



# INSTITUTE FOR INFECTIOUS ANIMAL DISEASES

2023

YEAR END REPORT





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As I reflect on completing my third year serving as Director of the Institute, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to our staff, sponsors, internal collaborators, and external partners for their unwavering support and collaboration in our joint endeavor to safeguard animal health and fortify our food supply chain.

IIAD remains resolute in its dedication to advancing research, crafting innovative solutions, and offering expert guidance to confront the intricate challenges posed by infectious animal diseases. Your ongoing involvement and partnership are priceless assets as we persistently strive to alleviate the repercussions of these threats on both animal welfare and public health.

We look forward to the opportunities that await us in 2024, and I anticipate great advancements through our continued partnership in the pursuit of excellence and innovation.

Warm regards,  
*Dr. Heather Simmons*

DIRECTOR'S  
STATEMENT



*“Our vision is to be a collaborative leader  
in developing knowledge-based solutions  
for animal health.”*

# INSTITUTE ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the year 2023, IIAD forged new ground within the one health space through collaboration with global and national partners implementing programs focusing on strengthening veterinary epidemiology workforce capacity, enhancing U.S. livestock foreign animal disease preparedness and biosecurity practices, and curriculum development and training in emergency management, surveillance, and risk analysis.

- \$3.7  
MILLION

**Funding Dollars Managed**  
  
Over the year 2023, IIAD managed \$3.72 million dollars in funding from sponsors for implementing national and international programs.
- 21

**Projects Managed**  
  
The Institute received 21 awarded grants for proposed projects within the scope of building one health, capacity building training, curriculum development, and more.
- 65

**Collaborating Countries**  
  
IIAD continues to grow a large robust international network, executing capacity development activities for donors across Africa, Europe, and Southeast Asia.
- 89

**Partnering Organizations & Partners**  
  
The Institute collaborated with 40 international and national organizations in addition to 27 external researchers and consultants, and 12 Texas A&M Faculty as well as 8 graduate students and post-doctorates, and 2 veterinary externs.
- 17

**Proposal Submissions**  
  
IIAD submitted 17 proposals over the course of 2023 with 41% awarded and funded in addition to 7 project proposals pending or currently under development.



# MEET OUR TEAM



**Heather Simmons, DVM, MSVPH**  
*Director*

✉ [HEATHER.SIMMONS@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:HEATHER.SIMMONS@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Dr. Heather Simmons helped found IIAD in 2010 and has served as the leader and Director of the Institute over the last 4 years.

**Rachel Whisenant, MBA**  
*Associate Director*

✉ [RACHEL.WHISENANT@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:RACHEL.WHISENANT@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Rachel Whisenant has been with the Institute since 2009 and holds the position as Associate Director facilitating unit operations.



**Christine Budke, DVM, PhD**  
*Senior Lead Scientist*

✉ [CBUDKE@TAMU.EDU](mailto:CBUDKE@TAMU.EDU)

Dr. Christine Budke is a Senior Lead Scientist for the Institute in addition to serving as a professor at Texas A&M's Veterinary School.



**Jimmy Tickel, DVM**  
*Veterinarian*

✉ [JIMMY.TICKEL@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:JIMMY.TICKEL@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Dr. Jimmy Tickel has worked as a veterinarian for the Institute since 2019 and specializes in animal emergency management.

**Sarah Manning**  
*Program Coordinator*

✉ [SARAH.MANNING@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:SARAH.MANNING@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Sarah Manning has facilitated animal health and veterinary capacity-building programs as well as marketing efforts across IIAD since 2019.



**Julie Stowell-Moss, M.Ed.**  
*Program Coordinator*

✉ [JULIE.STOWELL-MOSS@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:JULIE.STOWELL-MOSS@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Julie Stowell-Moss provides expertise in professional learning, curriculum development, and project management for the Institute.





SENIOR FELLOWS 2023

**Madeline Healy**  
*Grants Program Coordinator*

✉ [MADELINE.HEALY@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:MADELINE.HEALY@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Madeline Healy aids in proposal development, budget development, and project coordination for the Institute.



**Barbara Martin**  
*Subject Matter Expert in Diagnostics*



**David Castellan, DVM, MPVM, ACPVM, ACPV**  
*Subject Matter Expert in Epidemiology*



**Gary Flory**  
*Subject Matter Expert in Animal Diseases & Environmental Management*



**Gary Vroegindewey, DVM, MSS, DACVPM**  
*Subject Matter Expert in Veterinary Emergency Management*



**Jonathon Rushton**  
*Subject Matter Expert in Animal Health Economics*



**Subhash Morzaria, BVSc, MSc, PhD, CIBiol, MRCVS**  
*Subject Matter Expert in Transboundary Animal Diseases*



**Sunil Joshi**  
*Business Coordinator*

✉ [SUNIL.JOSHI@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:SUNIL.JOSHI@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Sunil Joshi supports the Institute’s business functions through account management, procurement, payroll, and financial planning.

