

SCRAPIE: ERADICATE IT

The sheep industry's scrapie eradication efforts.



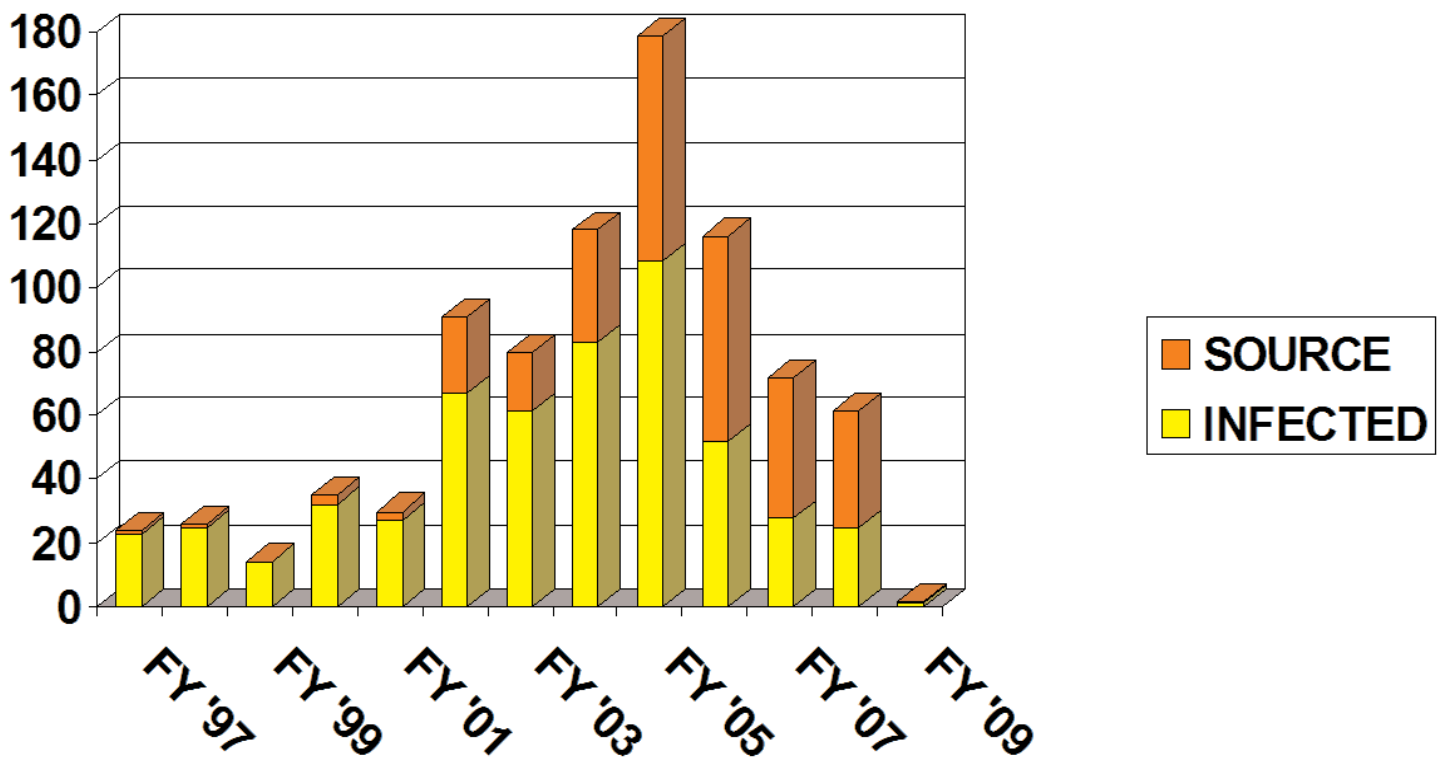
December 2008

The goal of the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) and the U.S. sheep industry is to eradicate scrapie from our borders. In addition, it is the objective to have the World Organization for Animal Health, OIE, declare the United States scrapie free by 2017. This quarterly publication is created specifically for those of you in the field who are also working to achieve this goal.

This newsletter brings together, into one spot, current information from all 50 states, as well as from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and any other organization providing scrapie news, and reports it back to the field.

If you have first-hand accounts that you believe would be relevant for others to read or have information that you would like included in this newsletter, please let us know at becky@sheepusa.org.

