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USDA BIOSECURITY PROGRAMS AND AUTHORITIES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

NOVEMBER 15, 2001

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USDA BIOSECURITY PROGRAMS AND AUTHORITIES

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2001

House of Representatives,

Committee on Agriculture,

Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:30 a.m., in room 1300, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Larry Combest (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Goodlatte, Smith, Lucas of Oklahoma, Moran, Thune, Jenkins, Gutknecht, Simpson, Ose, Fletcher, Johnson, Osborne, Pence, Rehberg, Graves, Putnam, Kennedy, Stenholm, Condit, Peterson, Dooley, Clayton, Bishop, Thompson of Mississippi, Baldacci, Berry, McIntyre, Etheridge, Boswell, Phelps, Lucas of Kentucky, Thompson of California, Hill, Baca, Larsen, Acevedo-Vilá, Kind, and Shows.

Staff present: William E. O'Conner, Jr., staff director; Lance Kotschwar, chief counsel; Pete Thomson, David Ebersole, John Goldberg, Callista Gingrich, chief clerk; Anne Hazlett, Ryan Weston, Brent Gattis, Susanna Love, Vernie Hubert, Anne Simmons, Danelle Farmer, and Andy Johnson.

The **CHAIRMAN**. The committee will come to the order.

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At such point in time that we have a quorum, I will recognize Mr. Lucas for a brief explanation of a watershed proposal that we had notified members that we would be taking up in order to pass that out. We have got to have a quorum. And so at such time that that occurs, we will take a brief delay from our scheduled business and move to that.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. LARRY COMBEST, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

I would like to welcome Deputy Secretary Moseley and his colleagues and members of the committee to today's hearing on the biosecurity activities of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The attacks of September 11 have led all Americans to reconsider fundamentals. Members of this committee have naturally turned to exploring ways that the food production system can be protected from potential terrorist attacks. We have a responsibility to farmers, ranchers, processors, retailers, and consumers to ensure appropriate steps are being taken to maintain confidence in our food supply.

Fortunately, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has been in the biosecurity business for a long time. The Animal Plant Health Inspection Service has its origins in the 19th century. The Food Safety Inspection Service started operations at the beginning of the 20th century.

Other sectors of our economy must make wholesale changes in how they function. In some cases, organizations must be

completely retooled or even created out of whole cloth. We have the luxury of having broad legal authorities, plentiful resources, and trained personnel already in place to begin addressing the threats of the 21st century.

Nearly 5,000 APHIS employees securing our border from the importation of animal and plant diseases and 7,600 FSIS inspectors in every meat and poultry plant in America are already working to protect our food production system. Obviously, the events of September 11 have caused these and other agencies of USDA to increase their vigilance, but we are very fortunate to have them. Not unlike our firefighters and police, they do a difficult job every day, a job we appreciate even more during these troubled times.

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As we review existing programs and authorities and consider the improvements that have been made in the last 8 weeks, we must temper our natural desire to take action with a certain degree of caution. It would be a cruel irony if in our haste to respond to the actions of Osama bin Laden, we do more economic damage to our food production system than the al Qaeda does.

That is why I will insist that any legislative proposals in this area proceed with due consideration and an appropriate commitment to regular order. I am concerned that current legislative activities specifically related to the programs and authorities of the Food and Drug Administration may be moving without benefit of thoughtful reflection and analysis.

We have a responsibility to ensure that we do not hurt the very constituents we are endeavoring to protect. It is not altogether certain that the same tired wish list of bureaucrats has suddenly become the perfect solution to the biosecurity challenges of the 21st century. The threat must be analyzed, the solutions must be tailored to specific risks, and the costs should be well understood before we proceed.

I expect the U.S. Department of Agriculture to take the lead in conducting the analysis of how these various legislative proposals impact farmers, ranchers, processors, retailers, and ultimately the consumer.

I look forward to today's testimony and the participation of my colleagues as we question our witnesses.

I would just make note that, without objection, all Members' statements, as usual, will be entered into the record. I would also make note that Mr. Stenholm is delayed due to a matter which he is addressing at the Pentagon, and will be joining us shortly.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stenholm follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES W. STENHOLM, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today and providing a forum for us to begin addressing this timely and significant matter. Since September 11 our Nation has rightly focused increased attention toward efforts to secure our agricultural industry from terrorist threats. That being said, however, let me also add that maintaining the safety and abundance of the U.S. food supply is not a new task for this committee or for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Systems have long been in place to protect our food supply from intentional and unintentional adulteration, to stop the introduction of foreign disease agents, and to research new and better methods for doing so. During these times, however, it is especially imperative that we carefully consider how to improve upon these practices in order to better support and coordinate our efforts.

Because both the FDA and USDA perform food inspection activities, I think it is critical that we understand the interactions between them and their respective responsibilities regarding biosecurity. This hearing should help people understand just how much more rigorous and extensive the USDA's programs are compared to those of the FDA. To the extent that more information may be needed to compare and contrast the USDA and FDA programs, however, we may need additional hearings from other agencies in order to dispel any misperceptions.

As most of us are aware, bioterrorism legislation has been introduced in the House and other bills are currently being developed, including a bipartisan effort by the Energy and Commerce Committee. It would be wise to coordinate these efforts and avoid a piecemeal approach that fails to take the big picture into account.

This hearing will give the Agriculture Committee the opportunity to examine an important part of that big picture. More specifically, it will enable us to determine what, if any, new authorities or resources may be needed by the USDA. We do not

want to create new legislation or expend scarce resources where none may be needed. By the same token, if legislative action is justified, I hope we can pursue it in a thoughtful, organized and expeditious manner. The information and insights we gain today should help us to weigh these choices in a responsible manner.

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Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing and I look forward to an informative exchange.

The **CHAIRMAN**. I would invite—as they already are then, let me introduce the panel to the table. Mr. James R. Moseley, the Deputy Secretary for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He is accompanied by the Honorable Elsa Murano, Under Secretary for Food Safety of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Honorable Joseph Jen, Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Mr. Bobby Acord, Administrator for Animal Plant Health Inspection Service at USDA in Washington as well.

Deputy Secretary Moseley, please proceed when ready.

STATEMENT OF JAMES R. MOSELEY, DEPUTY SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, It is a pleasure to be here today, and members of the committee. We are here to visit with you about biosecurity within the Department of Agriculture. And you have already introduced my folks sitting here at the table and so I will forego that.

As a result of the events of September 11, we are now painfully aware of the threats to our normal American freedoms. Clearly, human life is our No. 1 priority. But close to those threats is an awareness of our vulnerabilities in our important areas of our lives.

Without question, the potential consequences of contamination of any part of our Nation's food supply or the interruption of flow of food in the event of a malicious act would have significant impact not only on Americans but significant parts of the world. It is a safety issue, but it is an economic one as well.

The events of that day once again remind us of why we expend significant energy and resources in country: to assure people that the food that they consume is safe. USDA, as you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, has a long history of assuring the public that the process of production and processing, storage and distribution of food is as secure as we can make it with the resources that we allocate. We are working to continue that history, recognizing new threats, analyzing solutions, and implementing by taking action.

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The things USDA does to meet these challenges are numerous. My written testimony outlines these many areas of responsibilities within the USDA for our food system. I would respectfully submit that for the record.

While at the moment it seemed to be a serious problem, the fact that we were placed on high alert with the foot and mouth concerns in Europe earlier this year has now become a blessing in disguise. As a result, the Secretary initiated a complete review of our APHIS and FSIS procedures and implemented added security measures to prevent the spread of this disease to the United States. Specifically, we added additional veterinarians and dog teams at ports of entry. But most important, we educated millions of citizens as to the risk associated with inadvertent transfer of dangerous pathogens to the United States.

This exercise helped us to prepare for what was to become an even more real threat if a terrorist finds an opportunity to maliciously harm one of our most important national assets: our readily available, safe, and low-cost food supply. It is something that is easy to take for granted, but it is also something that all of us, and, very importantly, USDA considers of maximum value.

The security of our resources, however, isn't just a statement of what must be done, it is action that must be taken. Since September 11, we have worked in partnership with the new Office of Homeland Security, the National Security Council, as well as other Government departments to set us on a course for long-term protection against these challenges.

Obviously, of immediate concern was the security of our own USDA facilities. Within hours of the 9/11 event we reviewed all of USDA's physical infrastructure and took action to increase security. Of highest importance were our lab facilities and the biological materials that they contained. Then we set about a plan to engage those from the food and agriculture sector in discussions as to their points of vulnerability.

Starting with the agricultural aviators, I personally met over 80 people representing every sector of our industry, explaining to them what we were doing, where we believe the risk to be the greatest, but, more importantly, listening to their ideas about

what they were already doing and what remained to be accomplished.

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I must say I was impressed with our industry. They understood the threat, they understood what needed to be done, and they responded. Within 2 weeks of 9/11, some had already completed their review of their production processes. The inherent vulnerabilities they recognized and had started action to protect them.

Since that time, we have continued to seek input from a wide range of agricultural interests to ensure we are addressing everything necessary to continue to protect the food supply. This has led the Department to start to formalize this process so the discussion can continue to bring every sector of the industry together to discuss and share the best ideas about what must be done.

In the event of an intentional contamination, the primary goal is to develop a well thought-out plan of what action steps are essential in the event of a food-borne challenge to our system. What are the vulnerabilities? What steps must be taken immediately? If something does happen, how do we contain and eliminate the risk? Who will activate each area of the action plan? These questions are essential to rapid response, which is imperative to public confidence.

Finally, we also wanted to make sure that our existing systems were functioning properly. In other words, our responsibility within USDA for exclusion, rapid detection, and quick early response. I would have liked to have had our Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Bill Hawks with me today. However, he has been traveling a lot recently. And the reason for that is we believed it important that at the highest levels of USDA, we needed to go personally to our critical entry points of the country to make sure that things are being accomplished at the highest level of performance. Mr. Hawks is in California today, he was in Florida last week, and Maine 2 days ago. He and I agreed yesterday morning that we are going to travel together within 2 weeks to our most important point of entry, Miami, sometime soon.

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Our primary mission has been to review our established procedures at our APHIS facilities and observe what the 3,500 inspectors we have do on a daily basis. Frankly, we may find some problems, and if we do, then they will be addressed. But, just as important to us is for every employee of USDA to understand the importance we place on doing things right at this critical time.

We also want to observe at the ground level the cooperation with our Federal partners that is so important to our mission. Now, I know that Members of Congress have been concerned about our cooperation with other Federal agencies. Certainly we are spending a lot of time talking about it ourselves, and we just wanted to make sure that it is happening at the ground level where it really makes a difference.

So in summary, our goal is to develop an action plan and test our prevention and response systems across the board. To accomplish this, we are doing four things:

One, organizing the Department under the USDA Homeland Security Council to ensure coordination across all mission areas.

Two, assessing our research and infrastructure needs to allow us to employ the latest technology to help in these efforts. We want to make sure that our 7,600 FSIS inspectors and 1,000 scientists are focused on the current concern.

Three, formalizing an information flow throughout the entire agriculture and food sector to maintain confidence that we are doing everything possible to secure our food supply.

And finally, fourth, preparing to test ourselves with practice exercises that will demonstrate any deficiencies. But, most importantly, and I think the clear point that we want to make, we are trying to do this in such a manner that does not produce anxiety about the safety of our food supply.

It is good to ask questions. It is good to raise concerns. The times demand that. But one thing we all understand is that food is so essential to our daily routine that to produce unwarranted anxiety is unconscionable. We are trying to assess the vulnerabilities, trying to engage the right people, prepare for something we hope to never have to respond to, but be ready in case we need to. We think we are headed quickly in the right direction, but we look forward to your counsel and your questions.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Moseley appears at the conclusion of the hearing.]

The **CHAIRMAN**. Thank you very much, Mr. Moseley. And I know that we will have some questions.

One of the things, Mr. Moseley, you had mentioned, looking over the role and looking over the challenge which has been presented—not that this challenge is new—in protecting our food supply as it relates to the duties of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, but in looking at the heightened concerns, I think that all of us want full peace of mind put onto the subject matter.

