WVDL FALL NEWSLETTER

November 2026

Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

Message From The Director

WVDL Shines at AAVLD/USAHA and What's Ahead

Thank you for taking the time to read WVDL's Fall Newsletter. Please share it within your organization, and let us know if you have questions. Now, for the news. Hosting the AAVLD/USAHA annual meeting in Madison put WVDL's talent on full display. We welcomed six tours and strategic meetings at the lab, including 80 laboratory directors and partners from TraceFirst, Indical Bioscience, AVM, and Vet-LIRN. Our team presented seven posters and three oral presentations, led three symposia, and served on seven national committees.



As co-chair of the Joint Committee on NAHLN, I helped advance resolutions urging USDA to fund New World screwworm preparedness, award lab cooperative agreement funds before June 30, modernize IDIQ testing contracts, and build bulk tank milk testing for FMD.

We hosted 80 people for dinner for the Laboratory Director's Committee and Dr. Kevin Lahmers of Virginia Tech summed it up well: working with our team shows "why WVDL has such a strong national reputation for being a great place to work."

Disease watch: H5N1 B3.13 continues to spread in dairy cattle in WA, ID, TX, UT, CA, and KS. The virus is changing in ways we don't yet fully understand, so stay tuned. New World screwworm cases were also reported in AZ, TX, and NM in late October.

Save the date: Join us Thursday, Dec. 3, for the free Bovine Genetic Export meeting at WVDL. A virtual option is available, and the meeting offers 5 CE credits.

Keith

ANNUAL WVDL BOVINE GENETICS MEETING - MARK YOUR CALENDARS



Please mark your calendars for the upcoming Annual WVDL Bovine Genetic Export Meeting held at the WVDL on **Thursday, December 3, 2026**. For more information on this annual event, please check out the RSVP link below and there will be more information on the meeting agenda forth coming soon. To secure your spot at the meeting RSVP here: https://forms.gle/i1uVkPf4Z1ozfrgs7 .
RSVP deadline is Wednesday, November 25, 2026. Hope to see you there!

WVDL Hosting the Annual AAVLD/USAHA Conference in Madison

The Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory was proud to host and participate in the AAVLD/USAHA Annual Meeting in Madison, WI, connecting with veterinary diagnostic laboratories, industry partners, and animal health leaders from across the country. WVDL staff shared research through seven scientific posters and three oral presentations, highlighting work in areas such as influenza testing, Salmonella diagnostics, and antimicrobial susceptibility testing. These efforts help advance diagnostic methods and strengthen the tools available to veterinarians and animal health professionals. WVDL also contributed to national discussions and resolutions focused on



emerging disease preparedness, sustainable diagnostic laboratory funding, and bulk tank milk surveillance for foreign animal diseases. Collaboration at meetings like this helps WVDL stay at the forefront of veterinary diagnostics, support disease surveillance and preparedness, and continue providing reliable, high-quality diagnostic services to the veterinarians, producers, and animal health professionals who depend on us.



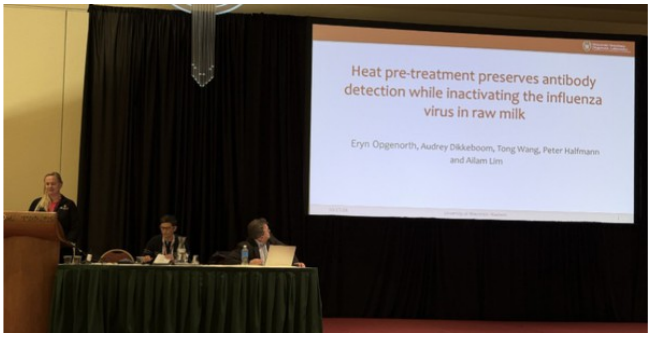
WVDL hosted many tours of the lab during the conference. Thanks to the visitors from the Association of Veterinary Microbiologists toured the WVDL while in town for the AAVLD conference



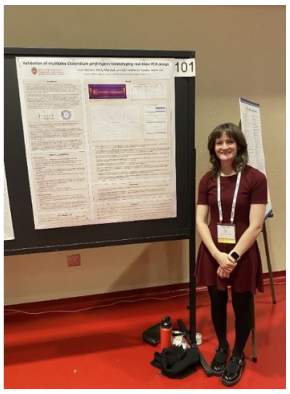
Annual AAVLD Directors meeting was hosted by the WVDL at the Madison lab during the AAVLD conference.