Infected and Source Flocks New Statuses by Year FY 1997 – 2009*



*Through November 30, 2008

National Scrapie Eradication Program Update

The United States is well on its way to eradicating scrapie and meeting the World Organization for Animal Health scrapie-free standards. Hard work by producers, the states and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have yielded impressive numbers. This cooperative effort has resulted in substantial decreases in the percent of black-face cull sheep sampled at slaughter that have tested positive and in the number of scrapie cases and new infected flocks.

Program Update

The number of new infected and source flocks identified during the fiscal year (FY) 2008 dropped from 72 for FY 2007 to 61 for FY 2008. There were 43,914 slaughter surveillance samples collected for FY 2008. Forty-two of these sheep were confirmed positive for scrapie by the National Veterinary Services Laboratories. Except for one positive white-face sheep, which was classified as Nor98-like scrapie, all of the positives were blackface sheep. The percent of black-faced sheep found positive at slaughter has decreased by 80 percent since the initiation of slaughter surveillance in FY 2003.

Participation in the Scrapie Flock Certification Program (SFCP) is a positive for the industry. According to information from USDA, as of December 30, 2008, there were 1,919 flocks participating in the SFCP. Of these, 526 were certified flocks, 1,361 were complete monitored flocks, 28 were export monitored flocks and 4 were select monitored flocks.

In addition, the Caprine Scrapie Prevalence Study was conducted from August 2007 through March 2008 to estimate the national prevalence of scrapie in adult goats at slaughter. There were 3,032 goats sampled. None of the goats tested as part of this study tested positive, yielding the conclusion that the scrapie prevalence in U.S. goats is greater than zero and less than 0.1 percent. However, it is important to note that five positive goats have been identified this fiscal year through field investigations. One was a clinical suspect submitted for testing by the owner and the other four originated from the birth herd of the clinical case.

Producers are reminded that the best way to prevent scrapie is to maintain a flock/herd closed to female additions unless they are genetically resistant or come from certified scrapie free flocks/herds. Because of this, a youth-specific brochure was developed by the American Sheep Industry Association to explain scrapie, the National Scrapie Eradication Program and how youth can comply with the program. This brochure was made available to sheep-interested youth at the 81st National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Ind., October 22-25, 2008.

Free Eradicate Scrapie PowerPoint Available

Goat producers and individuals involved in the goat industries — livestock market owners, extension personnel, show coordinators, processors, etc. — are urged to obtain a copy of "Goat Identification: Visual and Electronic," a newly released slide presentation available from the National Institute of Animal Agriculture (NIAA). The CD is free, thanks to funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Cindy Wolf, Ph.D., a scrapie expert with the University of Minnesota who leads the nation's Eradicate Scrapie! charge, explains that scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease that affects sheep and goats and can significantly diminish profitability for sheep and goat producers. The USDA implemented an accelerated National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP) eight years ago, with the goal of helping to eradicate scrapie by the year 2010. To that regard, the USDA has provided funding for this project so goat producers and those within the goat industry are informed and adhere to federal and state identification requirements.

"The first step to eradicating scrapie among the nation's sheep flocks and goat herds is to know which animals need an official ear tag or other official identification for interstate and intrastate movement, and to tag or officially identify those animals prior to movement," states Wolf. "This new slide set covers meat and fiber goats as well as dairy goats.

"When you finish watching this slide presentation, you will know which specific goats must be identified with an individual eartag, tattoo or microchip. You'll also be informed about record keeping requirements, factors that contribute to optimal eartag retention and minimal infection and tissue reaction and how to obtain free official USDA eartags for individual identification."

Wolf adds that the slide set also shares several identification tips as well as outlines the steps that must be taken to obtain a flock/herd identification number for the National Scrapie Eradication Program.

"The NSEP is not tied to the National Animal Identification System," Wolf explains. "You do not need a NAIS (National Animal Identification System) Premises Identification Number to obtain a NSEP flock/herd identification number. These are separate programs."

