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Modern Research Is Safe and Secure

The federal government has identified the need for “safe, secure, and state-of-the-art agriculture biocontainment laboratories that research and develop diagnostic capabilities for foreign-animal and zoonotic diseases.” An aging facility in New York performs animal-disease research today, but no U.S. facilities have adequate space, security, equipment, and infrastructure to meet modern requirements.

The proposed National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility will be designed to conduct scientific research to combat foreign-animal diseases by expanding our country’s ability to create drugs, vaccines, and other countermeasures against these diseases.

Modern Facilities Allow Safe and Secure Research

The NBAF will be a highly secure biosafety laboratory, designed to conduct research safely and effectively. Its state-of-the-art labs will not only protect researchers from contamination, but also ensure the safety of the community with recurring physical systems and the most stringent lab safety procedures.

Disease research facilities are designed with safety and security as the top priority. According to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, there are no recorded incidents involving community contamination from any of the BSL-3 and BSL-4 facilities in the U.S.

Important Facts

- Modern research methods and facilities are extremely safe — and urgently needed.
- The NBAF will be built with the highest safety standards, which are keeping tens of millions of residents safe in places where labs studying diseases *already exist*.
 - Federal labs in Frederick, Maryland, and Atlanta, Georgia, have worked on the most dangerous human diseases for decades. Not a single community outbreak has occurred in these cities.
 - A lab in Winnipeg, Canada, studies the highly contagious FMD virus just across the border from North Dakota. FMD research is already conducted on the “mainland” and has not spread to livestock outside the facility there.
- Modern biocontainment technology has eliminated the need for locating animal-disease research on an island as was done decades ago. At the same time, the nation needs to significantly upgrade its capacity to prevent disease outbreaks in animals, and the half-century-old New York facility is outdated and has limited capacity.
- Kansas knows that the safety and security of our national food supply is central to our nation’s public health and the stability of the economy, and we do animal-health research better than anyone else in the world. Kansas is uniquely qualified for the NBAF with the right kind of scientific assets and expertise in place to be applied immediately and safely.
- A decision to build the NBAF in an isolated location — away from animals and people — would significantly increase the cost of building, maintaining, and operating the lab and would continue to limit the availability of researchers willing to do this important work.
- Kansas provides an incredibly safe, secure home for the NBAF, with the proven ability to marry state-of-the-art biocontainment structures, solid physical security, and technological know-how with proven safety protocols and personal protection.
- Protecting animals and people from disease — making communities more secure and safe — is the goal, and it’s a challenge our country, and Kansas, is ready and able to undertake.