

# NAHLN: A D-Lab Perspective

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# WVDL and NAHLN

- WVDL is 1 of 12 core NAHLN Laboratories
- > 10 microbiologists proficiency tested in real-time PCR for several NAHLN surveillance diseases (ready to hit the ground running in the event of an outbreak)
- BSL-3 Laboratory space
- Member on the NAHLN Methods Technical Working Group and the NAHLN IT Committee
- I sit on the NAHLN Coordinating Council
- I am a member of the AAVLD/USAHA Joint Committee on NAHLN
- Each Lab uses NAHLN funding differently to address their role in the NAHLN



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# STATE VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABS

- Most states in the USA support veterinary diagnostic laboratories because the livestock industries are important to the economic stability of the state (in WI dairy is a \$26.5 Billion industry)
- Some of these laboratories are part of the State Departments of Agriculture, some are part of University Animal Science programs, some are part of the veterinary schools (not every state has a veterinary school), some stand alone within universities



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# STATE VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABS

- These State D-Laboratories have significant diagnostic expertise and infrastructure
- They are working full-time to meet their diagnostic obligations
- The NAHLN was established to leverage this expertise and infrastructure for FAD surveillance, response, and recovery testing



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# STATE VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABS

- A 2011 survey of 34 NAHLN Laboratories revealed direct state appropriations of \$100 million to NAHLN Laboratories toward total laboratory operation expenses of \$186 M
- WVDL has an annual budget of about \$9.5M (half of which is provided by the State of WI). It received \$182,000 for its NAHLN efforts this year –as a core lab
- Member labs funded through NIFA received about \$30,000 this year



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# NAHLN Evolution

- In response to 9/11 and the 2001 FMD outbreak in the UK it became apparent that the US needed to modify its approach to FAD surveillance
- Money became available from Congress to launch the NAHLN
  - Part of this money was used to fund the 12 initial laboratories



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# NAHLN Evolution

- Extensive effort on the part of USDA (APHIS and CSREES), State D-Lab directors, and SAHOs moved the NAHLN forward
  - Assays for use in surveillance were developed and validated
  - Proficiency testing protocols were developed and implemented
  - Surveillance programs were launched
  - Emphasis was placed on accreditation of the laboratories performing this surveillance testing



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# NAHLN Evolution

- New Labs were added, and we struggled with how to make that network inclusive and at the same time affordable
- The NALHN is now fairly stable, but the members feel that it could do so much more with more Federal support
  - Increase support for laboratories
  - Address the IT gaps



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# NAHLN Future

- AAVLD is working hard to secure additional Federal support for the NAHLN
- This increase in support would:
  - optimize FAD surveillance and surge capacity by increasing the number of laboratories participating in the NAHLN
  - fully develop the infrastructure for the electronic transmission of data between relevant players
  - Expand on the effectiveness of “train the trainer” program for training laboratory personnel



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# NAHLN Future

- State D-Laboratories are ready to play a role in addressing identified gaps
- But...it requires funding!



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