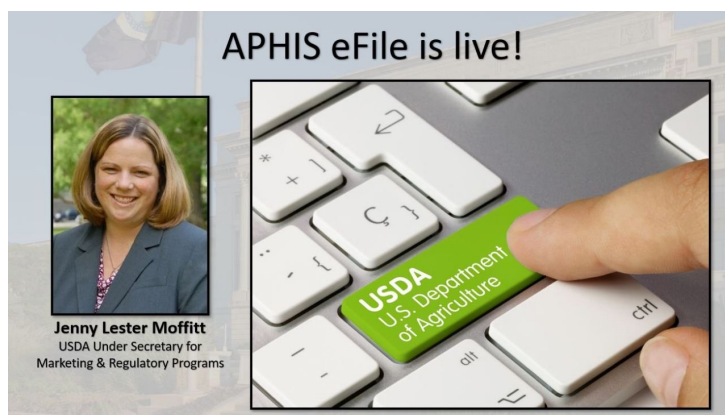


## USDA, APHIS leverages eFile system to streamline plant health and animal welfare licensing activities

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announces completion of its eFile system, a digital platform that streamlines the permitting and licensing process for animal and plant health and animal welfare activities. Through eFile, APHIS is modernizing regulatory services for its customers while supporting the Agency's mission to safeguard animal and plant health.

APHIS eFile is a one-stop shop for all APHIS-issued registrations, permits, and other licenses. It allows stakeholders to apply for and manage permits and licenses online and provides real-time tracking of application status. APHIS eFile also automates many of the manual tasks involved in the permitting and licensing process, making it more efficient and accurate.

APHIS eFile is a major step forward in modernizing our permitting and licensing process," said Michael Watson, APHIS Acting Administrator. "It automates more than 70% of our licensing and permitting processes and makes it easier for stakeholders to comply with our regulations, so we can focus on protecting animal and plant health and welfare."

APHIS's Animal Care (AC), Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), Veterinary Services (VS), and Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) programs now all successfully provide customers and stakeholder services through eFile.

APHIS eFile's successful implementation across these programs has yielded significant improvements for both customers and employees. AC's Learning Registration Assistant reduced calls to specialists by assisting over 57,100 users, while VS's Permitting Assistant helped avoid unnecessary applications and accelerated permit processing, issuing nearly 33,500 permits.

PPQ's eFile streamlined permitting issuance, reducing processing time from weeks to minutes, while BRS's Permitting Assistant empowered users by enabling them to determine permit requirements before applying.