

Advancing Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Road Map for Arkansas

A Three-Year Plan

Fiscal Years: 2023-2025

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#1 NATURAL RESOURCES DRIVE

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Animal Agriculture is the leading component of Arkansas' economy. The Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission's (ALPD) key function is to prevent disease introduction and be prepared to respond to disease challenges when it occurs. Animal identification is pivotal in disease detection, control, and eradication. Those data points allow rapid traceability that can protect economies and allow rapid recovery. To respond quickly, animal health officials need to know which animals are involved, where they are located, and what other animals might have been exposed. The sooner reliable data is available, impacted animals can be located, appropriate response measures can be taken, and disease spread can be halted.

Historically, ALPD data has been spread across several platforms with cumbersome search capabilities. Progress has been by changing databases and acquiring management software that will serve as a centralizing platform. The largest success was moving our livestock market data from a front-line Excel form into a web-based searchable form. That format is compatible with "up-stream" state and federal data warehouses.

The ability to find infected and exposed livestock in a rapid manner will:

- Increase our state's disease response capabilities;
- Limit the spread of animal diseases;
- Minimize animal losses and economic impact on the agriculture industry;
- Protect producers' livelihoods;
- Provide sustained market access and confidence for our trading partners;
- Protect or reduce public exposure to zoonotic diseases; and
- Improve animal welfare by reducing morbidity and mortality events.

Our goal is to support USDA's interstate traceability program objectives that promote the use of an official, electronic identification standard that interfaces with specific disease eradication programs, interstate commerce, breed registries, or age and source verification programs. Moving away from paper towards electronic reporting gains efficiencies in our ability to trace animals, reduce transcription errors and speed commerce.

History of ADT in Arkansas

Software systems have been researched for several years. Several demonstrations were considered. The commercial data management system, EzyVet was purchased March 2023. It supports USAHA standards through API compatibilities which our IT department is familiar with.

Compiled data in Table 1 below, shows trends away from paper to digital data and more rapid completion times.

Table 1 AR Traceability Performance Measures

Year	# of TPM	# Terminated	Entirely Paper	Multiple Methods	Combination Paper and IT Database	Entirely IT/database	Average of Actual Hours Expended
2017	28	0	2	1	10	15	1.5
2018	31	0	0	5	0	26	1.38
2019	28	0	0	1	1	26	1.23
2020	8	0	0	3	1	4	0.84
2021	8	0	0	0	1	7	1.13
2022	8	0	0	0	1	7	0.47

Critical elements of this road map include Traceability Performance Measures, distribution and administration of National Uniform Eartag System (NUES) tags, Radio Frequency Identification Devices (RFID) and other official identification (ID) devices, data sharing, outreach, monitoring and reporting of interstate movement activity, and traceability implementation priorities. Successful implementation of this plan should result in a rapid response to program diseases, facilitate continuity of business for affected commodities, Arkansas and other state’s producers in the event of a disease outbreak, and enhanced compliance with federal and state ADT rules. ALPD yearly goals are stated in Section 4.2 below.

II. CURRENT TRACEABILITY SITUATION

2.1 Who are we?

This roadmap is prepared and is to be implemented by ALPD, the animal disease control and animal emergency response agency for Arkansas. Traceability data is often used for disease traces, lost or stolen animal inquiries and other investigations as needed. ALPD personnel critical to the success of ADT include the Director, the State Veterinarian, the Field Services Veterinarian, NPIP Administrator, the ADT Program Coordinator, and the ADT Assistant Program Coordinator. ALPD has a commission that consists of seven public members appointed by the Governor that advise agency personnel. ALPD maintains an Animal Disease Traceability Working Group composed of ALPD, USDA APHIS VS, Livestock Market, and producer representatives to provide input and feedback on the implementation of ADT. The current working group includes the following members who will meet twice a year via Teams:

