Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health (DCPAH)

Established in response to an unprecedented number of cattle deaths on farms throughout Michigan in 1973 and 1974, MSU’s Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health (DCPAH) assisted the state in the management of toxic polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs), a fire-retardant chemical that had been inadvertently mixed with cattle feed. The subsequent discovery of human PBB exposure from contaminated dairy products emphasized the central role of a state-of-the-art veterinary diagnostic laboratory in the protection of animal and human health.

Since that time, DCPAH’s mandate has been to protect the public by ensuring the health of animals in the state of Michigan and around the nation. In the more than 30 years since its inception, the Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health has become one of the country’s premier veterinary diagnostic laboratories. The laboratory handles more than 220,000 cases involving approximately 1.5 million tests annually. The ever-increasing demand underscores the importance of having trusted, quality diagnostic information to meet the nation’s myriad animal and human health needs.

The Michigan State University Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health is an invaluable resource in identifying, tracking, and addressing emerging animal and public health issues. DCPAH faculty and staff currently work with national, state, and local officials to research and counter threats like avian influenza, bovine tuberculosis, West Nile virus, and chronic wasting disease. The establishment of—and strong state support for—this important facility benefits pet owners and the livestock and wildlife industries, making quality, trusted, and comprehensive veterinary diagnostics widely available. Income from the laboratory is reinvested in teaching, research, and outreach for the purpose of protecting human and animal welfare domestically and around the world.