The committee would be interested, I think as we move forward, in any suggestions of either legislative or legal changes that are required. At this time it is my understanding that there are no recommendations that the Department feels are necessary in order for them to do their work.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Mr. Chairman, we are certainly reviewing to make sure that we do have the appropriate authorities. But I do think that the point is that we have had a long history of dealing with these issues within USDA. Clearly this is a different kind of a threat. But in very many ways it is the same kind of a threat. It is the natural occurrence versus the intentional occurrence, but the outcome would be the same.

We believe that we have the existing authorities at the present time to mitigate the vulnerabilities and the risk that we have, and we are not asking for any additional authorities. And we think that any additional authorities, if they should be recognized, we certainly would bring them to you. But the first thing we would do is clearly look at the cost-benefit, make sure that whatever we are asking for makes sense. And that in the context of what it is going to cost the American taxpayer we get benefit from that. And also what it is going to cost the industry, that the risk-to-reward ratio is right. But at this time we just don't think that we need any additional authorities outside of what we already have existing.

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The **CHAIRMAN**. And I appreciate that. Obviously this committee will be carefully following your activities and the proposed or assumed risks and/or threat which does exist.

We will leave that burden to you, to the USDA and to the administration in terms of as you move forward, particularly as you may encounter instances, to be the first to notify us in a very expeditious fashion if in fact there are needed legislative changes. And I assure you we will move in very aggressive and rapid fashion as well.

And I appreciate the fact that you as a Department have a long history of dealing with issues, as you have said, whether they were accidental or intentional, the result is the same. The process of dealing with those also may be the same.

I have a tremendous confidence in the work which you have done, and I would again assure you that we will try to work as closely as we possibly could as a committee of jurisdiction in trying to deal with any problems which you might encounter that you do need, and we would certainly ask you to come forward in that regard as soon as possible.

Mr. Ethridge.

Mr. **ETHRIDGE**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity and thank you for calling this meeting at a very important time.

Mr. Deputy Secretary, I have a question that represents to some of this things you are talking about and relating to the important issue that affects an awful lot of the farmers in my part of the country.

As you know, there was an erroneous report that was put out about some broilers in Connecticut that were found—were reported to have been found with avian flu virus. And APHIS and the Connecticut virus officials have since confirmed that this was not the case. However, the Japanese, the Koreans, and I have been told or have heard that the Chinese Government are detaining and suspending American poultry exports to their countries because of those alleged instances. And I am afraid we are going to face a lot more of these as false alarms, pranksters, and even hoaxes regarding these diseases and other types effect our commerce. This is the very thing that we are talking about this morning.

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As you know, broilers are the No. 1 farm commodity in the State of North Carolina, and I want to know specifically what the Department is doing to demonstrate to those foreign governments that American poultry is free of avian virus; and, second, on a general note, how does the United States judge other countries when similar false alarms take place there? Do

we do the same thing that they do?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well, I would answer the second question first. I would guess that we do not do the same thing that they do, because what we want to do is to look at this issue on a very science-based level and make sure that we are right in our assessment, and then communicate that very quickly.

I think what you have pointed out is the essence of what USDA tries to do, is to identify, to detect, and to respond very rapidly to these circumstances. And that is very dependent upon our scientific baselines that we have to work with.

So our goal here is to make sure that we are able to do that quickly, provide the science, and then negotiate. And unfortunately it becomes negotiations. It ought to be a simple decision. This is straightforward. It is not a problem: Open your borders again. But I think it does frequently become negotiations. And we have to then be very forthcoming at the table and say this was not a problem.

Bobby Acord with APHIS might be able to give us a little bit more information on this, sir.

Mr. **ACORD**. Thank you. Mr. Ethridge, we did have a serologically positive flock of broilers in Connecticut. No virus was isolated from those birds. It was a low pathogenic avian influenza, not something that we need to be concerned about.

But we did have a veterinarian head to Japan last evening to sit down with the veterinary officials in Japan, explain to them the issue here in the United States, the fact that we don't have the avian influenza that they are concerned about. That individual will go on to Korea and have the same discussions with them. We have also contacted the Japanese Embassy here, and we have our chief veterinary official talking with them.

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So our belief is that we are bringing this to a conclusion very quickly, but we often have that kind of reaction based on news reports from other countries, and we work quickly to try and get the science back to them so they can correct the decision that they have made.

Mr. **ETHRIDGE**. Let me thank you for that. And given the concern of our folks in my home State, I would appreciate being kept apprised of the situation, if you would, please, with my office.

Mr. **ACORD**. We would be happy to do that.

Mr. **ETHRIDGE**. This is a critical issue, but I raise it in the context that it is one of a much larger issue, given the environment we now find ourselves in. I think that it is going to mean that all of us, and especially USDA, are going to have to be on guard to move very quickly. Otherwise, we could have some stresses in some markets that would create real problems in this country at a time when our farmers are having a tough time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Lucas.

Mr. **LUCAS** of Oklahoma. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Deputy Secretary, one of the things that down through the years, not only serving now as the subcommittee chairman with jurisdiction over research, but just representing a region of the country with very diverse agriculture, what has come to my attention is that your folks have done an outstanding job in battling the challenges that my producers out there face; whether the potential threat of bioterrorism or things like karnal bunt, that it is just a domestic challenge that we face. But it has become quite clear to me that the variety of things that you are taking on, that your people are forced to deal with, and the magnitude of those efforts now perhaps in some areas not just require more authority—and as you said, you believe you have sufficient authority to address your challenges now—but it looks to me like perhaps we need to focus on the facilities that you have and the ability that you have to respond to these sort of challenges, whether it is something like karnal bunt, or, Heaven forbid, an actual act of bioterrorism against us.

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So I think I speak not only for myself but probably several other members of this committee, and that we will look potentially legislatively in the coming days at ways to expand your budget authorization, not that that will guarantee you funding, but give you the justification then to make the case to the appropriators that when it comes to state-of-the-art labs and the availability of personnel around the country, that there are some needs out there that could be made.

Could you or anyone on the panel for just a moment address that as far as the potential needs in upgrading your lab facilities, being able to have state-of-the-art test equipment positioned around the country, those kind of positions that are more dollars and cents than new authority?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Yes, Congressman. Thank you.

One thing that the Secretary and I have been very clear about, I think in all of our public statements is the need to take a close look at the infrastructure of agriculture. And a lot of people think about infrastructure in terms of roads and bridges and waterways and so forth, but as far as USDA is concerned, our infrastructure, our labs, and our Food Safety Inspection Service and APHIS, and our communications infrastructure. And we clearly have some things, as we have now assumed this responsibility in this administration, that are causing us to take a close look and ask some questions.

And as we move along in that process of asking questions in terms of adequacy, we will be expressing those needs. I think you are well aware of from your State the lab facilities that we have at Ames, the lab facility at Plum Island, even in Athens, Georgia is a facility that has been there for some extended period of time. All of those facilities are in need of our attention. We can do some things—in fact, we have had a plan on the table for some time for a long-term review of those facilities and take a look at what we need to do to repair them.

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There is some urgency that seems to have come forward right now related to those facilities. However, they are functioning. We are not diminished in our capacity. But clearly it is something that we must take a look at and we will look to Members of Congress to help us in that regard when we get the final numbers together and really know what we need to do. There are some needs there, clearly.

Mr. **LUCAS** of Oklahoma. I will look forward to that, Secretary, because your folks have done a very good job. But it is just in the new world that you alluded to that we live in, the challenges now come from some different directions and come with such intensity that we just—we have a finite ability to process those samples. We have a finite number of people to move across the country. Those are the kind of things that we have to look at.

As a committee we only authorize. But I certainly see where, working together, potentially we can bring greater attention to those needs and help make the case to our brethren appropriators when it is time to make those dollars available.

Anyway, I appreciate the effort you are doing, and I look forward to progressing together. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. I would recognize, Congressman, that you are from the good State of Oklahoma and not the State of Iowa, as I indicated.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Baldacci.

Mr. **BALDACCI**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And, Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing on this very important matter. And I appreciate the Department's representatives and the testimony that they provided.

This is a big area, it is an important area, and it is one which a lot of Americans are concerned about. We appreciate the fact that the Department has a large and complex infrastructure to oversee, but it is one which Americans are concerned about, recognizing that we have taken steps in the past to not have as many inspectors on premises, and have gone towards more data collection and review of the data to make determinations.

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I would like to ask the Department, is there any reconfiguration of that momentum in the direction to maybe have a—not a reverse, but enhancing the inspections and having more people do the personal inspections than have been proposed in the past?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Dr. Murano, would you like to address that question, please?

Ms. **MURANO**. Thank you, Mr. Baldacci. I guess I need to understand better your question in terms of that, because as far as the food, meat and poultry inspection, we have 7,600 inspectors in about 6,000 plants, meat and poultry processing plants, so we have an inspector in every plant, at least one inspector in every plant. And I guess I am not sure what you are referring to.

Mr. **BALDACCI**. Well, didn't we develop a plan a few years ago to reduce the number of inspectors necessary and develop a different type of procedure for inspections?

Ms. **MURANO**. I understand now what you are asking.

Yes, we are conducting right now a pilot project where we are looking at using the concept of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points, and using that concept to see where we can better use the resources in terms of our inspectors for where the

risks are the highest. And this pilot project is still ongoing. We don't have all of the final results yet, but so far it is showing some promise in terms of our ability to certainly position inspectors where they are needed most and where they can make the most impact, while not wasting resources in areas where perhaps they are not needed to be present all of the time.

However, in conducting this pilot program, we have placed an inspector at the end of the line, in every line anyway, because it is something that we feel that is important to make sure that that activity continues until we get all of the data and can better assess what is the best course of action in order to, as I said before, utilize our resources in the best possible manner. But that is still ongoing. I hesitate to tell you any conclusions at this point.

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Mr. **BALDACCI**. Well, I would like to be kept abreast of the developments in regard to that.

Mr. Deputy Secretary, I understand it is a new administration. I don't expect you know all of the experience in being thrown into a very difficult circumstance, as we all have been. So I am sensitive towards that. The Department of Agriculture's responsibility with water and utilities is a concern to many people in terms of the concern about utilities, transmission lines, and et cetera.

And without going into detail now, I think that it would be helpful to me, whether the committee is interested in it or not, if we could have a follow-up to this meeting so that we could go over the risk analysis of what has taken place. Also in terms of the food and water supply and the inspection programs. And also, because Maine is a very large forested State, we have the concern about the U.S. Forest Service. And even though we are a private forestland, we certainly have concerns in terms of our border security with Canada and the like in terms of that 616 miles across the border there.

And I appreciate the fact that you were in Maine and the Department was there, and I think it would be helpful to keep the communication flow among all of the representatives and Department people as we move forward. I think this is something where nobody has all of the answers. We are all trying to do the same thing. And it would be, I think, helpful to me to have that kind of communications know.

So, Mr. Chairman, thank you for the meeting and the hearing, and I would like to thank the Department and look forward to continuing our discussion.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Pence.

Mr. **PENCE**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for holding this hearing. It is a topic of great interest to the people of east central Indiana. And I especially want to thank the Department Secretary for adding to the ranks of gray-haired Hoosiers interested in agriculture in Washington, DC. Dick Lugar and I were feeling pretty alone. And my belated congratulations to you, Mr. Deputy Secretary. Indiana is proud of you. I am glad to see you where you are.

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Also I want to applaud and ask a technical question about investigation and jurisdiction. I want to applaud your call, though, for avoiding—I think your term was "unwarranted anxiety." It seems to this Member that we are in, maybe of necessity, a time of uncertain and unspecified warnings of dangers that cause great alarm among the American public. And I believe instinctively that that would be more profound with regard to our food supply if there were general and vague alarms provided, the way that we have seen issued from the Justice Department on several occasions of late.

Along those lines, I wanted to get your thoughts or the colleagues' that you brought with you, about the OIG's investigative authority. The Office of Inspector General investigates criminal activity affecting health and safety production, agriculture food supply, and USDA employees.