John G. Nilz, DVM	State Veterinarian
Richard F. Brown, DVM	AR Field Services Veterinarian
Blake Walters	AR ADT Program Coordinator
Cindy Taylor	AR ADT Assistant Coordinator
Patrick Fisk	Director, ADA-ALPD
Linda J. Buss, DVM	USDA APHIS VS AVIC
Cody Burcham	Arkansas Cattlemen's Association Coordinator
Jerry Masters	Arkansas Swine Producers
Vacant	Univ. of AR Cooperative Extension Veterinarian
Joe Barbour	Livestock Marketing Association
Darrell Ford	Hope Livestock Market
Kevin Simmons	NPIP Coordinator - Arkansas ADA-ALPD

2.2 Where are we now?

Animal disease traceability is a critical component of the overall animal health program. ALPD employees, Livestock Inspectors, place and record USDA official ID a at livestock markets to facilitate compliance with the USDA ADT rule. The data is captured via a newly create web-based form and is stored on the ALPD server. All inspectors have laptops and RFID readers. This transition along with continuing to offer and encourage on-farm Brucellosis vaccination has facilitated identification of many breeding cattle likely to remain in the state. Current focus is on electronic identification placement in replacement stock presented at all 34 AR markets.

ALPD strives to continue enhancing our capabilities to electronically record and transmit ADT data in the field. Devices have been updated and data generated is being formatted to uploading into CoreOne/SCS. A cloud based form has been created with an Excel format compatible with CoreOne/SCS.

Two dedicated administrative staff members can complete national performance traces. One of them is available 24-7 in the event of a true emergency response. They practice completing the traces without calling associated states that probably will not be available after hours. They open the task, research appropriate databases and upload answers well within the national goal. Our staff strives for accuracy and therefore has yielded some minutes in the race to trace. Moving forward they will focus on speed and measure accuracy to verify that it remains constant.

All market staff have Microsoft capable laptops and RFID readers. Field use is increasing in all markets. The supplemental grant is allowing distribution of RFID readers to market veterinarians, county agents and land grant agriculture colleges.

ALPD administrative staff dedicated to ADT has increased to three full time positions as of April 2021.

A key component in implementation of ADT is expanding the traceability technology infrastructure to support ADT, which includes the following:

- Our newly purchased, EzyVet practice management software will pull all data into one platform. This software will come online March 2023. Our IT department has developed and launched a component that will seamlessly integrate with this Cloud Based environment. All digitized forms will be linked into workflow channels. All animal identification will be entered into EzyVet. Our livestock market form will be the largest data capture and serve as the data backbone. All ASH herds and OCV number will be housed here as well. The new software has a CVI component which ALPD will assess and employ or upload an in-house design.

- CoreOne/SCS – used as a database for bovine and swine disease monitoring programs and program disease work (TB, Brucellosis, etc.). This includes uploading all VS Form 4-54 (paper or electronic), VS Form 4-26, and VS Form 4-33 data into CoreOne/SCS. We are nearing goals of sharing electronic CVI data and data generated by the ALPD CVI Imaging System with CoreOne/SCS. TraceFirst programs have assisted in this effort.
- ALPD Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) Imaging System (Papervision) – incoming and outgoing CVIs are scanned and logged into an imaging system housed at ALPD. The previous limitations on searchability have improved to the ability to locate and transmit within minutes. CVIs enter through electronic and paper formats. Global Vet Link provided a search engine using the following data points: certificate type, billing date, animal ID, carrier, certificate number, premised ID, purpose of movement, owner demographics, origin, and species and type. Paper CVIs are scanned into Paper Vision Client which gives search functionality. Their Data Capture feature uses the following data points: certificated number, consignor and receiver demographics, veterinarian, animal number, species, animal ID.
- USDA APHIS VS animal disease traceability information systems
 - Standardized Premises Identification System (SPIS)
 - Animal Identification Number Management System (AIMS)
 - StateVet (Trace First)
 - CoreOne
 - Increasing capabilities in EMRS, NAHMS, NAHRS.

2.3 Strengths and Weaknesses

The primary strength for ADT is approximately 20 ~~thirty~~ ALPD field livestock inspectors (LSI). LSIs are at livestock markets on sale days identifying animals and recording established identification devices. An added attribute is the working relationship between USDA APHIS VS and ALPD field personnel and administrative cooperation. The Arkansas Survey Herd program (swine registration) and NPIP Live Bird Market Surveillance (LBMS) provide a framework for monitoring those animal populations at risk.