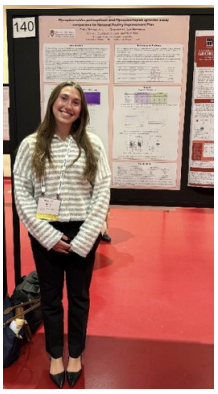
Some of the WVDL Pathologists and Client Service DVMs that presented topics at the "Calf Conundrums" Symposia at the AAVLD conference



Eryn Opgenorth (Virology) presented “Heat pre-treatment preserves antibody detection while inactivating the influenza virus in raw milk" at the AAVLD conference.



APHL summer intern Cayli Watson together with Molecular team members authored and presented a poster on "Validation of multiplex Clostridium perfringens toxinotyping real-time PCR assays".



APHL summer intern Emily Blattner, together with Molecular team members authored and presented a poster on "Mycoplasmoides gallisepticum and Mycoplasmopsis synoviae assay comparison for the National Poultry Improvement Plan".

WVDL Director Search

The WVDL is launching a search for a new director. Dr. Keith Poulsen, WVDL director since September 2018, will continue as director until a successor is found. Following the appointment of a new director, Keith will continue supporting WVDL as a clinical professor.

The national search will be led by Isaacson, Miller in partnership with a search committee comprised of WVDL staff, WVDL board members, and external stakeholders. Dr. Kristen Bernard, retired chair of the School of Veterinary Medicine's Department of Pathobiological Sciences and former interim WVDL Chief Operating Officer, will chair the search. The goal is to identify the next executive director by late winter.

The University is committed to ensuring continuity of operations during this transition and is steadfast in their commitment to WVDL's mission: to deliver high-quality veterinary diagnostics and exemplary customer service to promote animal and public health and the vitality of the state and national agricultural economy. Questions about the search can be directed to Dean Jon Levine at deansoffice@vetmed.wisc.edu.

Bacteriology Update

Prototheca Mastitis Survey

The Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (WVDL) is conducting this survey to better understand the occurrence, diagnosis, management, and economic impact of *Prototheca* mastitis in dairy herds. Your responses are anonymous and confidential, and will be reported only in aggregate.

Dairy Veterinarians

We want your perspective

Scan to take survey



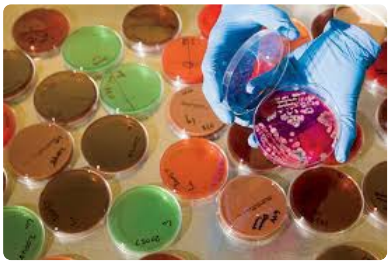
Dairy Producers & Professionals

What does Prototheca look like on dairy farms?

Whether you have dealt with it or not, your experience helps build the picture

Scan to take survey





Updates to Reporting Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (AST) Results

The WVDL is updating its reporting of antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST) results to align with Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) guidelines and FDA regulations governing extra-label drug use in animals.

The laboratory uses the broth microdilution method to determine the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) of selected antimicrobials against bacterial isolates. The MIC is the lowest concentration (µg/mL) of an antimicrobial agent that inhibits the growth of a bacterial strain *in vitro*. MIC values are used to categorize bacterial isolates as Susceptible (S), Intermediate (I), Resistant (R), and, when applicable, Susceptible Dose-Dependent (SDD) or Non-Susceptible (NS). These interpretations are based on clinical breakpoints established from *in vitro* studies, pharmacokinetic/pharmacodynamic data, and clinical efficacy studies. Selection of an antimicrobial should not be based solely on the lowest MIC value reported. A lower MIC does not

necessarily indicate greater clinical efficacy. Clinical breakpoints are essential for interpreting MIC values and guiding appropriate antimicrobial selection.

Veterinary-specific interpretive criteria are not available for all drug-organism-host species combinations. When interpretive criteria derived from other host species or disease indications are applied, confidence in predicting clinical treatment outcomes is low. An MIC value reported as No Interpretation (NI) indicates that no clinical breakpoints have been established for that antimicrobial. Use of these MIC values is at the discretion of the submitting veterinarian.

The updated reports will include all relevant antimicrobials available on Sensititre® panels (Thermo Fisher Scientific), along with MIC values and interpretive categories when available. The reports will exclude certain antimicrobials associated with significant adverse reactions, the potential for violative residues in food-producing animals, or those considered critically important for human medicine.