My question to you, Mr. Deputy Secretary, is has your office been in contact with Governor Ridge and had a conversation with or established protocols for the role of the Department's Office of Inspector General in the event of a threat of a compromise of the food supply?

Recently, back in our home State of Indiana, there was a regrettable circumstance where the left hand didn't know what the right hand was doing with an anthrax scare at a postal maintenance facility. And it would be this Member's hope that the USDA would be on point with the expertise that it has relative to investigating any potential compromise of the food supply.

I am just curious as to what discussions have been had and what understanding there is with the new Office of Homeland Security on this point.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Yes, Congressman Pence. First of all, the Secretary and I met personally with Governor Ridge the day

after he was sworn into his position. We had a very good—just sat down for about an hour and talk about the Department of Agriculture and food security and how important it was. And Governor Ridge was very open to the role that the Department of Agriculture had and to this issue.

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In that context, of course, the Office of Homeland Security at the White House level has now come down to the departmental level, and we have initiated within the confines of USDA another Office of Homeland Security, USDA Office of Homeland Security. And a very important component of that is the Office of the Inspector General.

And, in fact, at the personal level, I will tell you that I talk with our Acting Inspector General almost every day about these issues and follow up as to what they are finding, what is going on, what is the intelligence out there.

There are some issues which we will not discuss here because of the classified nature of them. But there are some issues, and OIG is an absolutely essential link within the Department to uncover those issues, to work with the FBI, the CIA.

And so it is, like I say, almost daily contact with my OIG. In fact, last night she was in my office and she said, one of these days I am going to bring you good news. That kind of gives you an idea of what we are dealing with. But it is a very important part of our structure and has been very useful to us.

Mr. **PENCE**. And that Office of Homeland Security, is that in conjunction with Governor Ridge's new offices, or is this within Department of Agriculture?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Under the authority of Governor Ridge's activity. Within the Department of Agriculture, we follow that lead, and we now have instituted an Office of Homeland Security within USDA, of which I am the chairman. It is at the highest levels of USDA. And the various people who are sitting here are responsible for the subgroups within that committee. And every agency of need is on this council. In fact, we have a meeting this afternoon with the members of that council, the high-level members of that council. And it is really what is helping us begin to coordinate our effort across all of the mission areas of USDA.

Mr. **PENCE**. I thank the Deputy Secretary for his time and appreciate your leadership on that, and yield back.

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The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. **PETERSON**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On the sheet I have here, as I understand it, you are hiring another—or you are going to add 350 inspectors to APHIS.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. That is correct. As a result of the FMD issue that came up earlier in the year, we were authorized to request and were authorized to hire an additional 350 inspectors.

Mr. **PETERSON**. Do you know where you are going to put these? Where they would be located?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Bobby, would you fill us in on that, please?

Mr. **ACORD**. They are going to be located at most of the major airports around the country. Certainly Kennedy, Miami, Orlando, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Chicago—ports of entry with a high volume of traffic is where they will be focused mostly.

Mr. **PETERSON**. This decision was made before the September 11 event?

Mr. **ACORD**. That's correct, sir. When we got into what I would refer to as a near outbreak of foot and mouth disease, the Secretary became very involved in that effort and authorized us to hire these additional employees. And we were able to do that rather quickly.

Mr. **PETERSON**. And given what we are obviously facing now since the September 11 event, do you think that these 350 are enough to deal with the threat? Because, I mean, I would think that we now clearly see there is probably a higher threat than we realized prior to September 11.

Mr. **ACORD**. Because those inspectors are funded from a user fee that is paid by international travelers, we are able to hire additional inspectors. And we anticipate that if the user fee holds up, given the level of travel that might exist post-September 11, that we could potentially hire as many as an additional 600 inspectors next year for ports of entry activity.

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Mr. **PETERSON**. These inspectors are checking the passengers and their possessions? Is that what they do?

Mr. **ACORD**. They are checking passengers and—as well as baggage. We have actually doubled the number of dog teams we have, over 90 now that are working around the country. We expect to continue to add to that. And it is a genuine effort to keep out animal and plant disease.

Mr. **PETERSON**. As I understand it, the foot and mouth got into England because—maybe I am wrong about this—but I thought I read someplace that it was some food that was brought in from China that—I don't know if it was a pilot or passenger—brought this food in and then took it out to a farm. I don't know if that is true.

But are they checking that sort of thing? If someone has got McDonalds or some kind of food from China or Taiwan, are they checking that? If the person has it, are they taking it from them?

Mr. **ACORD**. Passengers, of course, have to declare whether or not they have food products that they are bringing back, whether or not they have been on a farm. They are asked if they—and if they declare that they have these products, they are confiscated. If they don't, and we find them, then they are fined on the spot.

We also have arrangements for disposal of garbage from airplanes to make sure that any food that comes from a foreign country is properly incinerated, disposed of, so that we minimize the risk that way. And the theory about the foot and mouth disease in England is that it resulted from some uncooked meat from China that actually got into a garbage feeding operation there, and the garbage was not properly cooked, which is something that we oversee along with the States in this country.

Mr. **PETERSON**. What would stop—up in my part of the world, we have border points that you have to go across, that weren't even manned during the night. Now apparently they are. But you can go down the road 3 miles and go across a gravel road anyplace along Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana border, there are probably hundreds of crossings.

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What would stop a terrorist from going over to one of those crossings? I mean, if I were a terrorist, I don't think that I would go through the border checkpoint. Is there any way that we can deal with that?

Mr. **ACORD**. Well, the Canadians have the same entry requirements that we do with regard to these kind of products; they have the same concerns about animal and plant health. We work closely with them to assure that that they have the same kind of exclusion process and requirements in place that we do.

And so we are not quite so concerned about these kind of potential carriers of pests or diseases coming through the Canadian border that way.

Mr. **PETERSON**. Mr. Chairman, with your indulgence, I wanted to ask a question of Mr. Acord, if I could.

The **CHAIRMAN**. The gentleman's time has expired for this round. We will have another round.

Mr. Simpson.

Mr. **SIMPSON**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I thank you for holding this hearing, and I appreciate your testimony.

Mr. Deputy Secretary, maybe this isn't the proper place to ask it, but since you mentioned in your testimony that the Department of Agriculture also has stewardship responsibility of over 190 million acres of national forestland, I am concerned not only about bioterrorism that we are talking about today, but also environmental terrorism that is occurring throughout the United States. Recently in Idaho, we have had experience where groups have taken credit for and announced beforehand that they have spiked trees and so forth.

Does the Department consider that terrorism just as serious as bioterrorism and other types of terrorism that occur?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well, clearly terrorism is terrorism. We typically refer to bioterrorism as something that would occur to the food supply. We also believe that ecoterrorism as it has been defined is certainly egregious to society, and it is something that we take very seriously. We are well aware, in fact it has been an ongoing problem within the Forest Service with some of the groups that have chosen to terrorize our forests and our employees and caused harm to people and damaged machinery and so forth. And we take that very seriously. The Forest Service has added individuals to our patrols, and clearly since 9/11 we have stepped that up.

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The point is that we are trying as hard as we can to minimize that. The fact is that terrorists have the ability to stay one step ahead of us. What we are trying to do is just eliminate as many opportunities as possible for those terrorists to take any kind of an activity. But it is an issue that we are concerned about, have been for some period of time, because it affects the safety

of employees, of people. And so we follow up on that.

Mr. **SIMPSON**. I appreciate that. I know that you do a great job with the bioterrorism and the entry of foodstuffs in the United States in trying to keep our food supply safe, and I and the American people thank you for that. And I just want to make sure that we take ecoterrorism as seriously. It still stuns me that we have groups that announce that they have done this, and then for some reason nothing seems to happen to them, and that concerns me. But I think it is a very serious problem that is just as serious as some of the other acts that go on, that we need to take seriously, and perhaps we can sit down at some point in time and look at what we are doing and some of studies that have been done on it. So I appreciate it.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. We would be happy to do that.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Boswell.

Mr. **BOSWELL**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate you having this hearing and apologize for being here a little late. If this was covered, I am sure that you will stop me.

But I want to ask for your comment as well as from the Secretary regarding the letter that went out from the Animal Agriculture Coalition regarding the Animal Health Protection Act that is kind of waiting in the wings somewhere. And the letter that has gone out, I am just looking at it—I would like to enter it in the record—was from really everybody in the animal agricultural business. It is quite conclusive. I just wondered if you, Mr. Chairman, would share with us what your feeling is about this, and also the Secretary. Start with you, Mr. Deputy Secretary.

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Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well—

Mr. **BOSWELL**. Forgive me for interrupting you. I didn't mind you suggesting that Mr. Lucas was from Iowa, because he is really a fine person, and that is what we are in Iowa. But I almost feel like an Okie because all of the time in my previous life that I spent at Fort Sill in Oklahoma. So you can call me an Okie, if you happen to slip, and I won't mind.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Thank you. I am going to ask Bobby Acord to address this issue.

Mr. **ACORD**. Thank you. We are aware that there is a bill that has been introduced here. There is one introduced in the Senate. There are some minor differences, I understand, in those bills and we are prepared to work with the committee, at whatever pace you folks decide, to see that through to completion.

Mr. **BOSWELL**. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, do you have anything you can share with us?

The **CHAIRMAN**. There are—the one shop is looking at it. There has never been an official request from the Department. We will continue to look at it as it moves forward.

Mr. **BOSWELL**. Thank you. Can I ask Mr. Peterson to yield?

Mr. **PETERSON**. Yeah. Mr. Boswell, I would be more specific and ask Mr. Acord—the letter went down there in June—why the Department hasn't taken a position. Because I think that is what the letter asked, was what their position was on our bill, H.R. 2002 and the Senate bill. And apparently there has not been a response.

Mr. **ACORD**. Well, we have been trying to work through a number of those kinds of requests. I think we are very near being able to respond. Certainly that is one of the things that the events of 9/11 have kind of put some of those things on the back burner, if you will. It is not that we are not concerned about it or that we don't have a great interest in it. It is one of those things that we will catch up to here pretty shortly, hopefully.

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Mr. **MOSELEY**. Mr. Chairman, if I could just add, my colleague sitting behind me says we are looking at both the Senate and the House versions, and that a review of that is ongoing and we will be providing you with a statement on that soon.

Mr. **BOSWELL**. Well, I want to thank you for your attention to it. I know that you have been under a lot of pressure, as everybody else has, and you are working in a historical time. And our heart is with you, and we thank you for your serious efforts in many, many areas.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Goodlatte.

Mr. **GOODLATTE**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Deputy Secretary Moseley I would also like to extend my welcome to you and your associates, and appreciate your participation in this hearing on this very important issue.

As you may recall, within the last few weeks, my office has been in contact with you regarding concerns that were voiced to us by some of the farm community in Virginia that USDA inspectors and other employees, when they visited farms, weren't following all of the Department's guidelines in terms of protecting against potential spread of disease and other biological conditions.

You stepped in personally, and to my knowledge that problem has been substantially taken care of. I want to thank you for that.

My question for you is, if a USDA inspector or other employee were to visit a farm, and the farm had a higher level of standard for protection than the USDA rules, would the employees honor those higher levels of precautions that some farms take because of the very sensitive nature of their poultry operation or other agriculture operation?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Congressman, that is an easy question for me to answer, because I am a pork producer from Indiana. And we have a very, very, very high level of security in our operation because we have been involved in the breeding stock business, and we just cannot have a problem like this. And so we have high standards for anyone that comes into our operation.

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For example, if you have been on another farm within the previous 48 hours, you just simply don't come to our operation. So I am very sympathetic to this issue, and I will tell you that if there is a higher standard on a farm, that needs to be followed, any USDA employee that comes to that farm will follow the higher standard. As long as it understood and it is requested, they will do what is necessary to protect the biosecurity of that operation. We cannot afford for them not to do that, because the economic consequences of that to any individual operation are just far too devastating to allow it to happen.