ALPD has a -dedicated IT staff. Recently added personal have engaged our division and developed an online form based on needs. They are working on API functions to communicate with the platform. The Livestock Market piece was tested and was launched March 2023. Work continues to establish cross training, reliability and timeliness of electronic capture and transmission of ADT data. Further development of compatible IT applications and equipment will enhance efficient data entry and foster ADT transparency and fuller access. A NPIP “streamlining” project is in development at the time of writing this document.

2.4 Opportunities and Threats

Cow-calf beef and poultry production are leading animal agriculture commodities in Arkansas. Arkansas ranks in the Top 20 for cattle production and in the Top Five in most categories of poultry production (per NASS statistics). Approximately 1 million feeder pigs are produced annually. Our feral hog population is a constant concern. An animal disease event in these groups could have a significant impact on the state's economy. ALPD is tasked as the lead agency in responding and mitigating impact of animal diseases and natural disasters that would affect animal agriculture. An efficient ADT program is essential to timely response and a critical element in fulfilling this responsibility. Successful implementation of this plan will potentially save thousands of animals and mitigate the overall economic impact that disease threats have on producers and the state.

2.5 Inventory of existing infrastructure and suitability assessment

Personnel:

ALPD has experienced and knowledgeable employees on staff. We currently (2023) have a total of twenty inspectors dispersed throughout the state for routine surveillance tasks and on-demand mediation efforts. The state is currently divided into two regions; each region has an assigned supervisor responsible for management of personnel and activities within that respective region. The field supervisors report to the Agri Division Manager/ADT Program Coordinator stationed in Little Rock. The primary functions of field staff include maintaining a presence at each federally approved livestock market on sale day, identifying and recording ADT data for cattle and other species presented for sale at the market, assisting any available market veterinarian in obtaining information for issuance of ICVIs, vaccination of replacement heifers for Brucellosis, and ensuring compliance with other applicable state regulations. ALPD's current field staffing is sufficient in regard to the implementation of ADT in Arkansas.

A Field Services Veterinarian (FSV) was added to the team in 2021. A prime directive is market compliance based on ALPD Rule - ARKANSAS REGULATIONS FOR CONCENTRATION POINTS OF CATTLE (AUCTION MARKETS, FARM SALES, PRIVATE SALES, ETC.) INVOLVING INFECTIOUS, CONTAGIOUS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES and USDA VS ADT Monitoring and Compliance v. 2.7. The FSV will routinely visit on market per week and others as needed. The position reports to the State Veterinarian.

We are training several new inspectors due to the retirement of several of the most experienced employees.

The State Veterinarian and Agri Division Manager/ADT Program Coordinator play critical roles in implementation of the Arkansas ADT Program by coordinating ALPD staff and correlating with USDA APHIS VS. We have an

administrative staff of three full time employees who record, scan, and file ICVIs, test charts, EIA test charts, and market reports in addition to other duties. A half-time position supports PIN assignments, traceback exercise expertise, and the various disease reporting functions for state and federal programs. In addition, two full-time staffers support the NPIP program exclusively.

The ADT data (market charts, test charts, ICVIs, etc.) have primarily been received in hardcopy format (as of 2019). We are 100% for all market reports being electronically transferred; market charts and test charts are routinely entered into CoreOne/SCS. The ICVIs are scanned and logged into an imaging system (Papervision) to make those documents electronically searchable via multiple data entry points. Electronic CVI submission is increasing. The new software platform includes an eCVI function. The goal is to have that deployed within 2023.

Capabilities:

The current ALPD field staff is adequate in meeting current demands of ADT. The administrative staffing has recently risen to meet current data entry requirements. As we fully transition to electronic data formats with immediate entry into the respective databases, any perceived need for additional personnel should dissipate.

Data processing/ Storage:

ALPD's server is a Windows 2008R2 server with dual six-core Intel Xeon processor at 3.47GHz with 128GB of ram, and 5 TB of storage. Data is captured in the field by handheld computers and then transmitted via the internet back to the server.

