

Dr Sarah Tomlinson

Dr. Sarah Tomlinson has served as the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Coordinator of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) since June 2013. As the NAHLN Coordinator, she is responsible for oversight, planning and coordination of the network's operations to ensure the over 50 participating veterinary diagnostic laboratories across the U.S. meet quality standards, have trained and proficiency tested personnel and perform standardized testing for animal health diseases of concern. Prior to becoming coordinator, Dr. Tomlinson was previously an Associate Coordinator for NAHLN with responsibilities primarily focused on coordinating the surveillance, preparedness and information technology projects for NAHLN. Prior to working with the NAHLN, her focus was on national surveillance planning, evaluation and analysis as a veterinary epidemiologist and then Assistant Director of USDA's Veterinary Services' National Surveillance Unit. Dr. Tomlinson practiced as a large animal veterinarian after earning her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Colorado State University. Outside of work, she spends her time with kids and family, raising show lambs and cattle, coaching and cheering her kids on in many sports activities, and enjoying the outdoors.

Abstract: In 2015 and 2016, the United States experienced an unprecedented outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. The National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) served as a critical component in the rapid diagnosis and response and longer-term recovery from the outbreak. This presentation will provide insight to the roles the laboratory network played in the HPAI outbreak as well as provide an overview of the network's foundations that were already in place to enable this efficient and effective response and support.