Unlocking Insights from USDA APHIS Inspection Reports: Navigating Data and AI Applications
8/12/25 Webinar Question Responses from JVR Shelter Strategies

The responses, views or opinions presented are solely those of the speakers and do not necessarily represent those of Life of Riley at Spring Point.

14:46:41 From Jim to Everyone:

Is there data available re: the number of commercial breeders who are NOT routinely inspected. And, the amount of time that lapses before re-inspection. And, finally, the actions taken against repeat non-compliance situations?

Our dataset captures completed inspections, so it is possible to infer time between published inspections. The actions taken against repeat non-compliance situations are not usually contained within the inspection reports, but rather the inspection reports would be what prompts corrective actions.

14:54:10 From Melina to Everyone:

Is this just based on the CFR text, or does it also use tech notes or other information that USDA has put out to licensees?

The CFR Ask tool currently integrates two main sources:

- The official Code of Federal Regulations (Title 9, Animal Welfare).
- The text of non-compliance citations from USDA APHIS inspection reports.

It does not yet include USDA "Tech Notes" or training/educational materials, though those could be added in the future.

15:04:26 From Lorna to Everyone:

curious about violations related to practicing veterinary medicine without a license.
15:14:30 From Lorna to Everyone:

Thanks! The specific language practicing veterinary medicine without a license may not be used in the reports but we know it happens all the time. Are you saying that the inspectors report it to the state vet boards but don't put that in their reports? maybe different wording might reveal something? Will have to play with this AI to see what might be found or maybe identify a gap?

Practicing veterinary medicine without a license falls under the jurisdiction of state veterinary licensing boards, not the Animal Welfare Act. Therefore, you will not see it listed as a non-compliant item in USDA APHIS inspection reports. If an inspector observes something that might be considered a "practice act violation" under state law, it would not be documented in that way. Instead, the inspector would describe the situation in terms of federal non-compliance

and cite it under an applicable AWA standard (for example, §2.131 - handling in a manner that does not cause trauma). If information were ever referred to a state licensing board, it would not be documented publicly in USDA inspection reports.

15:06:32 From Melina to Everyone:

When you filter by dogs in the search tool, it pulls up only inspections with dogs recorded as present during that inspection. There are other inspections for those same dog breeding facilities that do not have dogs present during those inspections, such as attempted inspections (2.126(b)

Access and inspection of records and property; submission of itineraries). Are you accounting for those inspections in your analysis and tool? When you list the top violation types, did you include those violations? And can you ask questions about attempted inspections to the chatbot?

Attempted inspections and inspections where dogs are not present at the time of inspection are excluded from the top violation types and chatbot dataset. Our current focus is on non-compliance text on completed inspections of facilities containing dogs.

15:10:57 From Joyce to Everyone:

Could this create a report about trends in compliance or violations for a specific US state over a number or years?

In the application's current state it cannot utilize any dimensions like location or timeframes. This is an area we want to explore, but the current system focuses on the topics and similarities in the non-compliance narrative.

15:12:23 From Melina to Everyone:

Do you plan to expand this to include Class B dog dealers, some of whom also breed their own dogs, as well as brokering?

Yes, the application began by including Class B and C licensees alongside Class A. However, development is necessary to branch them out into different groups.

15:14:32 From Andrew to Everyone:

Can you extract data on the number of breeding animals across the USA?

While it is possible to gain an estimate using the structured inspection report dataset using assumptions this is not a feature of the current application.

15:19:37 From Candace to Everyone:

For many of these sample prompts, AI cannot answer at all or correctly because the answer is "it depends" on several fronts. How do you want people to think about this so that frustration and misinformation do not occur (or occur minimally)?

Jyothi V. Robertson: 👍

We want people to use this as a tool to enhance their current process of understanding or research, but not replace verification using other sources. I would suggest users approach this tool with curiosity and caution. It can be a useful starting point for exploration, but not a definite truth. If you come across any frustrating use cases of the application please write them down in the feedback form.