Suitability:

The hardware and software updates for use by ALPD personnel is proving to be more than sufficient for the purposes of ADT; newer laptops, smartphones with "hotspot" capability and improved broadband access to our servers are recent advances.

III. VISION AND MISSION CONTEXT FOR ADVANCING TRACEABILITY

3.1 Vision Statement

Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission is focused on rapid response and mediation leading to eradication of animal disease challenges; this encompasses the inspection of livestock and poultry in the state, as well as surveillance of areas of livestock and poultry concentration. A key component in mitigating the impact of animal disease is the ability to rapidly identify and trace animals through their various touchpoints. ALPD embraces the task and strives to implement functional and efficient efforts for the ADT program and progress.

3.2 Mission Statement

To safeguard human and animal health, assure food safety and quality, and promote Arkansas livestock and poultry industries for the benefit of our citizens.

Goals:

1. Protect human and animal health from communicable animal diseases.
2. Protect humans and animals from environmental and toxicological threats.
3. Protect consumers by ensuring food safety and quality.
4. Promote and enhance marketability of livestock, poultry, and their products both nationally and internationally.

IV. TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Strategic goal(s)

ALPD is operating a state-wide infrastructure for ADT that proves to be compatible with the USDA standards established in the Traceability Rule. A primary objective is to manage a system that identifies animals accurately, enables rapid traceability of animals, and is fully functional in the event of an animal disease outbreak. The implementation of such a system is to enhance the effectiveness of animal disease response in Arkansas and mitigate the negative impacts of disease on industry producers. ALPD is working to build an infrastructure that will interact with other all needed entities in accordance with standards.

4.2 Programmatic goals (objectives)

- FY 2023 – Implement new software platform
Dramatically increase use of e-CVIs by Veterinarians.
Continue outreach and education efforts. Includes a class set of 6 wands for use in land grant agriculture colleges.
Distribute wands to all market veterinarians.
Determine Part 86 implications after release from public comment period.
RFID tags were featured in Ag. Dept. Magazine.
- FY 2024 – Increase use of eCVIs by Veterinarians to 100%.
Facilitate utilization of RFID tags and the use of EMRS & MIMS.
ALL VS 4-54 submitted electronically from livestock markets.
- FY 2025 – Maintain goal of 100% of CVIs submitted in electronic format.
Increase utilization of RFID at markets and distribution to Producers.
Transition to “all electronic” recording and ADT data collected.

4.3 ADT Trace Performance Measures (TPMs)

ALPD will continue to perform trace exercises in coordination with USDA APHIS VS staff to assess capabilities in Trace Performance Measures as below.

TPM	SUMMARY	GOAL
1. Determines the State/Tribe in which the animal was officially identified and notifies that State/Tribe of the reference animal's official ID number	State/Tribe that received the reference animal	95% notification within 1 business day
2. Confirms that it has documentation that an official ID number was issued within its jurisdiction and that it has contact information for the person who received that number.	State/Tribe where the reference animal was officially identified.	<i>Initial-</i> 75% within 5 business days <i>Future-</i> 95% within 2 business days
3. Determines the State or Tribe from which the animal was moved interstate into its jurisdiction and notifies that State or Tribe of the reference animal's official ID number	State/Tribe that received a reference animal	<i>Initial-</i> 95% within 7 business days <i>Future-</i> 95% within 3 business days
4. Determine the address or location from which the reference animal was shipped	State/Tribe that receives notification that a reference animal moved interstate from its jurisdiction (may be the same State/Tribe in #2)	<i>Initial-</i> 75% within 5 business days <i>Future-</i> 95% within 2 business days

4.4 Data requirements

a. Standards for Official Identification:

The following is a list of standards for Official Identification by species:

Bovine: Official ear tags (NUES) or Tattoos when accompanied by the breed registration certificate.

Ovine/Caprine: Official ear tags (i.e. Flock, Scrapie or AIN tags) or registration tattoos accompanied by the registration certificate.

