

**United States**

**Department of**

**Agriculture**

Marketing and

Regulatory

Programs

Animal and

Plant Health

Inspection

Service

Washington, DC

20250

August 25, 2021

Dear Tribal Partners:

Earlier this week, USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced that we have developed a [Strategic Framework](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/aphis_general/arp-strategic-framework.pdf) that outlines our approach for fulfilling a key charge within the American Rescue Plan Act to better protect people and animals from SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and other emerging diseases.  Our long-term goal is to build an early warning system to alert public health partners to take steps sooner to potentially prevent or limit the next zoonotic disease outbreak, or the next global pandemic.

This is a significant initiative comprised of many elements, and we want to ensure our Tribal partners have the opportunity to review the framework and provide [written comments](https://www.regulations.gov/docket/APHIS-2021-0061). Additionally, we are hosting a [series of webinars](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/resources/arp-strategic-framework/webinars) to provide more information about the framework and answer any questions you may have. On Tuesday, August 31, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. ET we are hosting a webinar for Tribal partners, and you can [register here](https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_ASY9UFI_S6GpDRNfHgaTXA) to participate. The webinar recording will also be available on our [website](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/resources/arp-strategic-framework/webinars).

Our hope is that this webinar will provide you some insight into the Strategic Framework and our plans to prevent, detect, investigate and respond to SARS-CoV-2 as well as other emerging and zoonotic diseases that could pose a threat to both people and animals.

The 45-day public comment period began on Tuesday, August 24, and will be open through Friday, October 8, 2021. To ensure transparency, we will be accepting written comments via [Regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov/docket/APHIS-2021-0061). APHIS will review all written comments, incorporate feedback as appropriate and share the final framework, which will serve as our roadmap for implementation.

We look forward to your participation in the upcoming webinars.

Sincerely,



Mike Watson

Associate Administrator