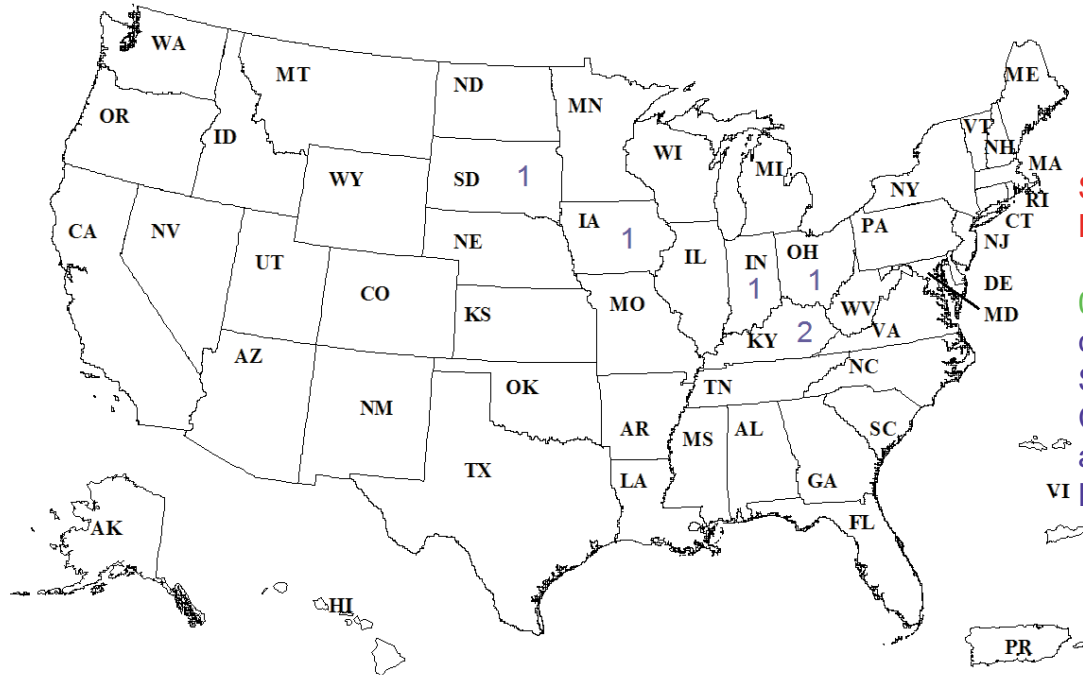
To obtain a free copy of the slide set on CD, contacting NIAA at 270-782-9798 or by visiting www.animalagriculture.org and clicking on the "Issues" tab at the top of the home page where the "Eradicate Scrapie" link can be found.

Animals Sampled for Scrapie Testing *Sheep and Goats*

As of November 30, 2008 (FY 2009)

7,359 animals have been sampled for scrapie testing: 6,668 RSSS; 428 regulatory field cases (number includes 128 rectal biopsies from Texas); and 263 regulatory live animal biopsies.