I have been there, I understand it, I know what I am talking about on this one. It is a very difficult situation.

Mr. **GOODLATTE**. Thank you. I think that is an excellent answer. Can I ask, is this well known within the Department? Are inspectors and others in the Department who are likely to visit farms aware that they should not offer any resistance when asked to abide by a stricter procedure?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well, I think you know that we did put together a fact sheet. And I put a personal note on top of that fact sheet that is to be widely distributed within the Department to our employees.

If that is not understood, we will take additional steps to make sure that it is.

Mr. **GOODLATTE**. Very good.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Bishop.

Mr. **BISHOP**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me also join my colleagues in welcoming and thanking the Secretary and your staff for coming in and sharing with us this morning.

The committee had an opportunity to travel to Canada as well as to Mexico a couple of years ago in our oversight capacity regulating the implementation of NAFTA. As a result of those visits, we were very struck with the lack of resources, lack of personnel, the lack of laboratories inspecting agricultural products that came across the border, both Canada as well as particularly from Mexico. In fact, we visited Nuevo Laredo and Laredo, Texas, and we actually spent some time at those entry ports there and were very disappointed to learn that, one, they didn't have significant numbers of Border Patrol agents, that the traffic was so heavy they had to only spot-check trucks coming through, so they actually did not physically examine the tractor-trailers that—many of which were hauling produce and animals across the border. So maybe 1 in 100 was being checked. How has that been addressed?

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And I was interested in your comments that you have been working on classified matters with the FBI and the CIA, but certainly with regard to the bioterrorism that we have been faced with recently, it seems to me that our borders are very vulnerable both at the checkpoints where we have people, personnel, who are in position to check if they can, and also the uncovered areas of our border where we simply don't have the personnel available to stop the traffic across, particularly the immigrant traffic.

How do we protect ourselves from the vulnerabilities that we face with this kind of open border situation and the lack of resources for your Department as well as the border control and the Border Patrol and the Customs? And the 350 new

inspectors that you have, are they going to address that problem? Is it really a question of additional resources that we need to be planning for in the near and the distant future?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Congressman, shortly after 9/11—well, in fact before 9/11, I made arrangements with the trilateral, with my counterparts in Canada and Mexico, and, in fact, it was to be about the time that the events happened here, so we had to postpone it, but we did go ahead and do that, and we did it because they were concerned about what had happened in this country, and they wanted to sit down and talk about this whole issue that this hearing is about today, while there is a number of other issues as well.

So we met in Canada, and we had a day-long discussion about the biosecurity issues, and I shared some of the comments that you did, and they share those concerns. We are well aware that there are some difficulties and problems there, but the fact is that we are committed between the three of us to continue to work and try to provide the resources to make sure that we don't have those difficulties of the past. That is what I am doing.

I think there are some things that I got when I came back that I learned that—within APHIS, some procedures and protocols that will give us a little bit higher level of certainty. So if you would allow me, I would like for Mr. Acord to explain some of those.

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Mr. **ACORD**. Congressman, much of what moves through from Mexico is subject to preinspection that takes place in Mexico. There is a manifest review so we do know what is moving through and so we can make sure that the product that is moving does not pose a pest risk to the United States. Some of it is sealed and moved through the United States to Canada for export out of Canada. We are working with the Mexican Government and Canadian Government, as Deputy Secretary Moseley indicated, to try to harmonize our procedures here. We are also trying to put additional inspectors at the land borders. We hope to be able to do that next year.

We will be holding discussions with the Mexicans next, the week after Thanksgiving to talk about some of these very issues. You will also be happy to know that every month there is a conference call among the chief veterinary officials, among the United States, Canada and Mexico, to talk about the requirements and the import requirements of all the North American countries. We want to make sure that our procedures, our protocols, are harmonized and they are, in fact, transparent, because we do exchange an awful lot of goods among the three countries, and we want to make sure that we are all seeking the same objective.

Mr. **BISHOP**. I appreciate that very much, but in light of the events of September 11, it just seems to just jump out at us that we have got such vulnerabilities for the importation of anthrax or of any of the other—smallpox, any of the other vices that could find themselves in the hands of terrorists, and that with the setup that we now have and under which we are laboring, it would appear that we probably should really, really focus some attention on that really quickly.

Mr. **ACORD**. We don't just rely on our port of entry and inspection programs; we have what—the second phase of our effort is early detection and rapid response to try to deal with any potential importation of a pest or disease. But we take your counsel on that issue and recognize the importance of it, and we will make every effort to continue to focus our attention on that.

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The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Putnam.

Mr. **PUTNAM**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank our panel, who have been working very hard on these issues, and show my appreciation for Mr. Hawks, who has been traveling the country getting up close and personal to some of these challenges.

I know that since September 11 you have attempted to improve coordination among the different agencies and departments both at the ports and those who have overlapping responsibilities in food safety. What specifically has come from those meetings?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. In terms—can you define—in terms of our APHIS—

Mr. **PUTNAM**. Do you have an action plan or some new protocol that will tangibly improve the interagency coordination between Customs and FDA and FSIS and APHIS and Border Patrol and everyone else who is on the front line at Miami Airport or the seaport?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. You are talking about at clearly different levels, and we can respond within those levels. Within USDA we have Dr. Murano, who chairs our FERRET group, and then across departments we have what was FORCG. I am not sure if we are still maintaining that acronym. But Dr. Murano and I have met with the folks at Health and Human Services and worked out some new arrangements here, and I think it is appropriate for her to try to share with you what we are trying to accomplish.

Ms. **MURANO**. Thank you, Mr. Putnam.

Let me begin by saying that one of the main goals of the Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety is to coordinate our efforts with FDA, EPA, whoever has a role to play in food safety. Having said that, I will tell you, as you know already, that prior to my arrival, and certainly prior to September 11, there was an entity called FORCG, Food-Borne Outbreak Response Coordinating Group, that was created a couple years ago designed to coordinate activities between agencies within USDA and outside of USDA within food safety, food-borne outbreaks.

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What we have done very recently is meet, as Deputy Secretary Moseley just said, with HHS officials at the highest levels and come up with a strategy where we can actually ensure that what we do in terms of biosecurity actually happens, and what I mean by that is not the creation of a bureaucracy, not the maintaining of a bureaucracy, but actually going down to the level of the people at each of those agencies and departments can get the work done.

Mr. **PUTNAM**. Can you elaborate on what those are?

Ms. **MURANO**. Absolutely. Within FSIS, we created something called the bio—Food Biosecurity Action Team, or FBAT. FBAT is composed of people in FSIS as well as we have APHIS representatives, and it is to look at food biosecurity issues with five action steps, if you will. One of them has to do with continuation of operation in case of an emergency so that operations of this FBAT team continue. The second thing is certainly food safety, is working to alert our work force and revamping our efforts to see where there are vulnerabilities, engaging in mock exercises, whatever it takes to see where the vulnerabilities are and prevent those. Third, worker safety, address the issue of safety of our own work force should something happen; also, communications not only with other agencies and other departments, but also with our stakeholders, which is extremely important. And last, security of our laboratories.

So having mentioned those five things to you that FBAT within FSIS and APHIS are engaging in, to answer your question more directly, our negotiations, or conversations as I like to say, with HHS have developed a new partnership, if you will, which we are temporarily calling the Food Threat Preparedness Network. It is truly a network because it is at the level of the Administrator of FSIS, APHIS, as well as the FDA, CFSAN and CDC, as well as EPA and local and State governments in terms of truly being the arms and legs of what we would do in case of an emergency, a biosecurity emergency. But more importantly than that, what we want this network to be and what it is, in fact, is a preventative network because we are getting together on a weekly basis by teleconference to develop whatever guidelines or activities we need to come up within a joint effort to try to anticipate as much as we can to prevent biosecurity incidents from taking place.

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Certainly a continuation of that is a rapid response element, which has always been there. As you understand, certainly from FSIS's point of view, rapid response on food emergencies is what we have always done for years. Of course, it has always been emergencies due to accidental contamination of food, not intentional, but I assure you that we feel very renewed and invigorated by our communications and collaborations with FDA, CFSAN, as well as the other partners that I mentioned, because we are very cognizant of the fact that we are under a special situation now, if you will, and if that promotes our working together, which it has, then it is a good outcome.

Mr. **PUTNAM**. Thank you.

My time has expired.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Dooley.

Mr. **DOOLEY**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you all for coming up to testify today.

What I am interested in is is there the coordination within USDA and other agencies to really put together the comprehensive and the coordinated approach to identify which biological potential threats that we might face and then actually commission to have the actual gene sequencing done that would allow us to then develop—well, there is a lot of

private sector technologies already there that can do the detection, and whether it is BSE or foot and mouth or some of the plant diseases, I would just be interested in what the status within USDA is on that.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Congressman, the answer to your question is yes, the capability exists. It is new, and some of the technologies, rapid detection technologies, that we actually use within the Department on the anthrax were very helpful, but they were go-to-the-field kinds of units where we could go out, collect the sample, and test it almost on site.

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These kinds of technologies are very important to us, but I would like to ask my counterpart here to talk about that in a little more detail.

Mr. **JEN**. Thank you. One of the—probably the newest technology in terms of rapid detection of any disease is called real-time polymerase chain reaction, PCR, which actually is for use to try to detect only a portion of the gene and get a result in about 30 minutes or less in that. We are testing those technologies at some of the—like foot and mouth disease and various other animal diseases at this time.

In terms of coordination with the other agencies, we do have in—USDA participated with NSF, NIH, and, in fact, it is normally coordinated by the OSTP for the plant genome studies, for the crop genome studies and animal genome studies at this time.

Mr. **DOOLEY**. I guess in practice has USDA then identified every pathogen or virus or whatever else they want to—that you want to be able to detect, then whom are you contracting with to actually do the sequencing so that you can actually have the information that we need to put onto a chip that can do the assessment and the identification? Are you folks identifying the inventory of potential threats? And then whom are we contracting with? How is that all coming together?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. First of all, I do have a list of the potential threats and a fairly comprehensive list, and, of course, we maintain an inventory of many of those biological materials that we can utilize to produce vaccines and do research on and so forth.

In terms of the actual development of the technology in terms of the rapid detection and so forth, I don't know that we are doing that internally, but there are a number—

Mr. **DOOLEY**. My question is a little bit different, though. We have a lot of companies out there that now have the ability to sequence the genes. Are we asking one company—because a lot of times there is not a private sector financial incentive for them to really do this. Are we budgeting money to go out and contract with a particular company or a group of companies to do the sequencing of these particular threats that are on our list?

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Mr. **JEN**. Can I answer that, please? The direct answer to your question, Congressman, is that sequencing is not necessarily the only thing needed, particularly in rapid detection technology we are dealing with. Actually it is the reagent that is used for it that is more important, and we are doing that internally for the most important ones ourselves, and none of the private companies are doing it.

Also for most of the animal disease, virus and things like that, they are very small. They don't need the kind of sequencing like the human genome or the rice genome, and we do have the capability in the area to do that ourselves. And it was these larger genome kinds of projects like the rice genome, yes, it is contracted out, and like I said, it is coordinated by various agencies, and we are a part of it.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Congressman, if I could add another 15 or 20 seconds to this, apparently there is an opportunity in the private sector, because I will tell you that I have had a number of phone calls since 9/11 of individuals wanting to merchandise their technologies to us, and so it got to the point where it was overwhelming for my office. And what I did was I set up a team within USDA of scientists that these people can go to and they can take a look at it and say, is this valid, does it make sense, is it cost-effective and so forth before it comes back to my office to give it consideration.

So I think the capacity in the private sector is there to do that, but it truly is a linkage between the public sector and the private sector. I hope that answers the question.

Mr. **DOOLEY**. Thank you.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Osborne.

Mr. **OSBORNE**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here today.

For the past year we have been confronted with the threat of BSE and foot and mouth disease. I guess in a perverted sense this may have been fortuitous in that you have already embarked on many activities that would prepare you better for the events in September.

