

Charting a Path Forward on Food Safety, Nutrition and Animal Health

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At FDA, we need to be prepared for the opportunities and challenges of today as well as those of tomorrow, and the FDA Foods and Veterinary Medicine Program's new Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2016-2025 helps us to do just that.

Our new [Strategic Plan](#) makes it clear that we must have an overarching and risk-based approach that encompasses our broad portfolio of responsibilities. The plan organizes this work under four key goals: food safety, nutrition, animal health and organizational excellence. Whether it's chemical safety, dietary supplements, cosmetics, genetic engineering, nutrition labeling, antimicrobial resistance, review of animal drugs, or ensuring that we have the right technologies to identify hazards in the commodities we regulate—all of these issues impact the public health. FDA is a public health agency first and foremost—and that is where our focus will be, using the core principle of science and tools such as regulation and guidance, research, and outreach and education to get us there. This fall, we'll be issuing a broad implementation plan which will highlight specific actions under these four goals.



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Over the past several years we've made a lot of progress in a number of key areas. We have been very focused on developing the implementation framework for the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), an enormous undertaking to modernize our preventive approach to food safety, and that work will continue. At the same time, we've made great headway on nutrition, modernizing the Nutrition Facts label, publishing draft, voluntary targets for reducing sodium in various foods, and making a final determination that partially hydrogenated oils are no longer "generally recognized as safe." We've addressed the impact of animal agriculture on antimicrobial resistance by phasing out the use of medically important antimicrobials for production use and bringing remaining uses under the direction of veterinarians. And whole genome sequencing has helped us to identify the sources of foodborne illness outbreaks with speed and precision.



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One important lesson we learned from our work on FSMA that we can apply moving forward is the importance of transparency and active stakeholder engagement. We transformed the way we do business, and it helped to make our work on FSMA successful. Sometimes, our perspectives may differ from those of our stakeholders, but the important thing is that we seek common areas of alignment to solve problems. We plan to use this approach more broadly.

It's important that our plan stays current. It will be updated to reflect emerging science, technology, innovation, and trends in globalization. It will keep pace with emerging hazards and risks in the products we regulate. That is why we are establishing an open docket. [Comments can be submitted at any time](#), so that we can consider them and update the plan at least every two years. We encourage you to take a look at the plan and let us know what you think. We will have plenty of opportunity for discussion in the months and years to come as we work to improve the public health together.

[Read the Foods and Veterinary Medicine \(FVM\) Program's Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2016–2025](#)

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