STUDENT PROGRAM AIDS 2023

**Kaitlin Thompson**  
*Texas A&M Veterinary Student*

✉ [KAITLIN.THOMPSON@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:KAITLIN.THOMPSON@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Kaitlin Thompson is a dual DVM and Master’s of Veterinary Public Health and Epidemiology student at Texas A&M.



**Cole Hartis**  
*Texas A&M Veterinary Student*

✉ [COLE.HARTIS@AG.TAMU.EDU](mailto:COLE.HARTIS@AG.TAMU.EDU)

Cole Hartis is a DVM student at Texas A&M and will pursue AVMA’s Congressional Fellowship after graduation to build experience in public policy.



# COMPLETED PROJECTS

## CSTE Influenza Zoonoses Education Among Youth in Agriculture

This project was funded from 2022-2023 and focused on the development of influenza educational activities for youth within the United States. IIAD coordinated with the Veterinary Science Certificate Program (VSCP) in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to coordinate the development of a sustainability plan for national actions with the Council for State Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) through sponsorship by the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC).



## Epidemiology Mapping Tool Assessment

In the fall of 2023, IIAD staff and partners traveled to Cameroon, Jordan, Malaysia, and Senegal to conduct epidemiology assessments for each country's national and sub-national veterinarian workforce. This effort equipped veterinary services to identify gaps and needs to support institutional capacity and workforce development for their country. Funded by DTRA and in partnership with FAO.

## Development of the Healthy Border 2030 Roadmap

This research project worked with the U.S.-Mexico Border Health Commission (BHC) to develop an overall report for U.S.-Mexico BHC 10 priority border issues in public health till 2030. IIAD diligently worked with U.S.-Mexico public health specialists in all border states to address areas for 10 border health issues of importance to public health and the U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS).



## FAO ASF Vaccine & Global AI Strategy

IIAD received funding from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to provide expert consultation in updating publications by FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) on a global strategy for Avian Influenza as well as providing expert consultation in FAO's publication for African Swine Fever vaccination. Research and efforts related to the project's completion and publications were conducted by IIAD's senior fellow Dr. David Castellán.



## International Animal Health Trainings

With partnering organizations from Africa, IIAD conducted 4 English and French virtual trainings in 2023 focusing on syndromic surveillance and risk analysis and assessment to educate epidemiologists, veterinarians, and other animal health specialists located in African regions on SMP-AH principles and practices. Two additional virtual trainings in diagnostic epidemiology will be conducted in the spring of 2024. Funded by [USDA-FAS](#) and in partnership with the [African Agricultural Technology Foundation \(AATF\)](#) and the [African Union-International Bureau for Animal Research \(AU-IBAR\)](#).



## Point-of-Care Test Adaptation Process

In August 2023, IIAD and project partners conducted the NAHLN Point-of-Care (POC) workshop in Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas with 28 key stakeholders in attendance. This project validated the process, identified areas for improvement, recognized planning gaps, and provided input to sponsors from [USDA APHIS](#), [VS](#), and [NAHLN](#) concerning the impacts of current emergency response plans.

## Support for Food & Agriculture Veterinary Defense

IIAD participated in External Advisory Board meetings to discuss, validate, and provide overall insight and clarity to [Food and Agriculture Veterinary Defense \(FAVD\)](#) related concepts and approaches under [DHS S&T](#). Activities included the deployment of new system-level improvements, ideas, and approaches to stakeholder outreach and communication, as well as special projects and activities related to critical issues identified by the FAVD team.

## WOAH Operation Phoenix Exercise

IIAD and the [European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease \(EuFMD\)](#) collaborated to deliver a global simulation exercise focusing on the coordination between animal health and law enforcement sectors in response to animal health crises. The project team conducted interviews with the [Food and Agriculture Organization](#), the [World Organisation for Animal Health](#), and law enforcement personnel across the globe to understand and determine communication mechanisms and testing elements.

## WOAH Tripartite One Health Guidelines

IIAD worked alongside and represented the [World Organisation for Animal Health \(WOAH\)](#) for an internal core team of a tripartite activity related to guidelines for One Health competencies, curriculum, continuing education, program accreditation, and sustainability of field epidemiology programs.



The Poultry Agribusiness Course hosted its first cohort in east Texas in the late summer of 2023.

Funded by [USDA NADPRP](#) and supported by the [Texas Poultry Federation](#), IIAD, [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension](#), and TAMU faculty conducted this course with hosts from top producing industry representatives and key major players within the poultry industry. This one-week long course focused on providing specialized hands-on educational opportunities for State Animal Health Officials (SAHOs) and state regulatory veterinarians regarding the agribusiness func-

tions of the U.S. poultry industries that might be impacted during a foreign animal disease (FAD) outbreak.

Topics covered in the course include basic overviews of the industries and their practices, business and marketing principles utilized to make the industries viable, as well as an introduction to animal health, environmental, nutritional, and biosecurity principles pertaining to hatcheries, breeder broilers, hen houses, and more.

The second cohort of state animal health officials are planned to attend round two of the course in the spring of 2024.







