



## Legislative Overview

Dr. Brian Hoefs | State Veterinarian

# Board members



## Board Members

Erica Sawatzke | Board President, Poultry Producer, Kensington

Peggy Anne Hawkins, DVM | Board Vice President, Veterinarian, Northfield

Jessica Koppien-Fox, DVM | Veterinarian, Marshall

Alex Stade | Cattle Producer, Prior Lake

Steve Neil | Livestock Producer, Northfield

Brandon Schafer | Livestock Producer, Goodhue

Abigail Maynard, DVM | Veterinarian Specializing in Companion Animals, St. Paul Park

# Emergency priorities

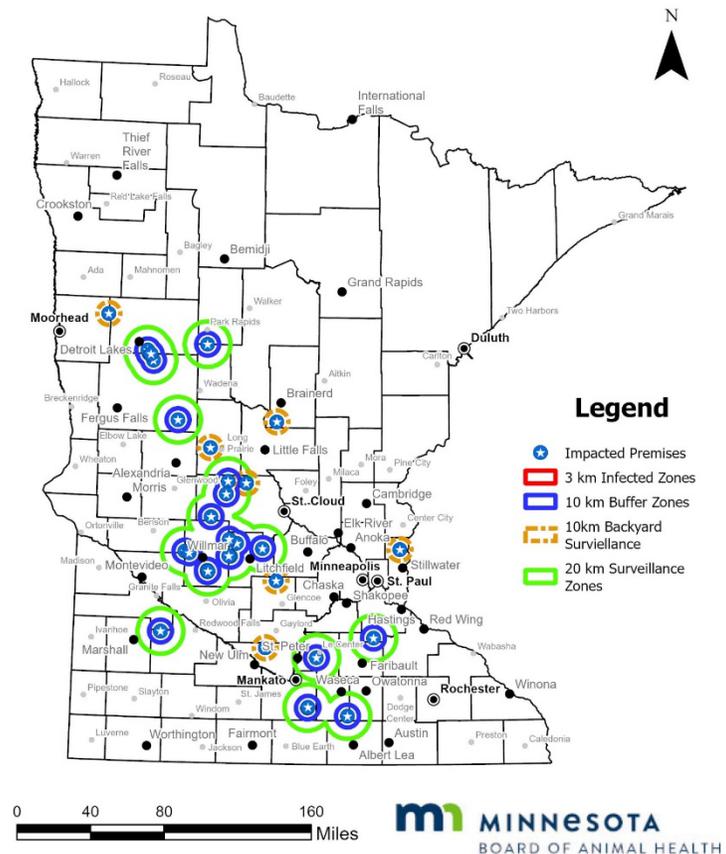
- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
- Avian Metapneumovirus
- New World Screwworm
- Equine Viruses
  - WNV
  - EHV-1
- Companion Animal Diseases
  - Tularemia
  - Brucellosis
  - Rabies



# Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

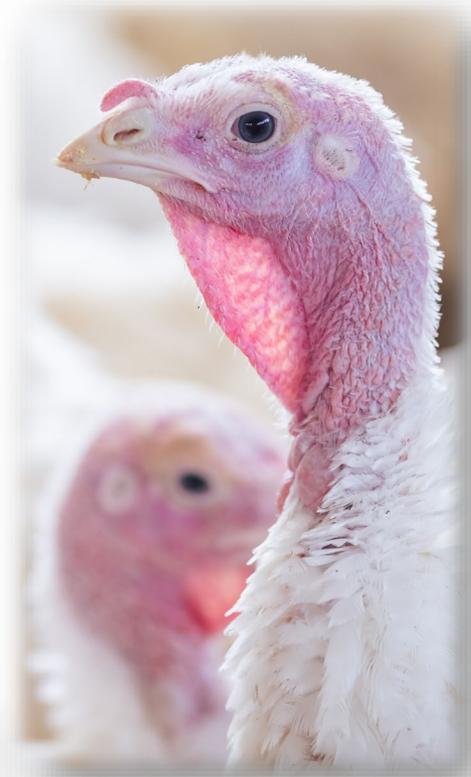
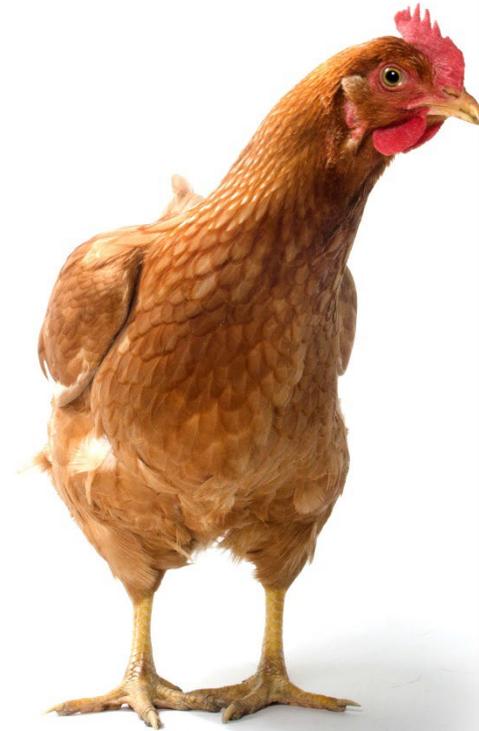
- Current picture (January 2025 to February 2026)
- 35 HPAI cases
  - 27 commercial premises
  - 8 backyard premises
- Genomic sequences show current poultry infections tied to wild birds
  - Transmission routes still being studied
- D1.1 subtype in majority
  - Current infections highlight distinct variants
  - No spillover among dairy and poultry populations

Avian Influenza in Minnesota 1/1/2025-2/4/2026



# Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

- Still detecting the virus in Minnesota flocks
- Surveillance and suspect testing
  - Supported with federal funds
- “Spring wave” usually increased cases
- Partnering to understand and stop spread
  - Industry
  - Academia



# Response fatigue

- March 26, 2026: four consecutive years responding to HPAI
- Deeply personal for veterinarians dedicated to caring for animals
- Is HPAI endemic in U.S.?
- Are vaccines viable?
- Follow the plan and evaluate the options



# H5N1 in livestock

- Most recent national detection = Wisconsin dairy in December 2025
- Most recent Minnesota case = March 2025
- MDA bulk tank sampling
- Minnesota cases:
  - 2024 = 10
  - 2025 = 1
  - 2026 = 0 YTD