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What would you say has been the biggest difference in terms of your previous activity prior to September 11 and since in terms of your thrust, or is it all just about the same type of activity?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well, I would say that more than anything else, that while I talked about trying to keep the anxiety level down out in the public, and though we have worked diligently to try to accomplish that, our anxiety level is quite high. The unintentional introduction of pests or problems is something that we were prepared for.

When you get down to the point of where you might have a malicious act, where you would have multiple agents that were introduced at the same time in different parts of the country, it really is a concern in terms of how do we respond to that, and that is the reason why we have been working with the industry. It started shortly after 9/11 to try to assess where are the critical points. We looked at this much like we talked earlier the HACCP Program in food safety. Where are the critical points, and what do we need to do to mitigate the risk at those critical point levels?

And then the next thing that we want to do is actually game this out, look at exercises where we have some threats, and actually go through those exercises and try to make some determinations of have we chosen correctly the proper responses and reactions?

So the level of intensity of trying to get on top of the situation, if you will, has been dramatically increased over foot and mouth, and I know that those people—I was not there, but those people involved in foot and mouth thought it cannot get any more difficult than this. But the fact is that it is more difficult now because we just don't know when an individual might be willing to do something that would be very harmful.

Mr. **OSBORNE**. I think you have anticipated my next question to some degree, and that was simply I would assume that an overt act of terrorism would result in multiple implementation of a disease or whatever, foot and mouth, at the same time, different parts of the country, and I guess my question is do you feel like you have enough personnel to meet an outbreak in 10 or 12 different spots, or do you have an ancillary plan where you would have some other people trained who would not maybe be full-time employees that can be thrust into the gap?

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Mr. **MOSELEY**. Congressman, we have been looking at that. In fact, it is what I call redundancy in the system, and we think that redundancy is very important, particularly within our lab structure. The worst thing that could happen is something occurs and our labs are disabled where we can do the detection. And that is the reason why when I met with the Canadians and the Mexicans, we talked about an agreement where we could coordinate on our labs just in case we had that eventuality.

But clearly we would have to go to emergency resources, and we have thought about those things. That is, part of our planning and part of our, quote, gaming exercise is to try to point out what would happen in the event of some kind of a catastrophic situation where we had multiple attacks at the same time.

Mr. **OSBORNE**. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Thank you.

Mr. **OSBORNE**. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Kind.

Mr. **KIND**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to commend the chairman for holding this hearing today. I want to thank the Deputy Secretary and all the witnesses and your entire staff for the focus you have brought on this very challenging and difficult issue. This is not easy stuff. The more you learn about it, the more you become familiar with the details and potentials that exist, the more appreciation you have for the complexity and difficulty of what you are wrestling with.

Let me follow on the heels of Mr. Osborne in regard to foot and mouth, mad cow disease, and maybe, Mr. Acord, you might be the best one for me to ask. In Wisconsin we have a \$4 billion to \$5 billion dairy industry, and we have seen the horrors now of foot and mouth or mad cow disease in the EU over the past year and the impact it has had not only on their farmers, but the communities that were affected. And one of the big concerns that we have at least in Wisconsin is the

potential for outbreak there, and given our large deer population, and this Saturday is the opening of deer gun hunt season, which I will probably miss for the first time in 15 years, if that herd gets infected, too, it would literally wipe out the livestock herds and the dairy industry in the upper Midwest and probably spread to other regions as well, which is a very big concern.

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What is the potential, the likelihood of some terrorist being able to infiltrate and infect herds, livestock herds in this country with foot and mouth or with mad cow disease? I guess I don't know enough about the science of it and how easy it would be to transport and to infect various livestock to do that.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. I am going to take a short crack at it and then turn to the guy that really knows.

In our attempt to try to keep calm about this, we have struggled with this question because we have some concern that this is not really difficult to do, particularly to spread foot and mouth disease. Now, to obtain a biological material that is secured in a lab and to take that out and actually introduce that into the food supply, for example, is not a simple process. There are several things that would have to occur for an individual to be able to do that.

But I think the issue about animal or plant diseases, be it karnal bunt or foot and mouth disease, is something that—and being a pork producer, I understand this because we have dealt with it in the pseudorabies area—that it is pretty easy to pick up that virus and move it physically because it has life, and, yes, you can destroy it, but you can also preserve it fairly well, and clearly the potential exists.

Likelihood that it is going to happen, obviously we feel pretty comfortable and secure that it is unlikely, but to give anyone an absolute guarantee that some event like that could not occur would just be wrong, and so that is the reason why, and the important thing is that in the event that it would happen, we have tried to develop this early detection, rapid response to the circumstance, because as I have understood with porcine epidemiology, the most important thing is to identify it quickly, contain it, and then start to push it back to the center, and sometimes that takes very strong measures in order to do it.

But the key thing is that we are able to do that quickly and effectively, and I think that was the issue in Britain. It got in several areas before they were able to get it contained, and we don't want to have to go through that kind of experience.

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Bobby, do you have anything to add to that?

Mr. **ACORD**. The only thing I would add at this point is the fact that we have worked with the State Departments of Agriculture, with the U.S. Animal Health Association, with the U.S. Veterinarians to stitch together a very important coalition with folks that are working on the very early detection, rapid response portion of this. During the height of the scare in the UK, we had weekly conference calls with the State Departments of Agriculture, along with the State veterinarians to focus on this very issue. We have teamed up now with FEMA to try to bring their resources to bear on any kind of an event or disease event that we would have.

So I think we have worked hard to build the kind of firewalls that we need, and I think Deputy Secretary Moseley is right on target with what we have done. We have practiced these kinds of scenarios in the past. We had an FMD exercise last September or the September before last working with Canada and Mexico and ourselves on a test exercise, if you will. So we have been in this business a long time. We understand what it takes to respond to it.

And finally I would just say that BSE is probably the most unlikely agent that you would find for use by a terrorist, if you will, because of the long incubation time and the mode of infection that takes place. It is highly unlikely that that would happen.

Mr. **KIND**. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Moran.

Mr. **MORAN**. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Secretary.

I have a broad question and a narrow question. Does the Department of Agriculture, either through its own sources or through law enforcement, know of any instances of bioterrorism that we have uncovered since or prior to September 11, a reasonable time frame? Are we talking at the moment about something that is at least theoretical and not actual, or are we aware of instances that would be potential bioterrorist acts?

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Mr. **MOSELEY**. We have—to my knowledge, and I think I am pretty current on this, we have no known bioterrorism attempts. Clearly I think there was a biosecurity issue 4 or 5 years ago with e. Coli in the Pacific Northwest where a group affected an election of all things. But as far as——

Ms. **MURANO**. Salmonella.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Salmonella? As far as we know, at least as far as I have been informed, at this point in time there are no known actual attempts or threats that have been carried out within the bioterrorist area.

Mr. **MORAN**. So the reports that we have seen or read about the crop-dusting, attempts to learn about crop-dusting, we do not know of anything that that was intended to do. I mean, no—we have no knowledge that that was intended to be an additional act?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well, I think we are probably speaking about classified information, but the fact is it has been widely reported in the press. That was credible. That evidence was found on an individual that was associated with the terrorist activities about crop-dusting planes, and there were some communications between those folks and some people that could train them to fly a crop duster. So by connecting the dots, we made—I think the intelligence drew the logical conclusion that there might be something to be concerned about here, and, of course, that was the reason why the action was taken on the crop-dusting planes. But as far as a threat that became a reality, we know of none.

Mr. **MORAN**. On my narrower question, I was interested in this rapid diagnostic technology and the so-called briefcase, and you indicated, Mr. Deputy Secretary, about the importance of responding quickly, isolating, moving it, I think, to the center were your words. Where are we on that technology? How soon can it be deployed? Will we have black boxes in feed yards in Kansas anytime soon? Will our Secretaries of Agriculture or State officials have access? How expensive is it? What kind of training does it take?

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Mr. **MOSELEY**. I would like to have one, but I don't have the \$50,000 that it takes to buy one right now.

Mr. **MORAN**. This is the Agriculture Committee, Mr. Deputy Secretary.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. I understand that. The technology is available. I think the issue is there are agents that are necessary that have not been fully developed, but the black box technology is available. In fact, that is what we used with the anthrax, or that kind of technology, with the anthrax services that we provided around town.

So this is something that is evolving. I think it is evolving very quickly and will be a major breakthrough in terms of our ability to get rapid diagnostic technology of these diseases when they occur.

Mr. **MORAN**. I did not mean to be flippant about my response about appropriations, because if it is a matter of \$50,000, I think we need to know that, because I think the potential of having this kind of technology on location is awfully important in any kind of effort that we are going to have to contain an incident.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Yes. I agree with that. We do have some of these units already available within the Department. We had that technology. That is the reason why we were able to help our sister agencies and departments around town with their anthrax situation, because we had availability of that technology.

Mr. **MORAN**. Is there a plan to disperse those units across the country?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. I can't answer that question.

Mr. **JEN**. Well, the question is—I mean, they are costly in some sense, and also there is very limited supply of the number. In fact, I think we understood that the Department of Defense ordered a whole bunch of them, so it is back-ordered by everyone else. You can't even get it at this time.

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The beauty of the test is that you can use nontechnical people on the phone through the Internet to connect with a specialist. That is why you can get the real response real fast in doing so. However, in order to validate these kinds of tests to meet the USDA standards, it has to go through some rigorous testing process, and I think that is being done. We estimate it is probably within the year we will be able to——

Mr. **MORAN**. I am sorry. I am out of time, but when you say "it" it means the box has——

Mr. **JEN**. Yes. The test itself.

Mr. **MORAN**. Thank you.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mrs. Clayton.

Mrs. **CLAYTON**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding the hearing, and I also want to welcome the Deputy Secretary and his combined group of experts. And also earlier I guess the Agriculture Committee had asked for many of you to come, and some of us attended that briefing, so I want to express thanks to your continued effort to inform us.

I guess foot and mouth, one of the things we had a reference to, and many of our States have had some experience in trying to meet already themselves—many of the State agricultural agencies have been working very diligently and persistently, and my State is no exception in that case. But they have come—the more they have gotten engaged in it—because I participated with the Secretary of Agriculture, Commissioner, in trying to give the scenario and have a deeper understanding of what it would take and how it would cause a greater coordination with people and the whole circle of influence, but they have been frustrated by what they felt has been the lack of APHIS to have the kind of infrastructure to respond to that.

Is that an unfounded frustration, or are you now responding to that? And North Carolina may be an exception, I don't know, but I think the deeper they get into it—and we had a couple of scares where we had to have some tests and close down a certain farm operation and had to send it to, I guess, your one laboratory in New York, as I understand it. And, again, that is a cause of concern in foot and mouth to have a very limited facility to manage all of this.

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Can you speak first to the APHIS infrastructure to assist those State agricultural agencies that are really going about doing the work, how that can be complemented with the agencies? And also if there is any plan to expand the laboratory capacity we have in the Nation now with having only 1, that certainly seems to be very limiting, particularly if this can be not only accidental, but can be used as one of the tools the terrorists can use.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well, I would make the comment that, first of all, the States are very, very important to our control and protection infrastructure. If it weren't for the States working and collaborating with us, we wouldn't be able to get the job done.

I am not aware of the situation that you speak of, but I would assure you that from my level of the Department of Agriculture, we would have the expectation that there would be utmost cooperation between the Federal agency that has responsibility for oversight and the State in whatever capacity that we need.

I would also go ahead and make the comment that that may be somewhat troubling that we needed to send that sample to Plum Island, and that was the only facility, but I think when we are dealing with something like FMD, for example, Plum Island by statute is there because of the nature of the material that we are working with. And FMD is not in this country, and we don't want it to get into this country, and while that was an alleged contamination in North Carolina, and had it been so, then we would have had it here, but it was a foreign pathogen, and it must go to Plum Island.

We would have a very high security level to reconstruct a lab like Plum Island, because by statute, if I am correct on this, I think it must reside on an island. So that is the reason why it had to go to Plum, and it couldn't go, for example, to North Carolina State University to use one of their labs. We couldn't do that.

