



ASA HUTCHINSON
GOVERNOR

ARKANSAS AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION
ARKANSAS LIVESTOCK & POULTRY COMMISSION
ARKANSAS STATE PLANT BOARD

1 NATURAL RESOURCES DRIVE, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72205 | (501) 225-1598 | AAD.ARKANSAS.GOV



WES WARD
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 12/12/2017

Contact: Adriane Barnes, (501) 516-6255, adriane.barnes@arkansas.gov

Twelve Days of Arkansas Agriculture: State Veterinary Diagnostic Lab Offers Wide Variety of Services

LITTLE ROCK, AR – The primary mission of the Arkansas’s Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL), part of the Arkansas Agriculture Department’s Livestock and Poultry Commission, is to support the state’s livestock and poultry industries by providing reliable and affordable testing services for the industries, private veterinarians, and animal owners. The lab’s services help diagnose and monitor animal diseases that can affect humans, reduce the productivity or marketability of animals, threaten animal populations, and affect the safety or quality of animal products. The VDL also performs several other important services, including its work at the State Fair, the Little Rock Zoo, and with law enforcement agencies in cases of suspected animal cruelty.

“Supporting our state’s livestock and poultry industries is our primary mission but we are pleased to take that mission a step forward when we can be of assistance to local, state, and federal entities that can benefit from our services”, says VDL Director Dr. Russ Summers.

The State Fair utilizes the VDL to provide drug testing on all animal category winners at the State Fair to ensure the animals have not received performance enhancing drugs or other banned substances. VDL staff tested more than 100 animals that placed in their category at the 2017 State Fair. The VDL also works with the veterinary staff of the Little Rock Zoo to promote animal wellness by providing approximately 200 blood chemistry tests, antibiotic sensitivities, and biopsies, and in the event of animal demise, necropsies, annually.

The VDL has a successful history in assisting law enforcement agencies with animal cruelty investigations. Law enforcement officers and local veterinarians often lack the time or resources to provide thorough forensic necropsy services, without which there is often insufficient evidence to prosecute perpetrators in animal cruelty cases. Law enforcement officials can contact the VDL to request forensic necropsy or assistance of any kind by calling **501-823-1730** or emailing rsummers@alpc.ar.gov.

The VDL is accredited by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation for activities listed on A2LA Scope of Accreditation 4109.01, and is a member of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) and the Veterinary Laboratory Investigation and Response Network (Vet-LIRN). The VDL completed approximately 20,000 diagnostic cases, with an additional 28,000 regulatory cases, and 5,000 poultry-related cases in 2016.

This release is the seventh edition to the Twelve Days of Arkansas Agriculture campaign, which highlights some of the programs and services provided by the AAD that support our state’s agriculture industry. Follow each of the 12 stories by searching the #12DaysofARagriculture hashtag, or visit aad.arkansas.gov. The AAD is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation.

