FOOD & AG HIGHLIGHTS

Animal Health and Food Safety Services Division

"Protecting Public Health and Animal Agriculture"

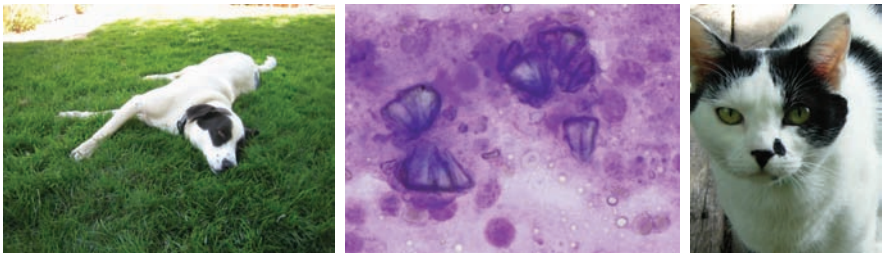
California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System (CAHFS)

The CAHFS is comprised of five laboratories strategically located in the heart of California's farming and ranching country: Davis, Turlock, Fresno, Tulare and San Bernardino. The diagnostic laboratory system provides state-of-the-art capabilities for surveillance and diagnosis of food-borne pathogens and diseases of livestock and poultry, including more than 60 exotic diseases currently not found in the U.S., many of which have public health significance. The early detection and accurate reporting of these diseases is essential in safeguarding public health, and protecting the economy of California from these catastrophic diseases.

Liquid Chromatograph Tandem Mass Spectrometer purchased with Homeland Security grant funds

Melamine Contamination

CAHFS played a critical role in the identification of melamine in pet food in 2007, collaborating with the FDA to develop a method for analyzing suspect food samples. Additionally, CAHFS took its expertise a step further by developing a method to test meat from hogs that had consumed melamine-contaminated feed. The rapid response to this incident by CAHFS confirmed the meat was free of melamine and alleviated consumer fears by confirming that the human food supply was not tainted. In 2008, based on demonstrated competence and rapid test capability, the lab performed testing of milk-based infant formulas and other food products identified by FDA as possible risks to human health.



Pet food from China was contaminated with melamine, forming crystals in kidneys of dogs and cats

Cooperative Efforts at the United States / Mexico Border

San Ysidro border crossing

Milk and Dairy Food Safety investigators actively participated in U. S. Customs and Border Protection's Operation Snapshot at the U.S./Mexico border. The operation conducted sampling of agricultural commodities and foods entering California in personal baggage that may represent health risks from food-borne pathogens, and are in sufficient quantities to suggest potential diversion to commercial markets. The CAHFS Laboratory used these and other samples from border crossings and found 13% of the samples contaminated with Salmonella, 4% contaminated with Listeria and one Mycobacterium bovis contamination out of the 204 cheese samples tested. This data encouraged the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's recognition of the need for control of high-risk dairy commodities entering the country. As a result, FDA has developed a pilot project to better control high-risk dairy product importation.

Sampled cheese

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