

MDARD Director Jamie Clover Adams Appoints Dr. James Averill as State Veterinarian

LANSING - Today, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) Director Jamie Clover Adams announced that Dr. James Averill has been appointed State Veterinarian within MDARD's Animal Industry Division effective June 9, 2013. Former State Veterinarian Dr. Steve Halstead will serve as the department's liaison between Michigan's livestock industry, Michigan State University, and MDARD working to bring greater focus, alignment and collaboration around efforts to strengthen and grow the industry.

"As part of my commitment to streamline and provide greater efficiency, merging the role of the Animal Industry Division Director and State Veterinarian just makes sense. As Animal Industry's Division Director, Dr. Averill has done an excellent job serving the people, farmers, and producers of Michigan for the past two years and I look forward to his leadership in the years ahead," said Clover Adams. "I also thank Dr. Halstead for his service and commitment to animal health and welfare in Michigan as well as nationally as the past president of the U.S. Animal Health Association."

The State Veterinarian is Michigan's chief of regulatory veterinary medicine. He oversees disease surveillance, prevention, and response impacting the state's multi-billion dollar animal agriculture sector.

"I am honored by this appointment and look forward to the new role," said Dr. Averill. "I'm fortunate to have a great team in the Animal Industry Division and we will keep working to protect the health and welfare of the state's livestock industry and companion animals."

Dr. Averill was born and raised in Maine on a dairy and sheep farm. He came to Michigan to attend Michigan State University where he received his doctor of veterinary medicine and doctor of philosophy. Dr. Averill came to work for MDARD in 2009 as the Bovine Tuberculosis Program Coordinator and became Division Director in 2011.

As part of its animal health mission, MDARD's Animal Industry Division and State Veterinarian works closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Veterinary Services and Wildlife Services, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, as well as other state and federal agencies, private practice veterinarians, and local law enforcement.

For more information, visit www.michigan.gov/mdard.