# ONGOING PROJECTS

## African Swine Fever Economics

The [Cross Border Threat Screening & Supply Chain Defense \(CBTS\)](#), a [DHS Center of Excellence](#), is collaborating with IIAD to lead an African Swine Fever (ASF) Economics Study that will measure the economic impacts of the ASF virus on U.S. supply chains in the Food and Agriculture sector.



## Biosecurity Plan Evaluation for Texas Poultry Farmers

Partnering with [SAFOSO](#) and the [Texas Poultry Federation](#), IIAD will investigate the social, behavioral, and demographic factors that affect biosecurity plans among Texas poultry farmers. A deeper understanding of the internal motivations, attitudes, and knowledge about biosecurity among industry will enable the development and improvement of outreach and communication efforts in biosecurity behaviors, with the outcome of decreasing infectious disease outbreaks within the poultry industry.

## Emergency Management Curriculum eModules

IIAD is part of an international consortium of [World Organisation for Animal Health \(WOAH\)](#) Collaborating Centres between the [WOAH Collaborating Centre Network on Veterinary Emergencies](#) and the WOAH Collaborating Centre Network for Veterinary Training and Education that is developing four eLearning modules on Emergency and Disaster Management to be included in the eLearning catalog of the WOAH Training Portal.

## CSTE Influenza Zoonoses Education Among Youth in Agriculture

This project received another round of funding from 2023-2024 and will continue to focus on the development of influenza educational activities for youth within the United States. [The Veterinary Science Certificate Program \(VSCP\)](#) in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will lead project efforts and coordinate with IIAD for the development of a sustainability plan for national actions with the [Council for State Territorial Epidemiologists \(CSTE\)](#) through sponsorship by the [Centers for Disease Prevention and Control \(CDC\)](#). In-person project activities and interactions with youth will be conducted through VSCP.



## FAD & Decon Producer Certificate Training Programs

With a focus on small-scale U.S. livestock producers within the beef, dairy, poultry, swine, and small ruminant industries, these projects aim to educate and provide resources to producers directly impacted by foreign animal disease (FAD) events and provide skills needed to perform decontamination activities in agricultural facilities effectively. Others involved in U.S.-based producer education to benefit from this program include cooperative extension educators, FFA, industry associations, livestock quality assurance personnel, veterinarians, and state animal health officials. These stakeholders will be invited to aid with program delivery, ensuring FAD response and decontamination efforts are collaborative and streamlined. Public health and agriculture emergency management officials at the county and federal level such as USDA and DHS will greatly benefit from increased FAD response and decontamination efficiency as well as strengthened producer relationships with the overarching goal to strengthen the nation's FAD response and decontamination practices. Funded by [USDA NADPRP](#).

## Completion of the Healthy Border 2030 Roadmap

This research project is to work with the [U.S.-Mexico Border Health Commission \(BHC\)](#) to develop an overall report for the U.S.-Mexico BHC's 10 priority border issues in public health till 2030. IIAD is working with U.S.-Mexico public health specialists in all border states to address areas for 10 border health issues of importance to public health and the [U.S. Health and Human Services \(HHS\)](#). In addition, the project will focus on evaluating 2 public health SOPs related to emerging diseases for emergency management communication between public health entities in the United States and Mexico.



## Strengthening Veterinary Health Systems for African Union Trade

Funded by [WOAH](#) and partnering with [AU-IBAR](#), the Institute will build capacity for the development and implementation of risk and science-based policies and regulatory measures aligned to international standards from SMP-AH protocols. The overall objective is to harmonize animal health and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) processes to improve animal health, animal production, and trade within the African Union.



### Ukraine Emergency Veterinary Medicine Assessments

Funded by USDA FAS and in conjunction with the Bridges and Ministry of Agriculture Ukraine, the main goal of this project is to determine how assistance can be provided to Ukrainian livestock, sheep, goat, and swine industries to aid in the recovery and re-establishment of a secure food supply by addressing constraints in veterinary medicine and supplies. With the military invasion of Ukraine by Russia, catastrophic damage has been done to Ukraine’s livestock value chain impacting the ability of the country to effectively produce commodities needed for food security.



### Veterinary Recruitment Toolbox for Rural Communities

Collaborating with West Texas A&M University and the Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine, a national survey will be conducted on veterinary schools, private practitioners, and state animal health officials to determine attributes needed to entice recent graduates and private veterinarians to be recruited to a national veterinary shortage area. Specific educational templates will be developed into a “Community and Economic Social Support Toolbox” with plans to pilot the tool in two Texas counties to enhance the recruitment process of veterinarians within small-town communities.

TO VIEW MORE  
INFORMATION ON OUR  
CURRENT AND PAST  
PROJECTS VISIT:

<https://iiad.tamu.edu/iiad-projects/>

FOR PROJECT INQUIRIES &  
JOINT OPPORTUNITIES,  
CONTACT OUR DIRECTOR  
DR. HEATHER SIMMONS AT:

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TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE RESEARCH | 2023 YEAR END REPORT

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# TEA



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