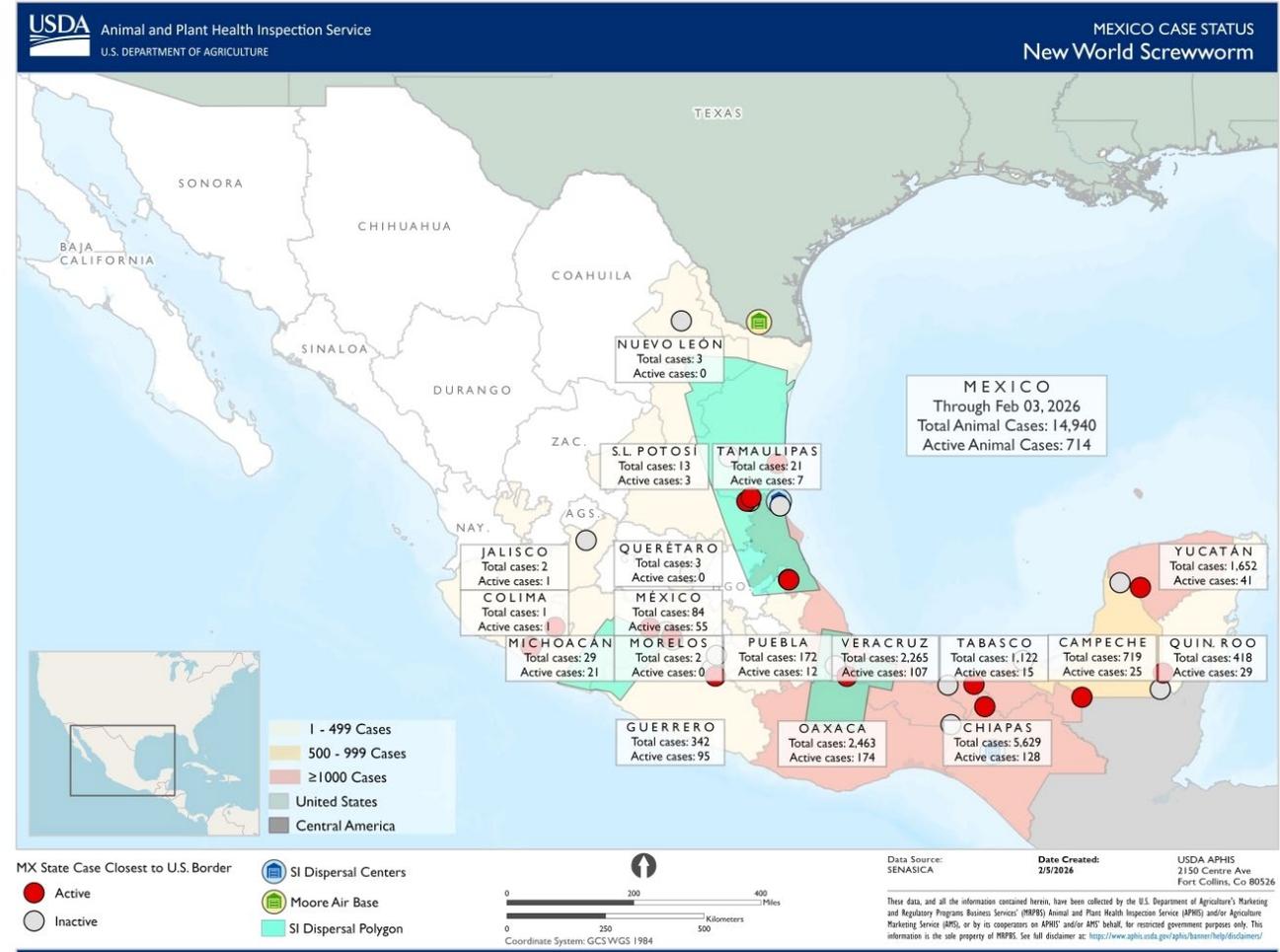
# Avian Metapneumovirus (aMPV)

- aMPV affects poultry
  - Causes respiratory infections
  - Reproductive disorders
  - Weaken birds' immune systems leaving them more susceptible to other bacterial or viral infections
- Coinfections lead to significant mortality and production losses
- aMPV testing is vital because of HPAI, which has similar presentation of mortality and clinical signs



