

### Duties and Responsibilities

The incumbent serves as an Animal Health Technician (AHT) responsible for technical and specialized work involved in a variety of animal health programs within an assigned geographical area. Typical assignments may include, but are not limited to, the following duties:

Assists Veterinary Medical Officers (VMO) with inspection and testing of livestock, poultry, and other avian species on ranches, farms, auctions, markets, etc., to detect animal diseases and parasites. Where State regulations, laws, or policies permit, the incumbent makes arrangements with herd and flock owners and independently draws blood samples from animals and poultry, conducts necessary serologic tests, tags, brands, appraises reactor animals, and reports findings to the Section VMO or to an Epidemiologist for evaluation of health status.

Supervises cleaning and disinfection of vehicles and premises that are contaminated by disease organisms or as a precautionary measure. Inspects premises to insure compliance with regulations and investigates reports received from farmers, county agents, and others relative to communicable diseases of livestock. As required, assists with conducting primary investigations, issuing warning notices, executing violation notices, etc.

Contacts owners of diseased or exposed animals or poultry, and inquires about first appearance of disease, clinical signs, disease progression, and death losses. Contacts nearby livestock owners whose animals might be affected by the disease and provides program information regarding preventive measures.

Inspects livestock moving in interstate commerce for visible evidence of disease and compliance with Federal and State regulations pertaining to interstate and intrastate movements. Establishes identity and classification of incoming consignments, supervises disposition of diseased animals and dipping of livestock. Prepares certificates granting approval of movements of disease-free, infected, or exposed livestock or poultry. Maintains contacts with owners or employees of livestock markets, slaughter establishments, feedlots, etc., to provide information, promote animal health programs, and insure compliance with laws, regulations, and policies.

As required, collects data for the National Animal Health Monitoring System, trains and/or provides technical supervision to lower graded technicians, and serves as a member of a Regional Emergency Animal Disease Eradication Organization task force. Represents USDA, APHIS, before producer groups, shippers, truckers, county agents, etc. Other duties may include tracing diseased livestock or animals detected with high levels of residues to herds of origin, inspecting food waste feed operations and associated animals on premises, collecting tissue, milk, or cream samples, vaccinating and identifying calves, applying back tags to various species of animals at markets, and inspecting import-export facilities for compliance with requirements.

## FACTORS:

Knowledge Required - Must possess knowledge of applicable sections of Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations, and pertinent State regulatory requirements. Must have knowledge of APHIS Directives, Veterinary Services Memorandums, and Uniform Methods and Rules pertaining to a variety of animal disease control and eradication programs. Must have knowledge of marketing practices and trade areas to facilitate trace-back to herds of origin. Must have practical knowledge of basic principles of animal science to recognize clinical signs of domestic and foreign animal diseases of concern to VS. Also, must have general knowledge of the management of domestic animals, including basic herd health standards and disease control and eradication procedures. Must have knowledge of a variety of technical procedures and methods to do serologic tests, inspect livestock for signs of disease, and identify disease vectors.

In order to carry out assigned duties, incumbent must be able to operate a motor vehicle and possess a valid State drivers license, or commercial drivers license if required.

The incumbent must possess good communication skills in order to be able to effectively deal with a wide variety of people and to complete required paperwork.

Supervisory Controls - The incumbent works independently, at a variety of field locations geographically removed from program offices. General supervision including advice on new or unusual assignments and/or administrative direction is provided by a Veterinary Medical Officer, Area Veterinarian in Charge, or Assistant AVIC. The supervisor outlines specific program requirements and periodically reviews the status of the programs for effectiveness and adherence to policy guidelines. The incumbent proceeds on own initiative and judgment within guidelines established by the supervisor. Assistance and advice on issues requiring professional medical competence is provided by the Section VMO or AVIC.

Guidelines - Guidelines include the CFR, Title 9 (various chapters); VS Memorandums; APHIS Directives; UM&Rs; State laws, regulations and policies; Meat Inspection manuals; laboratory procedure manuals; policies set by Regional Directors; Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights policies; and established guidelines that address environmental issues and the humane treatment of animals. The incumbent uses independent judgment to routinely determine which guidelines to follow or to implement and when a medical decision by a veterinarian is required. Often guidelines are general and do not provide specific procedural direction. The incumbent must determine the applicability of guidelines to particular situations and adapt when necessary. As program needs and priorities change, the incumbent proposes new and/or revised procedures and modifications. In unusual circumstances (i.e., where no guidelines are available), the incumbent suggests course of action for review and consideration by the Section VMO or AVIC.

Complexity - Assignments involve a broad range of technical/medical program functions that include a number of related and unrelated, national, regional, or local systems and procedures for disease detection, prevention, control, pertinent to animal health activities in counties and/or State(s). These functions include the proper collection and handling of various specimens, making preliminary interpretations of test results, tracing disease through review and analysis of sketchy data, interviewing people, and documenting findings. The incumbent has ongoing responsibility

for delivering program services for an assigned geographical area. He or she adjusts work methods, makes decisions, and solves routine problems independently based on knowledge of program goals and technical precedents.

Scope and Effect - The work involves using a variety of conventional technical approaches to provide information and assistance to the AVIC, VMOs, State animal health personnel, livestock market and slaughter establishment personnel, producers, farmers, et. al., on field activities pertaining to animal health and disease eradication.

The AHT's duties directly contribute to the success of animal health and disease control and eradication programs which significantly impact public health and the economics of animal industries at no less than an area-wide level.

Personal Contacts - Contacts are with Federal, State, and accredited veterinarians, other animal health technicians, State Livestock Inspectors, employees of other Federal agencies, office and laboratory personnel, contract employees, Animal Identification Coordinators, and Investigators. Contacts are also made with management and employees at livestock markets and slaughter plants, manufacturers, members of the livestock industry, livestock owners and managers, and the general public. Contacts may include persons who are uncooperative.

Purpose of Contacts - Contacts are to provide direction, give or exchange information, resolve problems, and provide services. Contacts are also to motivate, influence, and justify, and to further the Agency's mission and goals.

Physical Demands - The work may involve strenuous physical demands, including, but not limited to, restraining large animals and operating heavy equipment. The work requires standing, walking, running, bending, crouching, climbing, and lifting heavy items. The duties may also require long hours of driving a vehicle.

Work Environment - The work may require handling livestock during inclement weather and/or working in or around unpleasant conditions (e.g., blood, animal confinement units, high noise levels, dust, slippery surfaces). There may be exposure to disease conditions and agents that would require protective clothing and safeguards and enrollment in a health monitoring program.