Antimicrobial susceptibility reports are intended to support antimicrobial selection and are not treatment recommendations. Veterinarians remain responsible for all therapeutic decisions, including the selection and use of approved or extra-label antimicrobials, dosing regimens, and client education regarding meat and milk withdrawal times.

CLSI's MicroFree® resource provides free access to valuable information on antimicrobial susceptibility testing. Please contact WVDL if you have questions regarding AST results or their interpretation.

Pathology Update

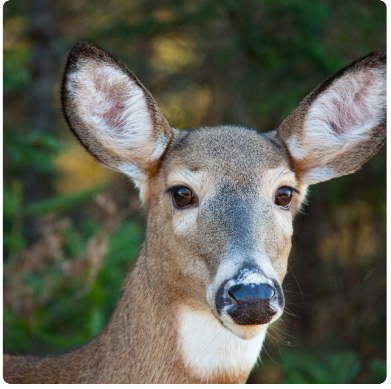


Reminder to follow DATCP Farmed Cervid Official ID Requirements

WVDL began charging $20 per farmed cervid head or carcass that is submitted without an Official ID for Regulatory Sample Collection in the Spring of 2024. This fee covers the cost of the tag and administrative costs associated with applying and recording the Official ID. This is to ensure that all animals submitted to WVDL as a whole carcass or head comply with the DATCP Farmed Cervid Official Identification Requirements.

Furthermore, WVDL has also agreed to report farmed cervids that are received without official identification to DATCP to assist them in ensuring compliance. As a reminder, it is the responsibility of the submitting Veterinarian to ensure that each farmed cervid submitted for CWD testing has an official ID.

CWD in Wisconsin and Beyond



Since its discovery in Southwest Wisconsin's wild deer population back in 2002, the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) Lab at the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (WVDL) has been on the front lines. In an enduring partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the lab has tested an incredible **353,793 animal samples** statewide to provide data to track and manage this fatal neurological disease.

The Latest Numbers: 2025 Season Recap for Wisconsin

- **Statewide Impact:** Out of 18,370 samples tested last season, **2,041 animals (11%)** tested positive for CWD.
- **Active Hotspots:** The Southern Farmland Zone continues to see the highest prevalence, where a stark **22% of samples** (1,760 out of 8,003) tested positive.
- **Geographic Spread:** The footprint of the disease remains broad, with CWD now officially identified in the wild deer herds of **51 out of Wisconsin's 72 counties**.

Looking Ahead: A Massive 2026 Testing Surge

As the 2026 hunting season gets underway, the WVDL is preparing for a massive influx of surveillance samples. The lab's projected testing volume is holding steady compared to last year as we gear up to receive approximately **98,000 total samples** across several species and borders:

- **85,000 wild deer samples** across 12 states and 5 Native American Tribes
- **8,000 cattle** samples
- **2,500 captive cervid** samples
- **2,500 captive sheep and goat** samples

How Hunters Can Help

Hunter participation remains the most vital tool we have to monitor herd health. If you are harvesting this season—especially within designated priority zones—please consider submitting a sample.

To find a convenient local drop-off kiosk, review carcass disposal rules, or check your specific harvest results, visit the Wisconsin DNR CWD Portal.

Virology Update

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) Preparedness



HPAI continues to be at the forefront of WVDL's testing preparedness. As a reminder, wild birds can be infected with HPAI and show no signs of illness. They can carry the disease to new locations when migrating and therefore continue to pose a threat to the poultry industry. The Eurasian H5 strain HPAI outbreak that started in the Spring of 2022 is not yet over. All bird owners should review their biosecurity procedures and continue to stay vigilant to protect poultry and pet birds from HPAI.

Any abnormal clinical signs and/or increase in mortality should be reported to the Wisconsin Dept of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). For more information and guidance on suspect cases they can be reached at (800) 572-8981. Submission forms and collection supply forms may be found on the WVDL website: https://www.wvdl.wisc.edu/submission-and-order-forms/. **Please be sure to fill out the submission form completely and include the reason for testing.**



Representing WVDL in Greece at the 2026 EAVLD

Dr. Ailam Lim delivered two oral presentations and presented two posters at the EAVLD Congress the following the week of AAVLD. The oral presentations presented on were: "*Heat Pre-treatment Preserves Antibody Detection While Inactivating Influenza Virus in Raw Milk"* and *"Increased Molecular Workflow Efficiency for Influenza A Virus Testing in Milk".* These presentations were very well received by attendees who were particularly impressed by the Wisconsin National Milk Testing Strategy, highlighting its high testing throughput, operational efficiency, and streamlined workflow for large-scale influenza surveillance in milk.