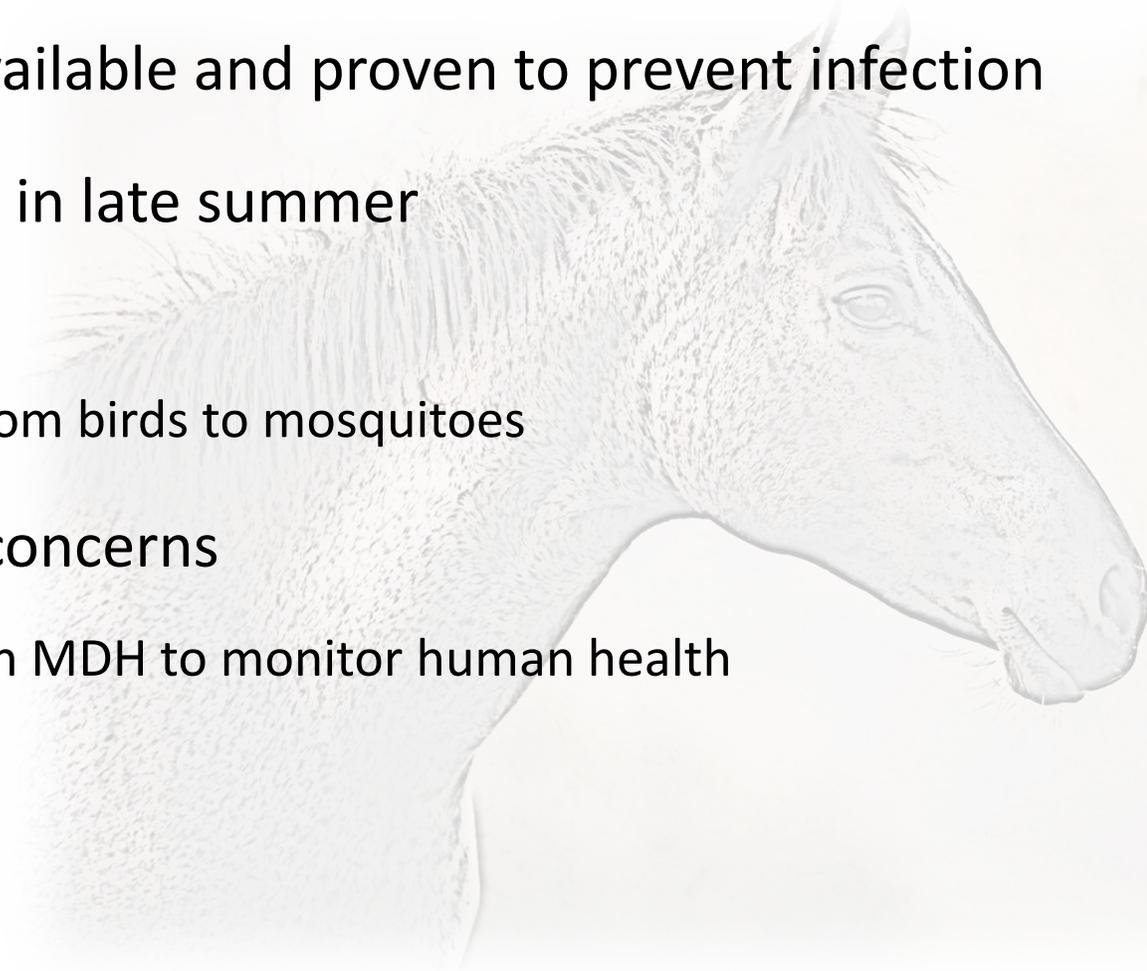
# New World Screwworm

- Pet travel is high-risk
- Download the Board's "No-Fly-Zone" poster for producers



# West Nile Virus

- Vaccines widely available and proven to prevent infection
- Typically see cases in late summer
  - 9 cases in 2025
  - Virus circulates from birds to mosquitoes
- Human exposure concerns
  - Collaboration with MDH to monitor human health



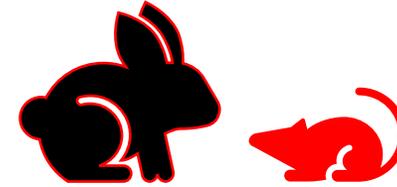
# Equine Herpesvirus Myeloencephalopathy

- Texas and Oklahoma EHM outbreak connected to a national rodeo event
  - November 2025
  - 26 exposed horses traced to Minnesota
  - All Minnesota traces remained healthy, and no EHM detected
- Minnesota detects and responds to a small number of EHM cases annually
  - 3 confirmed EHM cases in 2025
  - Exposed horses quarantined and monitored

# Zoonotic Companion Animal Diseases

- Companion animals, and humans, at risk from diseases

- 15,219 dogs imported last year

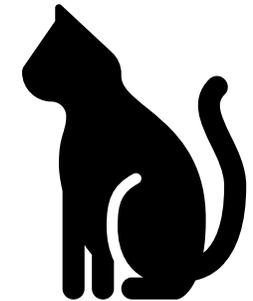


- Brucellosis is lifelong and dogs must either be quarantined or euthanized

- Brucellosis is primarily a threat from imported dogs

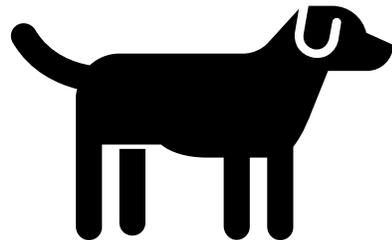
- Tularemia primarily impacts cats and pet rabbits