Equine: Description sufficient to identify the animal, Electronic Identification (ISO 11784/11785 only after 03/11/2014, Digital photographs sufficient to identify the animal.

Swine: Official ear tags (NUES, ASH Premises tags) with unique herd management number, or tattoos (as allowed by the ADT rule).

Poultry: NPIP approved devices or methods.

b. Official ID Distribution and Record Keeping:

Official ID devices are currently distributed by ALPD to Accredited Veterinarians and LSIs. ID devices are assigned by number; distribution of official IDs by ALPD is maintained via Excel spreadsheet and forwarded to USDA APHIS VS AIC for entry into AIMS. As records of official ID application are received, these records are processed and entered into CoreOne/SCS.

The significance of producer demand will be evaluated to determine how best to move forward with the distribution of official IDs to producers. RFID is favored going forward; ALPD will promote use of electronically recordable identification devices.

Approved forms for interstate movement: ICVI, VS 9-3 NPIP, NPIP 90 Day Certificate, NPIP flock certifications, VS 1-27, e-ICVI.

c. Sharing data with other states:

All ICVIs issued within Arkansas will be forwarded to the receiving state electronically unless otherwise requested by the respective state. Data that is entered into the Arkansas database will be retrieved and provided to other entities and the USDA **upon request**. Current IT structure does not allow outside access to Arkansas databases.

4.5 Information technology plan

ALPD has provided Microsoft capable laptops to all LSIs.

The attainment of this goal enhanced the ability to enter ADT data into the respective databases. ALPD's IT department is working to maintain a sound and secure system to support ADT.

4.6 Resource requirements

ALPD has in place a continuity of operation plan. It worked well in our 2022 HPAI response. Our state team unified with VS in an Incident Management Team. We are scheduling training for a Case Manager, Site Manager, and Financial Reporting Officer that will expand state level response.

4.7 Organizational needs

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture (ADA) and ALPD is in the process of cross-training available administrative personnel to ensure timely data entry.

4.7.1 Executive support

ALPD management executives have been educated and are cognizant of the critical nature of ADT regarding necessary compliance with rules and regulations (as well as need for effective response to animal disease challenges). We will continue our agency efforts for increasing ADT capabilities and efficiencies in Arkansas.

4.7.2 Coordination and oversight procedures

ALPD has well established statutory authority for the suppression and eradication of animal diseases in the state of Arkansas. Functional implementation of ADT is foremost in the toolbox for use in animal disease response. ALPD makes every effort to outreach and coordinate with commodity producer groups and allied governmental agencies in regard to implementation and oversight use of ADT

4.7.3 Policy

ALPD policy supports the general standards and traceability goals. Our strongest allies are our Cat II accredited veterinarians throughout the state. It is easy to encourage them to utilize this new form of individual identification. They are amenable with our tag management system. Many chose for us to manage the tags and they send in regular reports of distributions. Our new software will allow them to order tags online thereby creating a built in tracking method.

Policy changes will be determined after 9CFR part 86 is officially released in toto from public comment.

4.7.4 Staffing

To date, administrative staff have accomplished necessary data processing to help address any potential negative impact on our ADT functionality. The transition to ALL electronic records will allow us to gain efficiencies in data entry and greater value to the ADT system

4.7.5 Budget requirements

Budgets for current staff and resources are a combination of federal (ADT Cooperative Agreement Grant) and state (General Revenue) funds. Decreases in either of these funding sources have significant impact on ADT system operations.

4.7.6 Outreach (required to be addressed within the Road Map)

ADT success will rely on ALPD efforts in continuance of current education and outreach to stakeholders and commodity groups in Arkansas. Education and outreach will consist of the following at a minimum.