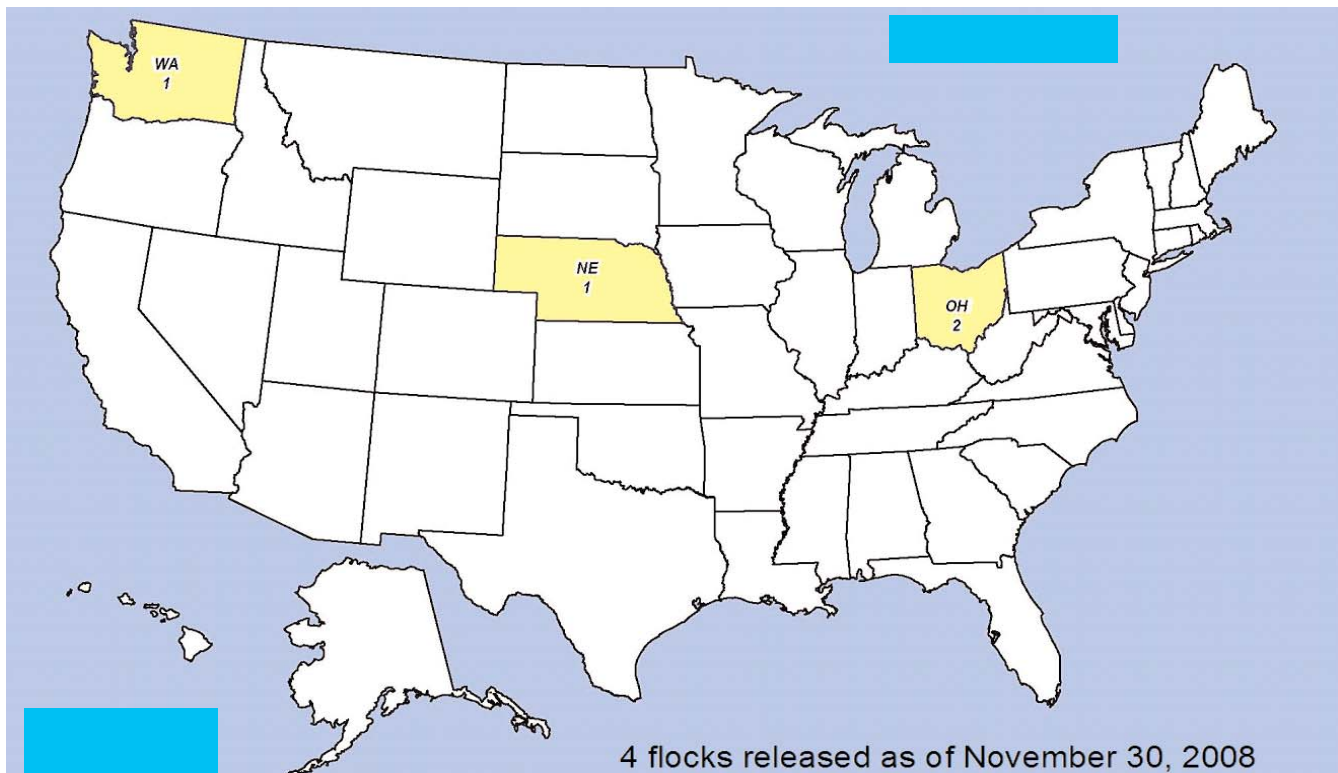
Scrapie Confirmed Cases in FY 2009



Scrapie cases as of Nov. 30, 2008 = 6

0 field cases; 6 RSSS cases (reported by State of ID tag. Collected in Oct./Nov. and reported as of Dec. 17, 2008).

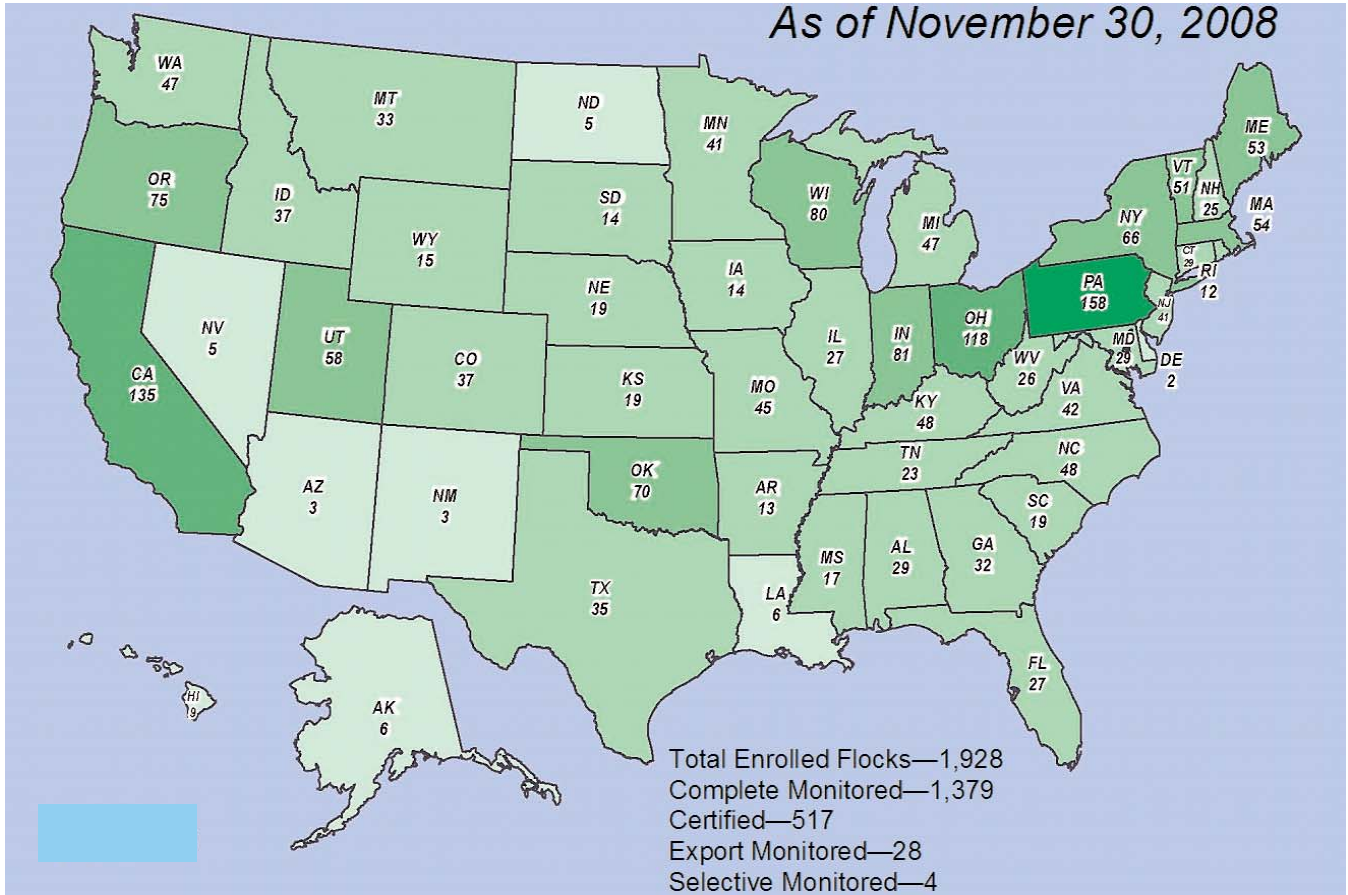
Released Scrapie Infected and Source Flocks FY 2009



