



Arizona Department of Agriculture

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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Veterinarian Retires

(Phoenix – Ariz.) After 25 years of protecting animals for the state, Dr. Richard Willer is retiring from the Arizona Department of Agriculture (ADA) effective September 3, 2008. Dr. Willer has witnessed the evolution of animal diseases and science during his tenure. He's served in the Animal Disease Control and the Meat and Poultry Inspection Programs, spending the last 16 year as the Arizona State Veterinarian.

"Throughout his career, Dr. Willer has been instrumental in Arizona's successful livestock disease control and eradication programs," said ADA Director Don Butler. "He has a keen understanding of the regulatory aspects of animal health on a state, national, and international level."

Dr. Willer has traveled around the world ensuring Arizona agriculture is protected against disease and works extensively with his counterparts in Mexico. Dr. Willer represented the ADA in the agricultural worktables during the Arizona Mexico Commission's Plenary Sessions and Border Governor Conferences.

Working with Arizona cattlemen, veterinarians in private practice, Cooperative Extension leaders, and the Arizona Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory, Dr. Willer helped design and implement the Arizona Livestock Incident Response Team (ALIRT). This team concept serves as a model for other states to investigate adverse animal health events.

During Dr. Willer's presidency of the United States Animal Health Association in 2005, he worked tirelessly to enhance committee structure and communications. His colleagues in the National Assembly of State Chief Livestock Health Officials and USDA continue to recognize and seek his leadership.

The Animal Services Division will host a retirement reception for Dr. Willer in our 3rd floor conference room Tuesday, September 2nd, from 1 pm to 3 pm.

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