

# Increased ILHAC Funding to Aid Animal Agriculture



*Principal investigators on the ILHAC funded grants, pictured from the left, Daniel Linhares, Olufemi Fasina, Mohamed El-Gazzar, Rahul Nelli, Gustavo Silva.*

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Increased funding from the Iowa State Legislature in the current fiscal year has allowed Iowa State University's College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) to provide seed grants to research projects designed to advance the health, well-being and profitability of Iowa's \$32.6 billion livestock production industry.

CVM received \$291,390 in FY25 for the Iowa Livestock Health Advisory Council (ILHAC). This group was created in 1977 to strengthen Iowa's animal-agriculture industry as a cooperative effort between Iowa livestock industry stakeholders, the State of Iowa and the College of Veterinary Medicine.

"The increased funding has allowed faculty in the College of Veterinary Medicine to rapidly address evolving animal health issues such as high-path avian influenza (HPAI), porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus (PRRSV), antimicrobial resistance (AMR), avian metapneumovirus and other diseases that impact Iowa's animal agriculture industry," said Dr. Dan Grooms, the Stephen G. Juelsgaard Dean of Veterinary Medicine.

Examples of high impact research projects made possible with the additional funding include:

Investigating antibiotic usage during the nursery phase in commercial swine production facilities. This is a highly vulnerable period for piglets due to stress and disease challenges. CVM researchers will identify key risk factors driving antibiotic use including health status, seasonality and management practices.

Developing surveillance and reporting tools for early key production indicators of PRRSV in swine breeding herds.

Investigating the interaction between HPAI H5N1 and critical host proteins to uncover how the virus can adapt to different host species such as dairy cattle. Influenza viruses have a significant economic impact on the swine, poultry and dairy industries and this research will provide crucial insights into preventing and controlling flu outbreaks across different species.

Establishing an infection model of Avian Metapneumovirus in turkeys, a critical step in the development of live attenuated vaccines. Avian metapneumovirus subtypes A and B were diagnosed for the first time in the United States in 2024 and have quickly spread across multiple states. There are currently no effective vaccines to combat this costly disease approved for use in the United States.

Establishing a bovine mammary organoid model for developing more effective treatments for coliform mastitis in dairy cattle. Clinical mastitis can compromise animal welfare, milk production and food safety significantly.