Mrs. **CLAYTON**. Are there any plans, other islands that this could happen, any plans for expansion——

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Mr. **MOSELEY**. I cannot answer that question.

Mrs. **CLAYTON**. Let me make one other observation. My understanding is that some time ago you did have one of these gaming exercises where you involved four or five States to test the time to—I don't know the disease you were testing for, if it was foot and mouth disease or another pathogen, but the Department was not very satisfied that this table model that you engaged, that that response time was as quick as you wanted it to be to qualify under an appropriate rapid response.

Has there been a rescheduling of that? This was earlier this summer sometime that you did this.

Mr. **ACORD**. What we tried to do last year was to have—and I think you are probably referring to the joint exercise between Mexico, not Canada, and the United States I believe that was the case——

Mrs. **CLAYTON**. I was under the impression it was States within here. I might be in error though.

Mr. **ACORD**. There were several States that had test exercises last year individually, and one of the reasons that we have the test exercises is to try to make sure that we find out what kind of gaps there are in the system that we have to fix. And as far as the laboratory facility at Plum Island, that is a diagnostic facility there. We are able to increase the capacity of that facility by detailing additional diagnosticians to that laboratory. We have worked with ARS so that if we did, in fact, have an outbreak in this country, the research part of that laboratory would be adjusted to do diagnostic work.

So I think that the limitation of the capacity of the laboratory is not an impediment to eradication because we are able to ratchet up the number of samples that would be tested. Hopefully, if we can get the rapid test that Dr. Jen referred to validated, if we got to an outbreak mode, then we would be able to use that rapid diagnostic test as a way of managing the outbreak. You wouldn't need to send something to Plum Island every time when you get into an outbreak situation.

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Mrs. **CLAYTON**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Smith.

Mr. **SMITH**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank our witnesses, Deputy Secretary Moseley, Under Secretary Murano and Mr. Acord. I know you are spending extra time and extra effort and more anxiety as we try to prepare ourselves for both the intended possible and intended—or unintended consequences of infecting and contaminating our food supply or our livestock food industry in this country.

I think I have talked to maybe both you, Under Secretary Murano, and you, Deputy Secretary Moseley, in terms of the meeting in our Republican Policy Committee with Secretary Thompson of HHS and his concern that we needed more cooperation with food inspection coming in across the border, and I think, Mr. Moseley, it was—maybe Under Secretary Murano, I think we sent you a draft, and I think, Secretary Moseley, we sent you the final copy that 30 of us, about, had introduced.

I have been working on this issue, some examples that were given to us as far as the potential inefficiency, and you gave some good examples of where we are working to increase the cooperation and efficiency between INS and USDA and HHS. It was suggested that if it is an open-face sandwich, one agency inspects it; if it is 2 slices of bread and a closed sandwich, another agency inspects it. If it's a burrito that is cheese, Health and Human Services inspects it; if it is a burrito with meat, Agriculture inspects it. I can't believe those are all true, but on the resolution, is USDA opposing this resolution?

I don't want to create a turf battle, but it seems to me that it is reasonable for the policymakers of the country, namely the Congress, to look at encouraging cooperation. And so, No. 1, do you oppose or support the resolution? And, No. 2, are there areas of legislation that would help accommodate and facilitate better utilization of the resources that we have?

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Mr. **MOSELEY**. Before Dr. Murano—I am going to let her answer that question because she is truly the expert in this area, but I think we want to make it clear that we are not against cooperation, and we understand that it is extremely important for—because of the way that food is regulated in this country, it is extremely important that we have a cooperative effort amongst all the parties that must come to the table to make sure it is done adequately. So we certainly don't want to be against cooperation.

Mr. **SMITH**. I know you are not against cooperation, but it was a couple of weeks ago, I think, we talked, and if I could have a formal response on USDA's position on the resolution or your suggestions for improving it if we want to go ahead.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Sure.

Ms. **MURANO**. Mr. Smith, I echo those words from Deputy Secretary Moseley. I don't like those examples either of the open and closed-face sandwich and the cheese and the beef burrito and so forth. I am very interested in working with our counterparts at HHS in resolving these issues if possible.

We have a strong work force in terms of inspection work force at FSIS as you know very well. We have over 7,000, 7,600 inspectors, one in every meat and poultry processing plant. Our colleagues at HHS unfortunately don't have that. So we would like to help them in that arena. As long as it doesn't compromise, obviously, our responsibilities with meat and poultry, we would like to help them whenever we can, and we would like to cooperate and work together to eliminate some of these issues that perhaps speak to some inefficiencies, let us put it that way. So I am very interested in any initiative that would advance that.

Mr. **SMITH**. Another question. In our effort to inspect the facilities in other countries, as we go into those packers, those livestock, some of the food processing facilities in other countries to give them accreditation, are we going and helping assure that there is a little more security with those packing facilities, with those food processing facilities that we give accreditation to?

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Ms. **MURANO**. Mr. Smith, I wanted to respond to that question by kind of explaining a little bit how we approve countries to export meat and poultry to the United States, and before we give that accreditation, there are two things that have to happen. One is that these countries submit paperwork to show that they have equivalent inspection systems as we have in the United States; and second, very importantly, we actually do site visits. We actually go out to those countries and make sure that what they have submitted as being an equivalent system to ours, in fact, is. Third, when those products are exported into the United States, our inspectors at several inspection facilities actually do a reinspection—

Mr. **SMITH**. I was thinking of the terrorist threat more, maybe an alertness of a little greater security provisions from those facilities.

Ms. **MURANO**. Certainly all of our inspectors, including the ones at the import facilities, are on a heightened state of alert to look for the unusual as well as the things that they normally look for. So the answer is yes.

Mr. **SMITH**. Thank you.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Stenholm.

Mr. **STENHOLM**. Welcome, Mr. Deputy Secretary and those accompanying you today.

Along the same lines of Mr. Smith, but a little different, the idea of creating a single food safety agency has been out there for quite some time, and instead of the inspection responsibilities being divided, shared, the idea is that they ought to be consolidated, and we can do a much better job. What are the administration's views on this proposal?

Ms. **MURANO**. Mr. Stenholm, let me begin by saying that our goal is food safety. Food safety, as far as the USDA is concerned, is not just what we talk about, it is about what we are all about. So we are interested in any measure that is going to improve food safety. Whether having a food safety agency would do that or not, I don't know the answer to that question, but certainly any ideas that might advance the improvement of food safety certainly should be looked at.

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Mr. **STENHOLM**. The administration has no views on the idea of a single food agency at this time?

Ms. **MURANO**. As far as I know, we have no position, but, again, we are open to discussion.

Mr. **STENHOLM**. After September the 11, Mr. Moseley, there seems to be a new willingness, and you have expressed this this morning, all four of you at different times in response to members of this committee, a new willingness on behalf of all interested parties to rethink their past positions on food safety. Have you had conversations with industry, unions, and consumer groups along these lines, and do you believe there is a new willingness among all of the interested parties to look at new positions or at these new or old positions in a new light?

Mr. **MOSELEY**. Well, I think I am going to ask Dr. Murano to close on this, but the fact is that we have very quickly engaged various sectors of the food industry, and, Congressman Stenholm, I was impressed because they came in and there was clearly an openness. I think the seriousness of what happened and the felt threat opened a lot of minds as to we have some issues here that we need to take very seriously and deal with. And as we sat down and talked, it was interesting to me they have already taken a close look at themselves and said they understand where the vulnerabilities are at, and we need to do things, and they actually brought us a list of the some of the things that they recognized that they could do to protect the food supply.

And so as far as an attitude right now, I think there is an openness and a willingness to sit down and discuss this whole issue area, and that we can make some—if we need to make improvements in particular areas, I think it is time for us to do that.

Ms. **MURANO**. I would just like to add very briefly that I personally have met with six industry associations personally—that doesn't include the meetings that we have had collectively as USDA with industry and other stakeholders—to discuss several issues of food safety, but also biosecurity, and I see the same willingness to establish a new way of looking at our relationship, if you will, because we are in this together, as they say, regarding food biosecurity. This is

a special time in our history, and we have to engage in a new level of trust and cooperation.

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Mr. **STENHOLM**. Have you met with the union that represents the employees at the Food Safety and Inspection Service?

Ms. **MURANO**. I haven't personally, but that is my plan, because we are right now engaging in negotiations for a new contract, as you probably know, and one of the things that I intend to do is it is my plan to be more directly involved to assure them of our commitment at the Food Safety and Inspection Service, of our intention to continue a good relationship with our work force and to improve on that as much as we can.

Mr. **STENHOLM**. I will accept that answer and the encouraging way in which you have all delivered it today. It is no secret that I have had 10 years of extreme frustration. I do not share the views that you have expressed about how great our food safety and inspection system is. I have been frustrated at the willingness, particularly of the union, to adapt new technology and to apply. I think it has set us back dramatically, and that is why I hope that in the spirit of the question that I asked today, that there is a sense of cooperation and a realization that it is in all of our best interest that we have a little better cooperation, particularly in the adaption of new science and technology that Mr. Smith was talking about and others were talking about today.

And so I hope the lemon that we were delivered on September 11 can turn into some lemonade in the areas that you are working now, and certainly I and, I believe, this committee will look forward to working with you on that.

I have one more question in the next round, Mr. Chairman.

Along that line, Mr. Acord, I don't want an answer today, but the handling of the karnal bunt situation in Texas did not raise a high level of confidence in your Agency that we could respond to anything in an orderly way, and perhaps that is an unfair criticism of you. I don't think it is. But I look forward in the very near future when you have had adequate time to look at what protocol is necessary in wheat-producing areas to deal with the karnal bunt situation and to do it in a much better way than we had in the four or five counties in Texas this last year, realizing that this is a problem—it is nowhere near even being compared to foot and mouth disease.

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As we all know, we have got a lot of things to deal with in the karnal bunt question, not the least of which is in the trade area and what have you. But I hope that we have all learned something as a result of that unfortunate experience that we went through, and that we will be able to move in a more expeditious way to deal with the problem so that it does not have an adverse effect on an industry as important as the wheat industry is to the United States. And we are in danger of doing that if we do not come up with a better protocol and a better way of handling it than what we did.

So I look forward at your convenience to having some additional conversations as to where we are headed, and then if there are ways in which the committee can be of help, certainly I believe the chairman would be amenable to doing that.

And my final—this was not meant to get an answer today, Mr. Acord.

Mr. **ACORD**. Thank you.

Mr. **STENHOLM**. And I think you appreciate that we don't want to get into that today.

But also what Mr. Peterson and Mr. Boswell talked about regarding H.R. 2002, and S. 1482, the Animal Health Protection Act, that proposal has been down to the Secretary for 5 months and we have an agreement of every single, I believe, livestock poultry organization that says that there are certain things that need to be looked at and considered.

We would appreciate a response from the Secretary as to whether it is a good idea, necessary, or what can be improved, so that those of us who believe this legislation does need to move forward, that we can move it forward. So I appreciate if you would do as you have already responded. It has been long enough not having a response.

Mr. **MOSELEY**. I will take note of that, Congressman, and I will go back and share that concern with the Secretary, and we will visit about that and get back to you. Thank you.

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The **CHAIRMAN**. I will recognize members for additional questions if they have them. But before doing so, I would just like to announce that your assistant clerk, this is her last hearing; Susanna Love is departing the committee tomorrow.

My natural inclination, as great a job as she has done, would have been to try to talk her out of that. However, when I found out the reason for it, I knew that I would find it very difficult with any sincerity to do that. The reason she is going back is because she is ready to go home to Texas. And I cannot argue with anybody who is ready to go back to Texas.

But we will miss you and we appreciate very much the work you have done.

I would recognize any other members for another round of questions. Mr. Thune.

Mr. **THUNE**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I missed the first round.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Thune, please take your first round.

