

# FDA FACT SHEET

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## FOOD EMERGENCY RESPONSE NETWORK (FERN) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT PROGRAM

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### *Program Description*

- The FERN CAP provides funding for microbiological, chemical, and/or radiological state, local and tribal laboratories to help increase the analytical capacity and expertise in the event of food outbreaks or other large-scale food emergency events requiring surge capacity testing of implicated food samples.
- Enhancements will be supported through:
  - training in current food methodologies
  - method validation and enhancement participation
  - analysis of surveillance and outbreak samples
  - facility and equipment upgrades
  - supply and personnel provision
- 171 laboratories representing all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
- 5 geographic regions
- Over 4,000 samples analyzed
- Over 1,200 analysts trained
- Integral member of the Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks (ICLN) managed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

### FDA Investment History

- **Chemical:** 14 laboratories up to \$378,000 each annually.
- **Microbiological:** 14 laboratories up to \$257,000 annually.
- **Radiological:** 5 laboratories up to \$240,000 each annually.

### Intended Outcomes

- **Prevention:** provide early means of detecting threat agents in the U.S. food supply.
- **Preparedness:** prepare food testing laboratories to respond to emergencies.
- **Response:** provide surge capacity for the nation to respond to food emergencies.
- **Recovery:** restore consumer confidence in food supply after an emergency threat.

### Program Metrics

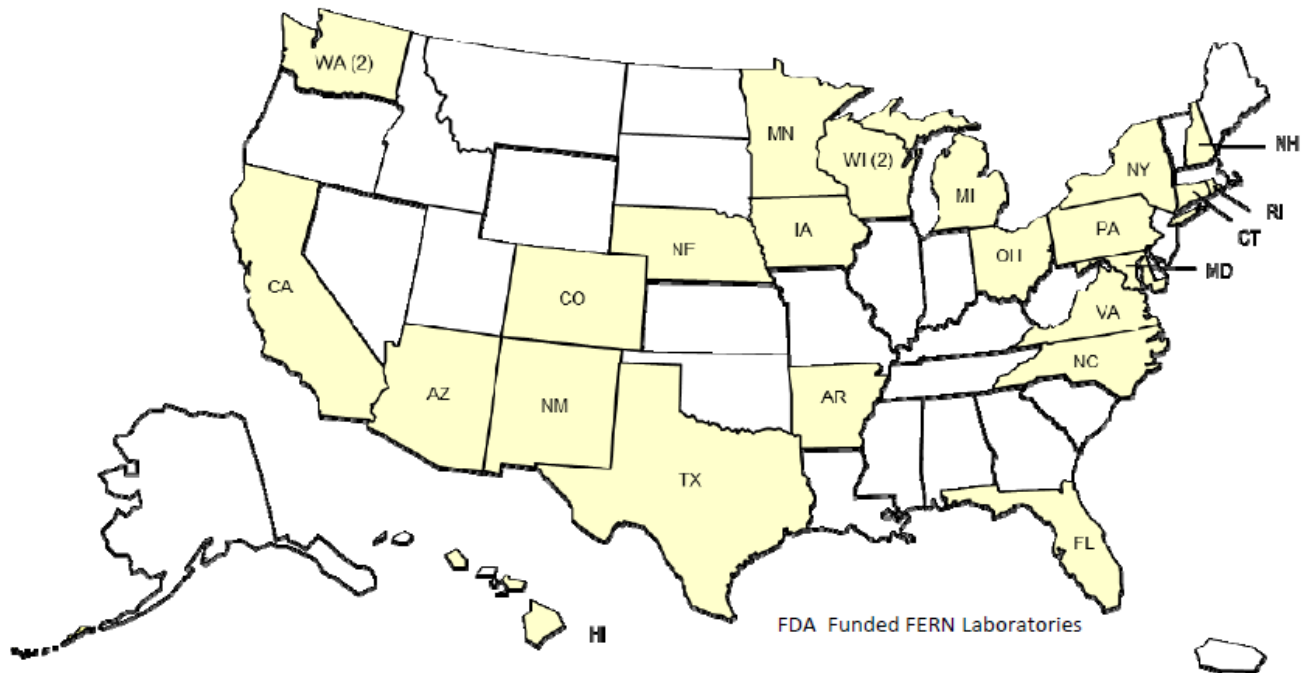
- Current program funding: \$8.8M
- Current number of awards: 26
- Average cost per cooperative agreement: \$384,615.38

### Surveillance & Activation

#### Accomplishments

- E. coli 0157:H7 in spinach (2006)
- Salmonella in peppers (2008)
- Melamine in pet food and infant formula (2007-2009)
- Salmonella in peanut butter (2009)
- Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill (2010)
- Radiological Crisis in Japan (2011)
- High Volume Surveillance – Avocados (2014 & 2015)

**Figure 1. FERN Cooperative Agreement States (2016-2017)**



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