

>> What are the primary responsibilities of the state veterinarian?

I am chief executive officer of the state Board of Agriculture, and that means that I'm responsible for enforcing its statutes and regulations, which primarily are KRS 257 and KAR 302.

Within those, we deal with animal disease programs, the movement of animals within the state, animals coming into the state and the licensure and inspection of stockyards and markets. Also, we deal with various disease prevention programs for producers, like the National Poultry

Improvement Program or NPIP, brucellosis certification and tuberculosis accreditation for cattle producers. Essentially, our mission statement says we are supposed to prevent and respond to animal disease issues in the state and promote an environment in which commerce and recreation using animals can happen.

What divisions and/or programs are contained within the OSV?

We have two divisions — the Division of Producer Services, which was new just before I came in 2003, and the Division of

Animal Health. Basically, the administrative staff and office staff are under producer services, and the Division of Animal Health is, by and large, the field staff and the veterinarians we employ.

What are the primary responsibilities of the staff under the Division of Animal Health?

The field staff's duties include the inspection of livestock markets. We have 48 livestock markets in Kentucky, which is a large number. Some of those are very small and some are very large. Bluegrass Stockyards in Lexington is the largest stockyard east of the Mississippi River. We have a presence every sale day at all the markets, for at least some part of the day. In addition, we have monthly inspections. The monthly inspections have been assigned to the enforcement officers. They don't do them all, but they do most of them.

We also have Kentucky-approved horse sales, which commonly happen at stockyards, but they are a sale separate from the stockyard's administration. Those have slightly different regulations we enforce.

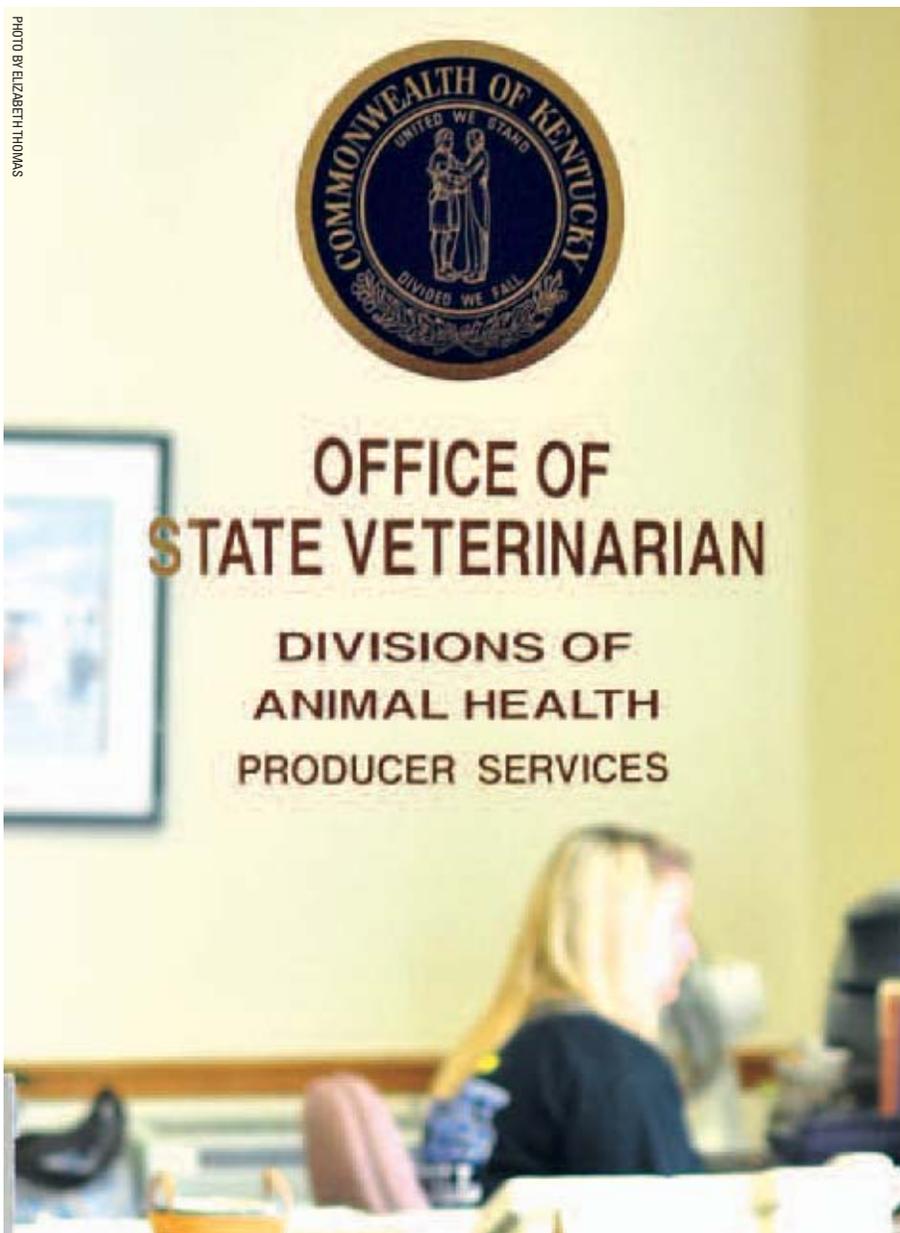
If there is any kind of disease outbreak, we certainly have a response mode. The field staff are assigned and dedicated to address whatever the issue is. A lot of the programs that we have through either private practitioners, or maybe by the USDA, are at least assisted by our field staff.

Within that field staff, we have an equine division headed by Rusty Ford, that primarily handles equine functions, whether it is horse shows, trail rides, those kind of things. The equine division primarily takes care of the horse park and state fair, but we also use the agriculture inspectors to support them because there are only four people in the Equine Inspectors Branch.

We have a Poultry Section headed by Sue Blair. She also administers the NPIP.

We have a large presence at not only the state fair, but also local shows and

PHOTO BY ELIZABETH THOMAS



◀ The Kentucky Office of the State Veterinarian, located in Frankfort, houses the Division of Animal Health. The DAH's five investigators are a widely unknown group of law enforcement officers tasked with enforcing the state's laws on animal health and safety across the commonwealth.