Mr. **THUNE**. Thank you. I thank the panel for your testimony this morning. I just have a couple of quick questions I would like to ask. There has been a lot of discussion of late, both here and in the other body, on the whole question of country-of-origin labeling on agricultural products, and a rather spirited debate and discussion about that. And there are a lot of reasons offered for why it makes sense.

Notwithstanding the many reasons and the various issues that have been raised here, I would like to know your opinion as to whether food safety could be enhanced by country-of-origin labeling for agricultural commodities?

Ms. **MURANO**. Mr. Thune, I don't believe this is a food safety issue. And the reason why I say that is because of what I just described earlier to Mr. Smith regarding what we do in terms of ensuring that the meat and poultry that is exported from other countries into the United States, that those countries have equivalent systems to our own. And not only do we ensure that, but we also do a reinspection upon entering of those products. So I don't believe this is a food safety issue.

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Mr. **THUNE**. One other question, I guess. And I appreciate that, for the record; because obviously as I said in that discussion, particularly now with the timing being such that it is, that has become part of the—sort of the focus of that debate. And I would just want your honest answer about whether or not that is a food safety issue, because there are—there is a lot of debate about that.

Obviously there is the consumer issue and the producer issue. I happen to think that both would benefit. But whether or not it does have a direct impact on food safety I think is a valid question, and I just wanted to get your expert opinion on that, so I appreciate that.

One other question that I have has to do with your experience in the whole—there are a number of agroterrorism, bioterrorism pieces of legislation that are under consideration right now, some of which provide block grants to States to help address that issue. In your experience in dealing with the States, are there deficiencies or shortcomings that the States have to deal with, that it would make sense that if we were going to address this in some form legislatively, that the dollars go to the States as opposed to keeping them here in Washington? Anybody care to take a stab at that?

Ms. **MURANO**. That is a difficult question for me to answer, because looking at it from a food safety point of view, the fact that we have a Federal inspection system for meat and poultry, and that that is the system that we are using when States do their own inspection, then that is a different story.

So without knowing any more about that issue, I hesitate to say one way or another. But I certainly can look into that and provide you with a better answer.

Mr. **THUNE**. It is more of a question of when you are talking about the infrastructure of food safety as to how the States fit into that and what their needs may be and how, if we are looking at a legislative response of some sort, that it would be directed there.

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Ms. **MURANO**. Well, certainly we have been working with States to make sure that those States that do their own inspection have the same systems that we do. And we are offering as much help as we can to them. Whether that money should go directly to them or should stay here and then be used for implementing some of these programs to help the States, I haven't thought about that, to be honest.

Mr. **THUNE**. Okay. Thank you. I appreciate that. That is all of my questions, Mr. Chairman.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Smith.

Mr. **SMITH**. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Well, again, would appreciate maybe an evaluation and response to H.Con.Res 258 that 28 of us introduced. It was suggested that the Department was a little concerned with one of the "whereas" called clauses

that says take steps to ensure that resources and experience of all involved agencies are used as efficiently as possible to maximize food inspection capabilities, regardless of agency of jurisdiction.

Maybe the "regardless of agency of jurisdiction" is a blocking point. It would just be my suggestion that it would be—I am trying to think of a strong word. It would be really bad if agriculture, USDA, lost our food inspection efforts ability and accomplishments to some other agency that does everything.

But it seems to me that to make sure that this doesn't happen, it is reasonable to aggressively look at the kind of cooperation where you don't question are we going to lose more than we gain because we have got more people taking on some of that responsibility. I would hope eventually that a greater responsibility for total food safety of the INS, of Food and Drug, would end up falling into our bailiwick in USDA.

Second, Under Secretary Jen, let me ask you a question on research. In our agricultural bill, we put in language that gave a priority that said that developing research on the genome of pathogens would receive priority in research.

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In the total research arena, what is—what are we doing in USDA as far as our USDA research and our State land grant research effort in this whole area that might help identify and maybe correct or cure problems that might happen intentionally or unintentionally?

Mr. **JEN**. Thank you, Mr. Smith. I think I really appreciate the fact that you are putting in that language, because I think it is very important in the economics of what we call biotechnology research.

Mr. **SMITH**. I think you have the ability to do it now, without the language, as far as a lot of the flexibility—

Mr. **JEN**. Right. I think additional funding certainly would help in that, because the result is proportional to the amount of funding that is available in doing so.

I think in the arena, the whole arena of the agriculture, the plant genome part of it is better taken care of than the animal genomics. That is the area we need more. Also I think the microbial genomics is where—some of these viruses and things concerned could use more funding in doing it.

It is just a matter of the number of diseases that is involved, or pests and things like that that is involved in that. How much you can do is strictly proportional to the amount of funding that is available to attack that.

We are doing all we can with our existing resources. And, like I mentioned earlier this morning, that we are cooperating with NSF, NIH, and FDA on some of that other research. It is coordinated by OSTP.

Mr. **SMITH**. Will USDA develop and review some priorities in research that might better accommodate the potential threat of—in the whole arena of terrorism and bioterrorism?

Mr. **JEN**. We certainly will. I think later this month we have a workshop on animal genomics and to set some priority in that area. It is on tap at this time.

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Mr. **SMITH**. Mr. Chairman, thank you. But here again, the cooperation of the several agencies, NSF, NIH, we just need more cooperation to make sure that we don't overlap and that we do our research as efficiently as possible.

Mr. **JEN**. In the area of genomics, the cooperation is very, very well.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Mr. Moran, did you have a follow-up question?

Mr. **MORAN**. No, sir.

The **CHAIRMAN**. I want to thank our panel for being here today and for helping us in this very important issue. And I want to again simply emphasize that this committee stands ready to work very closely with you in an expeditious fashion in any area whatsoever that you think would come under our jurisdiction that you think that you may have problems or you may have needs.

This is an issue which is probably getting more attention now than it normally does. Again, I think the fact that you have the process in place that you have and have had for many years should also send a great deal of comfort to the American people about the safety and quality of the food that they eat and potential disease problems that we have been fortunate, because of diligent work, to keep out of this country.

So I do want to say that again, and I will leave the burden on you to be the ones to come tell us if you have a problem.

But, thank you again very much. And the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:40 p.m., the committee was adjourned, subject to the call of the Chair.]

[Material submitted for inclusion in the record follows:]

Statement of James R. Moseley

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor for me to appear before you today to discuss the important role played by the Department of Agriculture in homeland security. I appreciate your initiative in calling this hearing because the Department's actions in support of homeland security are very important to farmers, consumers, and all of the other constituents of our programs.

As you know, the President has taken decisive action to protect our homeland security in light of the events of September 11. Executive Order 13228 established the Office of Homeland Security and the Homeland Security Council. The Office of Homeland Security is headed by former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge. The Secretary and I have met with Governor Ridge and continue to provide his team with counsel and information about USDA's role in homeland security. The Secretary is a member of the Homeland Security Council, which is chaired by the President. The Secretary recently attended the first meeting of the Homeland Security Council and we at USDA are actively working to ensure the protection of our food supply. There is also a Working Group of Deputy Secretaries that has been established to support the Homeland Security Council, and I am a member of that Working Group. In short, the President has seen to it that we have the necessary institutions in place to assure the coordination and information flow that we will all need to carry out our homeland security responsibilities. In addition, he has requested \$45.2 million in supplemental funding to further secure USDA facilities and programs.

Mr. Chairman, USDA has a long history of assuring that the Nation's supply of meat, poultry and egg products including production, processing, storage and distribution of foods, is safe and wholesome. My full testimony outlines the many areas of responsibilities of USDA in our food system.

For instance, to date, we have prevented such devastating animal diseases as Foot and Mouth and BSE from entering this country. This has come as a result of a very dedicated team of animal health and plant health experts composed of Federal, state and private efforts dedicated to maintaining our nations agricultural health. In fact, we implemented added security measures at the beginning of the year to prevent the spread of these diseases to the United States. We added additional veterinarians and dog teams at ports of entry. We also increased the number of inspectors.

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Since September 11, we have worked in partnership with the Office of Homeland Security and the National Security Council as well as other Departments to set us on a course for long-term success. We have secured our facilities and inventoried our biological assets, with special emphasis on our labs across the country.

We have sought input from a variety of interests to ensure we are addressing everything we need to. For instance, we continue to meet with industry, state officials, academia and others for input into the total response system.

And, most importantly, we are communicating this information to people in face-to-face meetings, through the media and through our website.

My testimony today outlines many of the details in these areas. But I think it is important to also focus on our long-term plans and actions to prevent any threat that may occur.

Our goal is to test our prevention and response systems across the board. To do this, we have organized an internal USDA Homeland Security Council chaired by myself with members from all of our program areas to ensure coordination across the department. In addition we are assessing our research needs to allow us to employ the latest technology to help in our efforts. And, we are formalizing a communication process to disseminate information about the products we regulate throughout the food chain. This will maintain confidence that we are doing everything possible to secure the products under our jurisdiction.

Mr. Chairman, please let me now expand in certain areas on what the Department is doing with respect to biosecurity. Most importantly, I want you to know that homeland security is of top priority. It has the personal attention of the Secretary, our subcabinet, agency heads, our USDA employees, and myself.

The Department is a large and complex organization which employs 100,000 people, has offices and installations throughout the world, provides stewardship for 190 million acres of national forest land, and provides more than \$100 billion

in loans, grants, and services annually. More than one in six Americans participates in programs sponsored by USDA, and many more benefit from the very diverse set of programs the Department operates. In this context, carrying out the Department's responsibilities for homeland security requires a very large effort, and it also requires discipline and focus. Our most intense efforts have, therefore, been directed to seven key areas, which we believe must be addressed if we are to be successful in carrying out our homeland security responsibilities. I would like to give you a brief report on what we are doing in each of these areas.

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PROTECTING U.S. BORDERS

USDA has important responsibilities at U.S. borders, airports and ports of entry. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) carries out inspections at U.S. ports-of-entry to prevent the introduction of foreign plant and animal pests and diseases, which would be harmful to our country's agriculture. The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) reviews foreign inspection systems and facilities that export meat and poultry products to the United States and reinspects all imported meat, poultry, and egg products to insure that U.S. requirements are met. Scientific support for these activities is provided by the Department's Agricultural Research Service (ARS). The Office of Inspector General provides audit and enforcement services.

The Department of Agriculture has been in the business of biosecurity since its inception. As you know, the Department had already been working to strengthen our border inspection systems prior to September 11 due to the presence of foot and mouth disease in the United Kingdom, Europe and South America. Since September 11, we have adjusted and strengthened our systems even further. By way of background APHIS, which is in charge of monitoring our borders, has 5,000 inspectors, veterinarians and other personnel helping at 126 ports of entry. In addition, these individuals work with state and industry officials to ensure prevention of harmful animal and plant diseases from entering our country. APHIS has responded by increasing awareness within the veterinarian community. Specifically, the agency has recently conducted an educational teleconference with veterinarian professionals in which diagnostic and foreign animal disease recognition skills were emphasized.

We are also working closely with our Federal partners including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Our veterinary medical and plant health communities have been put on notice to treat every foreign disease or pest investigation with increased diligence. All APHIS and FSIS field staff has been placed on a heightened state of alert. In addition, the Department is formalizing information flow throughout the our regulated industries to maintain confidence that we are doing everything possible to secure the food supply. Finally, we have established a protocol with the Federal Aviation Administration for the delivery of investigative samples by military transport to our laboratories in the event of another civil aircraft stand down. We must insure the rapid transportation of biological samples to diagnostic laboratories during emergency situations.

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ASSURING A SAFE FOOD SUPPLY

For purposes of homeland security, the complete, the complete process of production, processing, storage and distribution of food is important. This includes the seed necessary for production, feed for livestock and poultry, fertilizer for increasing crop yields, and farm equipment and repair parts for the machinery necessary to support agricultural production. Obviously, the protection of the Nation's food supply is a major undertaking and involves the efforts of a variety of USDA agencies and the Department of Health and Human Services through the Food and Drug Administration.

