



## **FACTSHEET ON THE NATIONAL BIO- AND AGRO-DEFENSE FACILITY (NBAF)**

*January 2008*

### **WHAT IS THE NBAF?**

- The [National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility \(NBAF\)](#) will be a state-of-the-art animal disease research facility. Its mission will be to help secure the nation's food supply, primarily by protecting livestock from pandemic diseases. The NBAF will replace the Plum Island Animal Disease Center in New York, which was established shortly after World War II and has reached the limits of its capacity. It will be managed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

- Two years ago DHS solicited proposals from across the country for potential sites for the NBAF. A competitive process that began with 29 initial proposals has now been narrowed down to five potential sites, including the one put forward by the [North Carolina Consortium for the NBAF](#), a public-private partnership of academia, agriculture, government, and the private sector in our state.
- The North Carolina Consortium has proposed to locate the NBAF at the NC Department of Agriculture's Umstead Research Farm in Butner (Granville County). In addition to the Butner site, DHS selected locations in Georgia, Kansas, Mississippi, and Texas as possible sites for the NBAF.
- DHS is currently planning public meetings for the potential host communities in the coming weeks, with opportunities for public comments and questions.
- An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), covering all of the proposed sites, is being prepared, and is expected to be published in late April. The EIS is of paramount importance in determining the suitability of the finalist sites for the NBAF. As required by the National Environmental Policy Act, the EIS will closely examine any environmental or public health impacts that could result from a decision to locate the NBAF at a particular site. The results of the EIS will be made public and available for discussion.
- Another round of public meetings is expected to occur in May or June, following release of a draft EIS. A final site selection decision is currently scheduled for late October 2008.

### **SAFETY OF THE NBAF**

- The NBAF will be the animal disease research equivalent of the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) located near downtown Atlanta. It will have the same security requirements as the CDC facility, which for decades has safely worked with contagious human diseases.
- The NBAF will not conduct biological weapons research. Research at the facility will be strictly focused on research related to animal infections and how to prevent, diagnose and treat them.
- DHS has proposed a list of [eight livestock and zoonotic diseases](#) planned for study at the NBAF. The facility will not conduct research on diseases such as anthrax, ebola, and smallpox. Research on those diseases is conducted by the CDC in Atlanta, Georgia.

## OVERSIGHT

- The siting, construction, and operation of the NBAF demand the strictest oversight and accountability to ensure the safest and most environmentally-friendly facility possible.
- As chairman of the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Price will exercise vigorous oversight of NBAF activities in order to achieve a safe and sustainable outcome for both our national security interests and the welfare of the communities where the facility is eventually sited, whether in North Carolina or elsewhere.
- NBAF work will be non-classified, and its work will be overseen by community oversight committees like those used by the CDC laboratories. Through these committees and other avenues, including hearings by Rep. Price's subcommittee, the activities of the NBAF facility will be fully transparent to the public.

## LOCAL IMPACT

- The North Carolina Department of Commerce has estimated that the NBAF, as one of the world's most advanced laboratories, will stimulate a local economic impact of \$1.6 billion over the first twenty years of its operation.
- If located in North Carolina, the NBAF is expected to bring jobs and investment into Granville, Durham and surrounding counties, including more than 1,000 construction jobs and 250 to 350 scientific, technical and administrative jobs, according to figures from the Department of Homeland Security and the North Carolina Department of Commerce.
- It would offer diagnostic training for state personnel and increase the capacity of our animal and public health services to respond to outbreaks of disease and related public health emergencies.
- The state's livestock farmers associations are widely supportive of locating the NBAF in North Carolina because of the role it will play in protecting their animals and livelihoods from disease.
- Proximity to the NBAF would boost North Carolina's growing university research and biotechnology sectors, and it would contribute to the further development of agribusiness, pharmaceutical, and high-tech research industries in the Triangle.