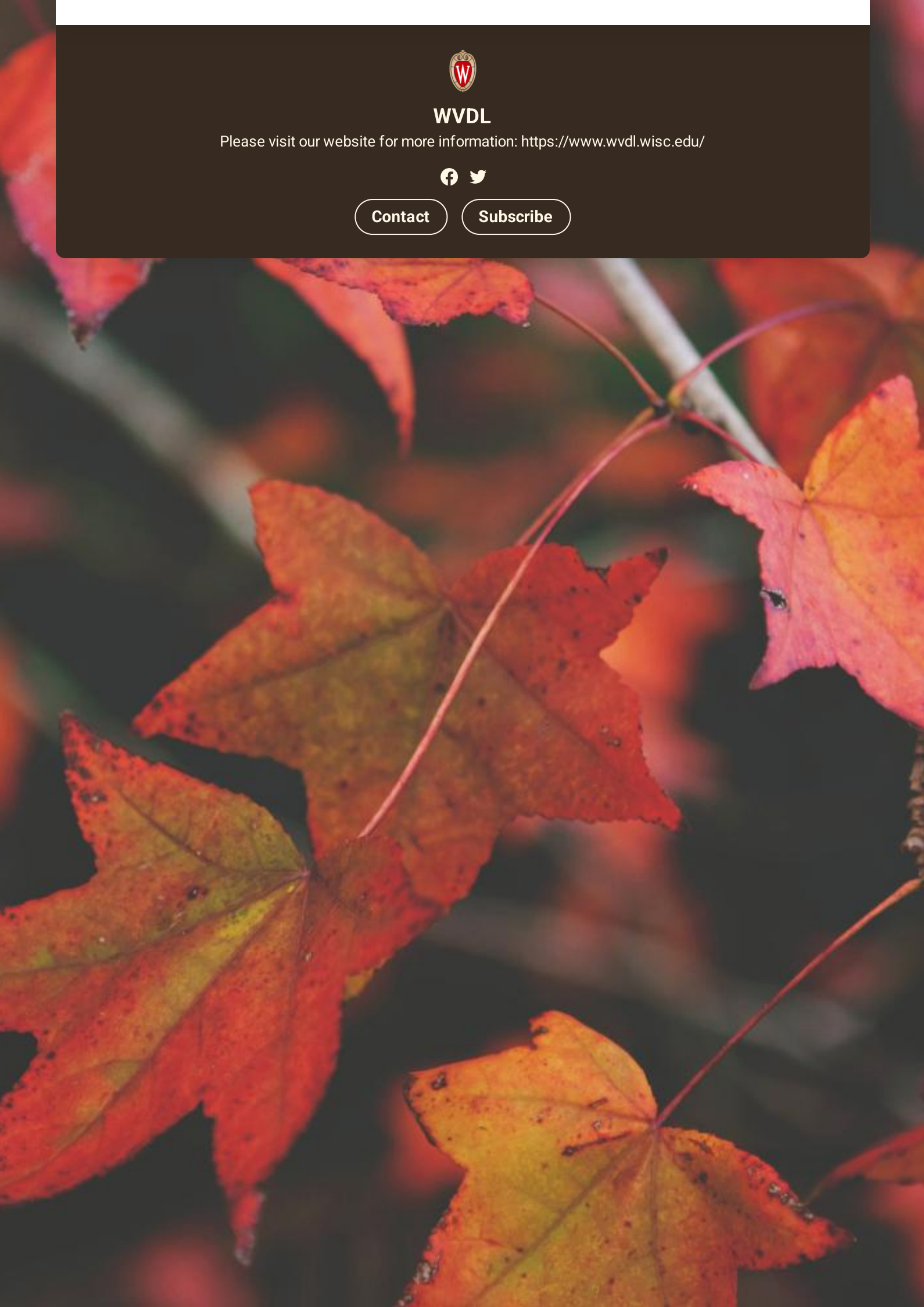
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