



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
HEALTH / AGRICULTURE BUILDING
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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor
KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

DOUGLAS H. FISHER
Secretary

October 1, 2013

Dear Agricultural Community,

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture is committed to keeping you informed of how the ongoing shutdown of federal services will impact agriculture in New Jersey. As of this afternoon, we know the following from a conference call today with USDA and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA):

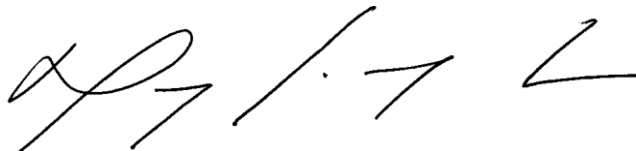
- ✓ Most USDA programs, with the exception of some APHIS programs addressing foreign animal diseases, will be inaccessible during the shutdown. Tests for foreign animal diseases will continue, according to the USDA.
- ✓ Phytosanitary certificates will continue to be available, as that program is funded through user fees, USDA officials said.
- ✓ Conservation funding through EQIP and other Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) programs will be inaccessible throughout the shutdown.
- ✓ Farmers seeking assistance with any natural disaster or weather-related damages will not be able to file those claims through their local FSA offices, but they should gather as much information, including pictures, as possible and be ready to submit those claims as soon as their local offices reopen, according to USDA Deputy Secretary Michael Scuse.
- ✓ Visitors to the USDA website will find the following message: "Due to the lapse in federal government funding, this website is not available. After funding has been restored, please allow some time for this website to become available again. For information about available government services, visit usa.gov. To view U.S. Department of Agriculture Agency Contingency plans, visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/contingency-plans>"
- ✓ Payments normally processed through USDA will not be processed during the duration of the shutdown, including CRP payments and Marketing Assistance loans, Deputy Secretary Scuse said.
- ✓ Field offices for NRCS, Rural Development and the Farm Service Agency will remain closed during the shutdown, Scuse said.

- ✓ Foreign Ag Service offices will be staffed by one person per office, but services will be minimal due to lack of support staff.
- ✓ The National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa, and the Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (FADDL) on Plum Island, New York, will be maintaining minimal staff during the government shutdown to support “excepted” programs.
- ✓ The main NVSL number (515 337 7266) will be answered during normal business hours of 8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m. Central time throughout the shutdown period, and personnel will be able to direct calls to available employees to help answer questions. For Foreign Animal Disease emergencies, please contact Dr. Paul Hauer at 515-203-9155 or Dr. Beth Lautner at 515-708-2496.
- ✓ All pending laboratory results will be completed and reported for all diagnostic samples received before October 1 for cases at both Ames and Plum Island (FADDL).
- ✓ User fee re-agents will continue to be provided. Please see 'NVSLs Reagents Catalog <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/lab_info_services/reagents.shtml> for assistance in determining which reagents are billable.
- ✓ Samples received on or after October 1 for all program disease testing will not be tested; however samples will be stored appropriately for testing after the government resumes normal operations.
- ✓ The NVSL website remains available at:
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/lab_info_services/>

If you have specific questions about USDA services that are not answered by the information above, please contact Jeff Beach, NJDA Policy Advisor, via e-mail at jeffrey.beach@ag.state.nj.us.

NJDA will continue to report information as it becomes available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. H. Fisher', written in a cursive style.

Douglas H. Fisher, Secretary, NJ Department of Agriculture