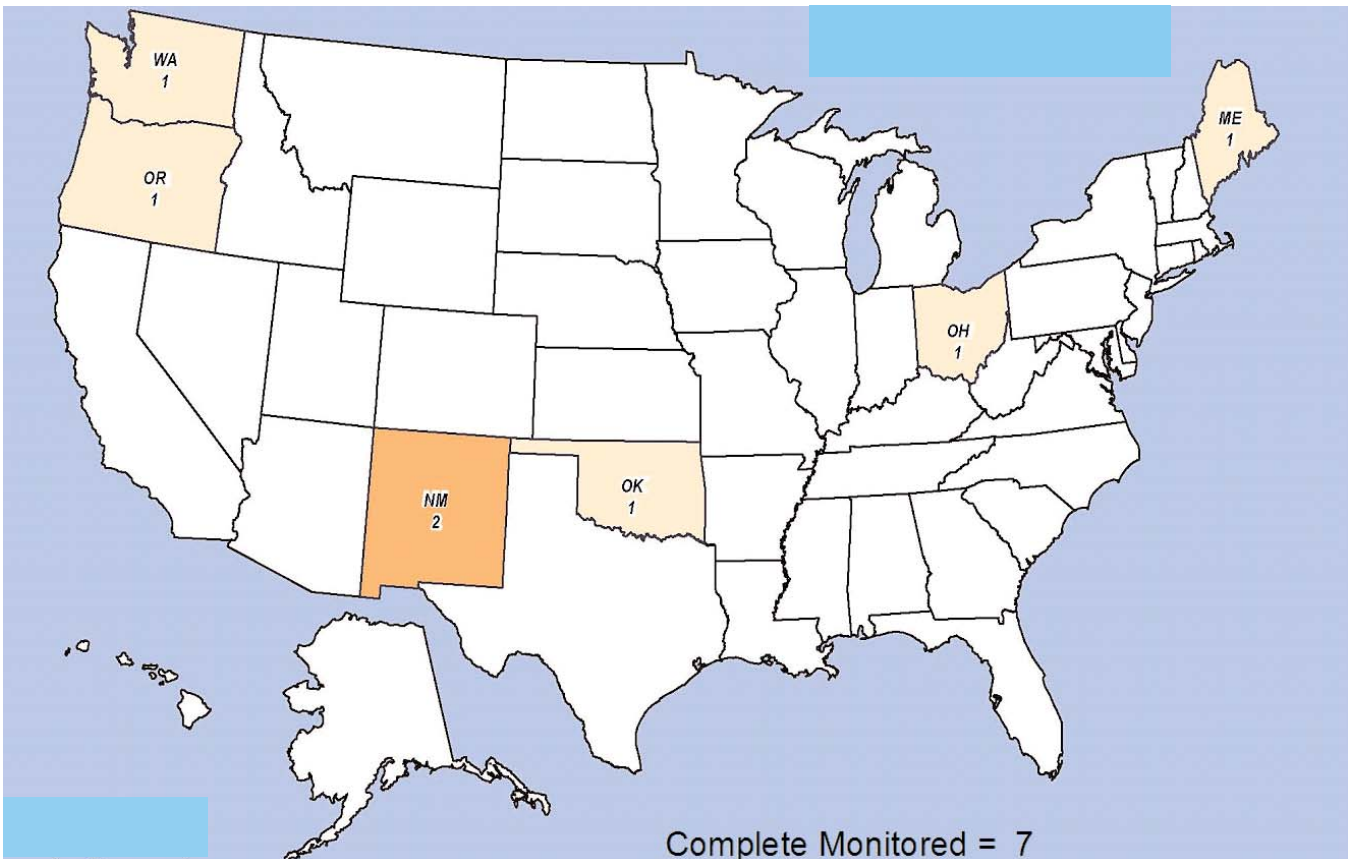
4 flocks released as of November 30, 2008

