



# Arizona Department of Agriculture

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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## **NEW STATE VET HIRED** **Experience Benefits Animal and Public Health**

(Phoenix) Director Mark Killian announced the appointment of Dr. Peter Mundschenk as the new State Veterinarian. Dr. Mundschenk had been Acting State Veterinarian prior to accepting the position.

“Dr. Mundschenk’s professional history shows a deep dedication to all animal health,” said Leatta McLaughlin, associate director of Animal Services Division at the Department of Agriculture. “After starting his own private practice working with large and small animals, he’s worked with federal, state and local governments establishing animal health programs to protect animals and the public.”

Since joining the department last year, Dr. Mundschenk created the Arizona program to protect the public and industry from avian influenza. Part of the program includes staffing and funding for an outreach program to educate people with backyard chickens, ducks, geese and exotic birds. People often are in close contact in small poultry operations creating a risk of catching diseases that affect people and animals.

As State Veterinarian, Dr. Mundschenk is responsible for the prevention and tracking of animal diseases. Many of which are a threat to public health through the food system and spreading through other close contact or vectors such as mosquitoes and flies. The State Veterinarian also provides veterinary oversight to the program that inspects meat and poultry operations.

“One of the top priorities for our state is having a strong State Veterinarian,” said Mark Killian, Director. “I know Dr. Mundschenk is the right person to support the agriculture industry, livestock businesses and the production of animal food in our state.”

The Department held meetings in May with partners in all fields of agriculture. The strongest request from every meeting was to hire a State Veterinarian.

Dr. Mundschenk replaces Dr. Perry Durham who left the Department last year.

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