It is important to realize that the Department of Agriculture has been in the food safety business for almost 100 years since the passage of the original Federal meat inspection legislation in 1906. Over the course of that time, our responsibilities have been expanded and our systems have improved. We have well-established partnerships with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, and with industry. The system was functioning effectively prior to September 11 and is continuing to function effectively.

The Department's FSIS has fundamental responsibility for meat, poultry, and egg products and carries out its responsibility through a team that includes over 7,600 food inspectors, 200 compliance officers, and 200 laboratory personnel. Since 1996, FSIS has been highly successful in working with industry to install landmark pathogen reduction/hazard analysis and critical

control point systems, which greatly strengthened the ability of the inspection system to respond to food safety issues. The FSIS works closely with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state agencies to conduct an ongoing systematic collection of food borne illness data to detect outbreaks and monitor disease trends and patterns.

USDA has other important responsibilities in connection with the food supply: The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) because of various activities resulting in the acquisition of commodities; the Food and Nutrition Service because of our efforts to provide food assistance to children and needy families. The Farm Service Agency, because of the critical linkage provided by that agency to our Nation's farmers; and the Foreign Agricultural Service has the responsibility to gather information on current food and agriculture situations because of the capability of that agency to gather information worldwide. Scientific support for these activities is provided by ARS, and audit and enforcement support is provided by the OIG.

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The Department has taken a variety of actions to further strengthen these systems. USDA has a Food Emergency Rapid Response and Evaluation Team (FERRET), which was authorized by the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998, and is chaired by our Under Secretary for Food Safety. FERRET is very active in ensuring the necessary USDA-wide coordination of food safety activities. We have put our own personnel on a heightened state of alert. We are working with our cooperators to make sure that they are engaged in a heightened state of alert as well as establishing a Food Biosecurity action team to serve as the arms and legs of our efforts to ensure that we are vigilant in safeguarding foods under USDA's jurisdiction. USDA has been meeting on a regular basis with FDA's food counter terrorism committee. In addition, USDA has recently organized to form the Food Threat Preparedness Network, linking FDA, CDC, FSIS and others to focus on preventative activities to proactively protect our food supply. For instance, the Department of Agriculture is working with industry to develop guidelines for security measures. We continue to provide emergency food relief in support of the Federal Government's efforts in New York.

PROTECTING AND ENHANCING RESEARCH AND LABORATORY FACILITIES

Science and technical support are a vital component of our overall homeland security efforts. ARS is our principle in-house research agency. APHIS and FSIS also maintain a number of laboratories and methods development centers. In addition, we work closely with our cooperators at 78 land grant universities located throughout the U.S. In short, we have tremendous scientific capability to respond to homeland security issues, but we must maximize security and further improve this capability.

Since September 11, USDA has enhanced the security of its research buildings, laboratories, and pathogen inventories, and also established new guidelines for personnel suitability. Those measures include increased USDA security, and additional patrols and surveillance by the Coast Guard of the waters and shipping lanes surrounding our facility at Plum Island, New York. USDA is also making sure that all the work the Department conducts with sensitive materials performed in the most secure locations.

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We have taken two additional actions to provide further assurance that we are doing all of the necessary measures in this area. We have contracted with SANDIA National Laboratory to provide a risk assessment and security analysis of our five Biosecurity Level Three laboratories. The Department has also asked the OIG to conduct reviews of the controls and procedures throughout the Department's laboratory system to ensure that facilities are secure.

PROTECTING OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Department has a huge infrastructure beyond those particular areas I have already discussed. We have more than 24,000 buildings at 7,000 sites throughout the world. We have responsibility for the National Forest System. The Natural Resources Conservation Service has a variety of responsibilities in rural America, including providing technical assistance to help assess water supply vulnerability. The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) provides funding for electric, telecommunication, and water and waste disposal systems in rural America. These and other activities are all important in the context of homeland security, and we are doing everything possible to strengthen these activities. For instance, the Forest Service has established additional patrols to improve security on National Forest System lands; RUS is working with its borrowers to improve security where necessary at electric, telecommunications, and water systems financed by the Federal Government.

At this point, I want to pay particular attention to one of our most important responsibilities—the protection of our own employees. At the USDA headquarters complex, members of the guard force were armed for the first time and will remain armed. Increased numbers of officers have been added to supplement the basic staff. We have technology, within the Department, that enables environmental testing for anthrax. This technology has been used by multiple government agencies during the recent anthrax emergencies. We have used that capability to establish a mobile diagnosis unit at the Washington Navy Yard to furnish rapid responses to possible environmental anthrax detections. This unit is being used for the protection of USDA employees and has also been made available to other Cabinet-level organizations.

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Obviously, the vast majority of the USDA workforce is outside the Washington area. We are working aggressively with all of our agencies to upgrade security wherever necessary for all of our employees. In this regard, one specific action is our effort to expedite and strengthen our system for security clearances. We have hired a contractor to assist in completing the necessary investigations to evaluate the individuals being considered for security clearances.

SECURING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

In many areas, information technology is at the core of USDA activities. It is used to gather and use crucial information in support of USDA programs. We issue payments to farmers and engage in thousands of other transactions through information technology. We provide the infrastructure that manages the payroll for 500,000 Federal employees, and the Thrift Savings Retirement Plan for all Federal employees. We are vulnerable to security breaches in these areas. Our Chief Information Officer has overall responsibility for the Department's Cyber Security Program. We are working to strengthen that program through upgraded security policies and standards as well as through increased oversight and guidance for USDA agencies. We have asked all of our information technology processing centers to raise their alert level and insure that system backups are available.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS

In February 2001, the Department established an Office of Crisis Planning and Management. The mission of this office is to manage USDA's emergency operations center, coordinate staff from USDA agencies in response to emergencies, provide USDA liaison with the FEMA, and support a variety of other activities necessary to assure the continuation of the Department's operations in an emergency situation. Shortly after September 11 the Office of Crisis Planning and Management began 24 hour a day and 7 day a week operations with on-call personnel.

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The Department has a detailed Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) with alternative work sites to enable USDA's leadership to manage essential functions. The Department's COOP plan was implemented in response to the September 11 events, and we are now in the process of using that experience to review and strengthen the plan where such action is necessary.

AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS

As I have mentioned throughout this testimony, we look to our OIG in many areas for audit and investigative support to help us with our homeland security efforts. OIG has focused its efforts on homeland security cases. OIG has accelerated its overall effort to work with USDA agencies in a number of key areas including the security of USDA laboratories, controls over importation of bio-hazardous materials, vulnerabilities in the National Forest System, and cyber security. The work of the OIG has been very helpful in all of these areas.

Mr. Chairman, I have tried through this testimony to provide the Committee with a brief report of some of the key activities the Department is carrying out in support of homeland security. As the President has repeatedly stressed, homeland security is a long-term issue. We have a lot more work to do in the Department of Agriculture before we are fully satisfied that we have done everything possible for homeland security.

However, we need to look at measures to strengthen our already rigorous system of protections. This is particularly true in the area of infrastructure—our research and laboratory capabilities. You have heard the Secretary speak of this issue several times, but we need to ensure investment in the systems that will protect our food system, farmers and ranchers. This takes time and resources; neither of which are unlimited. I will work with Congress in examining these long-term measures to ensure the protection of our farms and food supply.

We are proud of our employees who provided food assistance in New York and of our Forest Service incident management teams, which provided assistance to the New York Fire Department and FEMA in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 events. We have a tremendous diversity of talent in USDA, and there is no doubt that we will be able to mobilize that talent in support of homeland security.

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One final note I would make has to do with the subject of communication. We simply must do everything possible to communicate to the public the actions we are taking in support of homeland security. The Secretary and other top officials of the Department are issuing public statements and are discussing this topic at every opportunity. USDA's website at www.USDA.gov includes access to a series of linkages which contain information about the actions we are taking to keep America's food and agriculture safe. We look forward to a strong and cooperative relationship with this Committee and other Committees in the Congress as we move ahead. I would be glad to respond to your questions or to provide any additional information for the record that you may require.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to talk with you today about this most important issue.

Statement of Institute of Food Technologists

Anthrax, the deadly disease currently at the forefront of American consciousness, is only one of dozens—realistically hundreds—of biological diseases, chemical toxicants and physically debilitating attacks that boast the potential of disabling our Nation's economy and threatening the collective health of its citizens. Each could have crippling and devastating effects if intentionally introduced into the U.S. food supply.

For this reason, the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) has established a cadre of highly qualified professionals with renowned expertise in food microbiology, chemistry, engineering, packaging, toxicology, food product manufacture and quality assurance, food service and retail operations, food distribution and delivery systems, crisis management, and risk communication to lead and direct IFT activities on topics directly relating to food bioterrorism. As a non-profit society with 28,000 individual members working in food science, technology, and related professions in industry, academia, and government, IFT brings sound science to the public discussion of food issues. IFT does so by drawing on the breadth of expertise comprised within its vast membership base.

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IFT has a proven record of assembling panels of experts to evaluate and assess prescribed issues in food safety and nutrition and delivering comprehensive reports and advice on a timely basis. IFT respectfully requests that this document be entered as part of the record of the full committee public hearing on November 15, 2001 to review USDA Biosecurity Programs and Authorities. We are eager for the House Agriculture Committee to be aware of the efforts of the scientific community to contribute to protections against bioterrorist activities, especially as they might be directed toward the U.S. food supply.

IFT extends its nationally recognized expertise to provide services that directly assist in risk characterization, the pursuit of objective risk assessment, and risk communication. Furthermore, IFT offers its assistance in identifying the potential magnitude of intentional adverse events, should any occur, and the traceability required to define raw materials and identify contamination sources. Additionally, to deter potential catastrophic attacks and minimize their impact if they occur, IFT offers: food safety education, critical to reducing the risk of foodborne illness whether linked with normal, unintentional, or intentional contamination; human health hazard assessments, paramount to reducing the risks to our populace; and, development of effective food security assurance programs, critically important throughout the food system.

IFT's cadre of experts are in the unique position to provide comprehensive assessments on microbiological, chemical, and physical hazards that could detrimentally affect the safety of our supply. Furthermore, IFT's group of experts can provide valuable insight to not only prevent, but effectively control contamination of the food supply, whether introduced during food product manufacture, distribution, retail, or preparation in foodservice or the home.

In summation, the Institute of Food Technologists stands ready to work in conjunction with—and in advisement to—Federal safety and security agencies, national and international food manufacturers, and national mass communications organizations to provide insight, expertise, and advisement on the myriad of food security challenges confronting the future health and well-

being of our great Nation and its citizens.

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Animal Agriculture Coalition

The undersigned Animal Agriculture Coalition and the National Assembly of Chief Livestock Officials want to convey our joint support for S. 1482, the Animal Health Protection Act, a bill to consolidate and revise statutes relating to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's authority to deal with animal health issues. We urge you to become a cosponsor of the legislation and support its passage as soon as possible. Over the last year, the animal agriculture industries have worked together with the State animal health officials to reach consensus on a bill that will work and protect our industries.

Current authority for animal health is scattered throughout several USDA statutes, some dating back to the 1880s. Current statutory authorities could complicate and delay the USDA response to a sudden animal health emergency. A new statute is needed to fill gaps in existing laws, clarify the areas of uncertainty, standardize USDA's responsibility and authority and enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's ability to carry out the mission of the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service. This would allow APHIS to deal expeditiously with serious animal disease outbreaks that may threaten animal health and the economic viability of the \$107 billion U.S. animal agriculture industry.

We ask for your help by passing the bill this session. It is vital that Congress clarifies the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to deal with livestock diseases and protect U.S. animal agriculture before there is the introduction of a devastating animal disease. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, American Feed Industry Association, National Chicken Council, American Horse Council, North American Elk Breeders Association, American Meat Institute National, Assembly of Chief Livestock Officials, American Sheep Industry Association, National Producers Federation, American Society of Animal Science, National Pork Producers Council, American Veterinary Medical Association, National Renderers Association, Animal Health Institute, National Turkey Federation, Federation of Animal Science Societies, United Egg Producers, Livestock Marketing Association, U.S. Animal Health Association, National Aquaculture Association.

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