4.7.6.1 Accredited veterinarians

Accredited veterinarians are vital public interface link for the ADT program:

- ICVIs correct and processed for achievement of Traceability Performance Standards.
- ALPD will inform veterinarians of needed ADT information via the ALPD website, Arkansas State Veterinarian's Quarterly Update, Arkansas Veterinary Medical Association (ARVMA) meetings and newsletters, ARVMA annual convention, and ADA newsletter distribution lists.
- Continuing education is offered once annually regarding traceability to some degree at the ARVMA annual convention. ALPD and USDA APHIS VS have one full morning and afternoon dedicated to regulatory topics.
- Enhance use of e-CVIs and MIMS; ALPD in coordination with USDA APHIS VS will emphasize use and provide instruction to veterinarians on options for transmitting data electronically.
- meetings are planned to cover the basics and focus on FADs such as ASF and FMD. This will increase our preparedness by reinforcing our front line surveillance squad- Cat II accredited DVMs.
- Certified Swine Sample Collector Training is planned. Our state's initial authorization has been completed.
- Will recruit trainers for FMD vaccination.

4.7.6.2 Slaughter plants

Our large processing plants are for poultry. These tend to be single sourced. The state has gained FSIS meat inspection clearance. Inspectors and a veterinarian are in training. As that scope of regulation develops, disease control will be addressed through pamphlets and placards. The large poultry processor have premovement testing and farm of origin tracing. Our inspection

system will be staffed with ALPD employees with ready access to our database.

4.7.6.3 Industry as a whole

The ADT advisory group will provide recommendations for outreach and education to the industry. Coordination with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, press releases, webpages, ALPD e-mails, industry association meetings, producer group meetings, and social media sources are some methods to consider where available. The primary focus of this effort will be the bovine, and to a lesser extent the small ruminant industries.

4.7.6.4 Livestock Markets

An ALPD Livestock Inspector Manual is being developed. A key goal is reaching market regulatory consistency. Upon completion, anticipated December 21, 2023, mailings and meeting will be launched. The first mailing will include an ALPD letter of explanation and USDA's ADT Monitoring and Compliance Overview v. 2.7. This document, introduced at the 2022 Livestock Market Association's annual meeting was perceived well.

4.8 Monitoring and reporting interstate movement activity

Movement of animals into and out of the state is monitored and reported on a regular basis via weekly activity summaries. Accomplishment is via scanning and tracking of ICVI's (paper and electronic) received by a dedicated ALPD staff member. That person also publishes a monthly summary to division management staff.

V. ADVANCING TRACEABILITY

5.1 Ranking of priorities for advancement

- Enhancement of IT infrastructure.
 1. IT staff engagement and development
 2. Training of all staff on the new software
- Increase use of electronic forms/data
 1. e-CVI
 2. VS 4-54
 3. OCV charts
- Timely data entry into appropriate data storage systems
 1. CoreOne/SCS
 2. ALPD Imaging System (Paper Vision)
 3. e-ICVI
 4. ICVI spreadsheet systems
- Education and Outreach
 1. Accredited Veterinarians
 2. Livestock Markets
 3. Producer Groups
- Improve and maintain ID eartag distribution record keeping system
- Utilize any potential for sharing e-data across multiple platforms.
- Develop and enable administrative staff for ease of entry of data into the CVI Papervision system, AIMS, EMRS and CoreOne/SCS.

5.2 Implementation of objectives

Maintain adequate funding and resources (personnel, read equipment) critical to the fulfillment of the ADT goals and objectives.

Summary below - annualized implementation of objectives:

FY 2023 -

1. Coordinate with USDA APHIS VS and CoreOne/SCS experts in regards to the feasibility of integrating the databases currently in use (i.e. CoreOne/SCS and ALPD Imaging System).
2. Increase education and outreach efforts with veterinarians in the use of e-ICVIs.
3. Update/expand use of electronic devices in use at Livestock Markets.

FY 2024 -

1. Continue education outreach efforts with all accredited veterinarians in regards to the use of eICVIs.
2. Advocate for RFID usage in target livestock markets.
3. Promote the use of RFID tags and MIMs at markets and private veterinarians and producers.
4. Convert VS 4-54's and vaccination charts filled by ALPD inspectors into e-format.

FY 2025-

1. Continue to facilitate the use of eCVIs by Arkansas veterinarians.
2. Continue RFID and MIMS education and outreach with veterinarians and producers.
3. Offer RFIDs directly to Arkansas producers.
4. Complete electronic recording and transmission of ADT data collected by ALPD personnel.