- Record 33 feline cases in 2025



- 36 Positive Rabies cases investigated in 2025

- 32 bats
- 2 skunks
- 2 cats



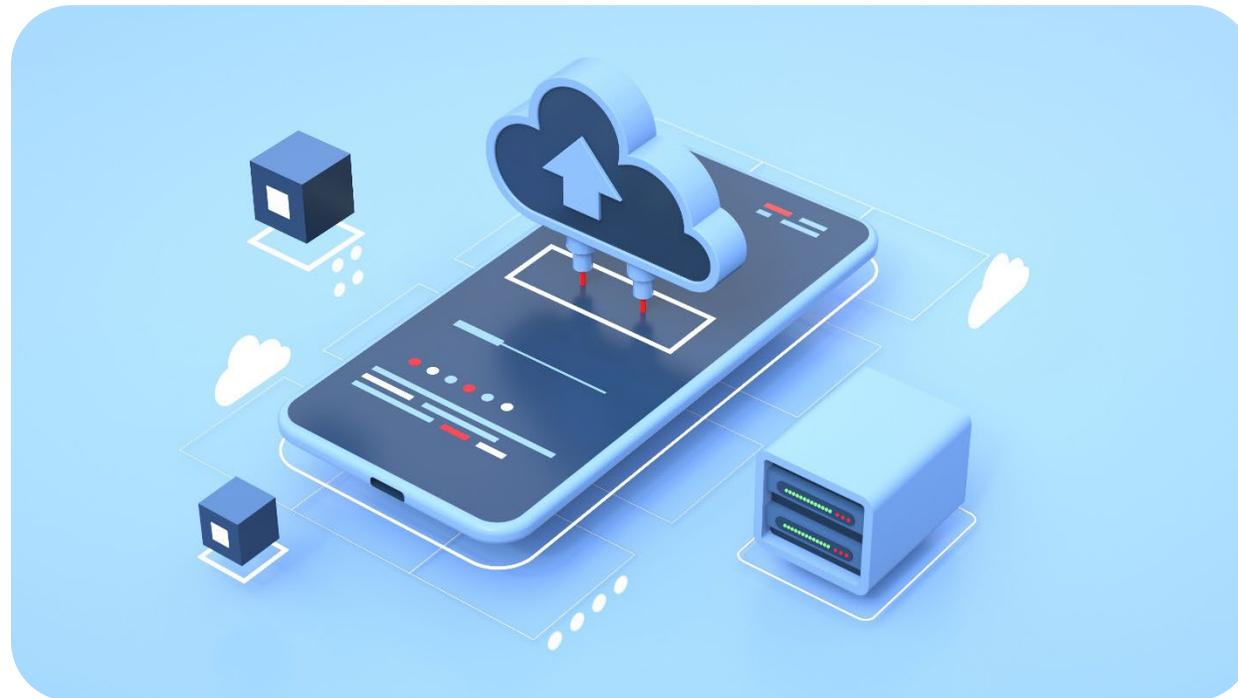
# Non-emergency priorities

- African Swine Fever
  - Squeal on Pigs website
- Foot and Mouth Disease
  - Vaccine distribution exercise
- Kennels
  - Regulating kennels with limited scope of authority
- Non-white tail deer farmed cervidae
  - Fencing
  - CWD research



# Going electronic

- Electronic health certificates (eCVI) requirements
- Radio Frequency ID (RFID) tag requirements



# Holding our bearings

- Nearly 1/3 of Board funding comes from federal funds
  - Federal funding is not guaranteed each fiscal year and was frozen in January
- All federal funds are reimbursements
  - The Board receives funds after it conducts work
- No state involvement in federal indemnity funds
  - Poultry producers paid directly by the federal government
- The Board has an apolitical mission to protect animal health in Minnesota



# Thank You!

**Dr. Brian Hoefs**

State Veterinarian and Executive Director