



UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

2012 RESOLUTION

116TH ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 18-24, 2012 ~ GREENSBORO, NC

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1 and 25 Combined **APPROVED**

SOURCE: **USAHA/AAVLD JOINT COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION**

SUBJECT MATTER: **USE OF 840 RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION EAR
TAGS FOR USE IN IDENTIFICATION OF FOOT-AND-
MOUTH DISEASE “VACCINATED-TO-LIVE” LIVESTOCK**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

If the United States experiences a foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak within its borders, it will require an effective and efficient collaborative response from state and federal government and the livestock industry. The scope and severity of the outbreak will determine what particular methods of control, mitigation, and eradication are chosen. One of the key decisions will be the need to utilize FMD vaccination to mitigate disease spread and assist in controlling the outbreak. If a decision to use FMD vaccination is chosen one of the vaccination options is a “vaccination-to-live” strategy. One important component of a “vaccination-to-live” strategy is the permanent identification and subsequent tracking of livestock that have been vaccinated for FMD. Because a “vaccination-to-live” strategy may be used in dairy herds, breeding herds, and seed-stock operations, the most efficient method of identifying and managing those livestock would be through the use of an official electronic identification (ID) ear tag. Official 840 radio frequency identification (RFID) ear tags are “connected” to an official state livestock premises registration number and have proven advantages in speed and efficiency over official metal ID ear tags. It has been demonstrated that the official 840 RFID tags have a greater capability to assist animal health officials to trace, control, and contain livestock diseases. Livestock movements documented through 840 RFID ear tags would help to minimize the negative economic impacts of interstate transport restrictions that will occur during a significant foreign animal disease outbreak.

Currently, the only FMD vaccination ear tags in the National Veterinary Stockpile are pink, metal clip-on tags. It is acknowledged that the metal ear tags are considerably less expensive than 840 RFID ear tags and could be effectively used in animals where a “vaccination-to-slaughter” option is implemented. However the management of the FMD “vaccinated-to live” animals would be more difficult and time-consuming without the use of 840 RFID ear tags. If Veterinary Services engaged in indefinite

delivery/ indefinite quantity contracts with tag manufacturers to supply 840 RFID tags in the event of an FMD outbreak, then an inventory would not have to be maintained. It is important that these tags do not interfere with or supplant traceability requirements at the State or Federal level, and be synchronized with any existent or future traceability strategy. Tags could also be of a color with high visibility and bear the acronym “FMD” in a highly contrasted color-type to avoid any confusion and issues with those who are color blind.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians urge the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to develop contracts with appropriate vendors to supply unique 840 radio frequency identification ear tags on demand for use in appropriate livestock that have been vaccinated for foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in a “vaccination-to-live” strategy as part of the unified state-federal FMD response operations. Tags should be visually identifiable and easily differentiated from tags used for other programs or purposes.

INTERIM RESPONSE:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS currently has a small inventory of 840 radio frequency identification (RFI) ear tags (approximately 50,000) which are currently available for animal health emergencies.

APHIS is constantly evaluating foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) response policy and has assembled a project team of subject matter experts to develop a FMD response policy that will take into account the use of vaccine as a viable tool to respond and control an outbreak. APHIS welcomes the opportunity to improve FMD preparedness by working with the United States Animal Health Association and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (USAHA/AAVLD), as well as with other stakeholders, to identify priorities for FMD preparedness. APHIS suggests the formation of a working group to evaluate and provide input on the prospective FMD policy response and capabilities, to establish priorities that align with existing resources, to explore public-private partnerships to further advance FMD preparedness, and to address the physical characteristics of an 840 RFI ear tag for FMD. APHIS suggests addressing the creation of the working group during the next USAHA Committee on Government Relations Meeting scheduled for February 2013. USAHA/AAVLD Resolution 3 (FMD Vaccine) is a closely related issue. Therefore APHIS suggests combining resolutions 1, 3, and 25 to approach them as a whole with broad stakeholder input.