Scrapie Flock Certification Program Participating Flocks

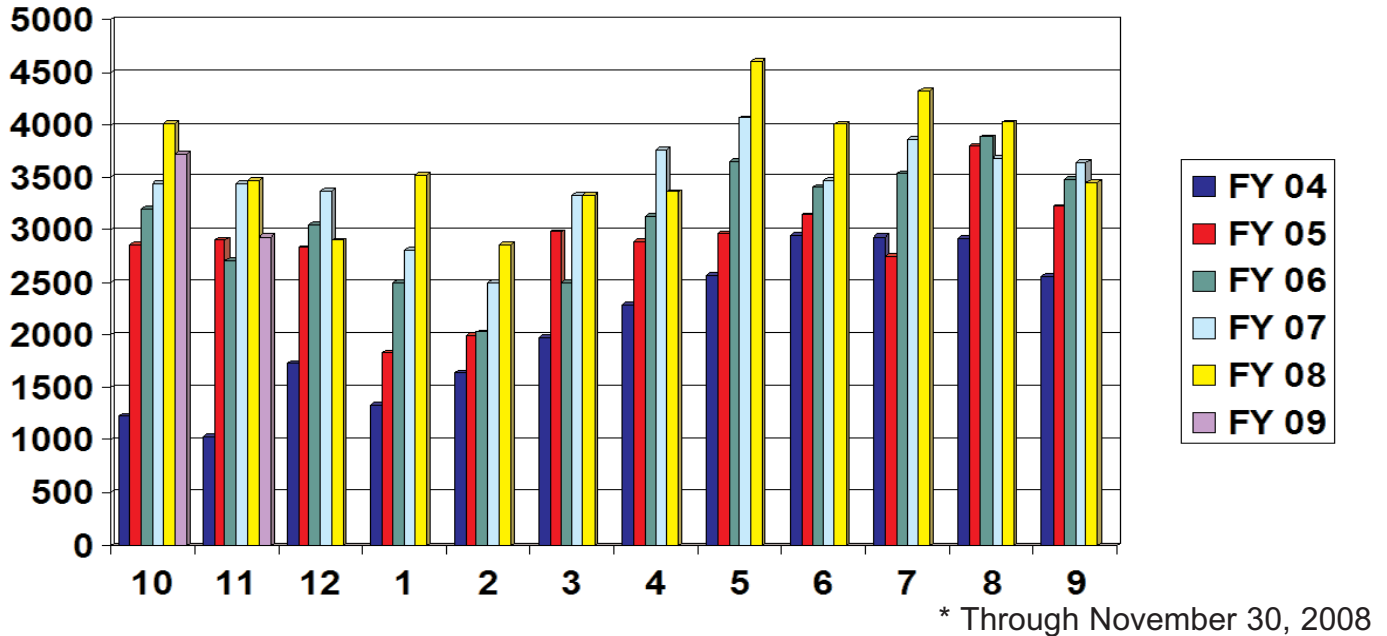
As of November 30, 2008



SFCP Flocks Enrolled and Certified in November 2008



Slaughter Surveillance Samples Collected by Month, FY 2004 to FY 2009*



The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's goal is to collect 4,000 slaughter surveillance samples each month from around the United States.

Regulatory Scrapie Slaughter Surveillance (RSSS) Statistics through November 30, 2008

| Since April 1, 2003: | In FY2009: |
|---|--|
| 196,119 samples collected 390 NVSL* confirmed positive | 6,668 samples collected 6 NVSL confirmed positive |

*National Veterinary Services Laboratories

Web Sites Dedicated to the Eradication of Scrapie

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/naahps/scrapie

Maryland Small Ruminant Page
www.sheepandgoat.com/scrapie.html

National Institute of Animal Agriculture
<http://www.animalagriculture.org/scrapie/Scrapie.htm>

Scrapie QuickPlace
<https://qp01.aphis.usda.gov/QuickPlace/scrapie/Main.nsf?OpenDatabase>
State and federal employees can access this password-protected site by e-mailing
Earl.T.Thorpe@APHIS.USDA.gov to receive a password.



American Sheep Industry Association
www.sheepusa.org