

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 1      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON JOHNE'S DISEASE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** PROGRAM STANDARD REVISION WITH UPDATED HERD CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The *Uniform Program Standards for the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program* was last revised in 2006. The Committee on Johne's Disease Scientific Advisory Subcommittee has been tasked to propose an improved basis for the Herd Classification System to provide better scientific accuracy for defining herd levels based upon true within herd prevalence. The new proposed Herd Classification System would have 6 levels of quantified risk for Johne's disease with increased flexibility on testing options to advance to the next level in the classification system. This increased flexibility allows producers more options in determining how to spend their own dollars in the program. The new proposed Herd Classification System would also allow transition from the current system to the new system to ensure continued producer participation.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) adopt the draft *Program Standards for the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program* including the new Herd Classification System. Additionally, USAHA requests USDA-APHIS-VS develop associated educational materials for the Johne's Program to inform producers about the new program standards including changes and transition to the new Herd Classification System.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) plans to adopt the concept of the new herd classification system by incorporating it into the *Program Standards for the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program*. The changes are expected by late spring. Additionally, VS will work through the National Johne's Disease Education Initiative to develop materials to prepare producers and veterinarians for changes to the program standards.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 2 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** KNOWLEDGE AND CAPABILITY GAPS RELATED TO MASS ANIMAL MORTALITY MANAGEMENT

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Recent natural disasters and animal disease events requiring disposal of mass animal mortality illustrate the need to be prepared for incident-dependant disposal challenges of large-scale poultry and livestock losses. Advantages and disadvantages of existing carcass disposal technologies and environmental health consequences of burial have not been adequately studied, thus the long term impacts of burial remain unknown. Better information on the impact of leachate and gasses produced by burial or composting methods and the impact of end-products of emerging disposal methods is in demand.

Other disposal issues, such as safe and legal disposal of animals possibly affected by prion diseases, reduced capacity of the rendering industry, and the additional disposal restrictions imposed on animal industries as a result of the 2008 Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Ban rule entitled "Substances Prohibited from Use in Animal Food or Feed" require further evaluation of current and emerging disposal methods. Recent livestock industry and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) memos and policy statements also support research to develop appropriate animal disposal mechanisms subsequent to the FDA rule and for disaster response.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) work with and encourage the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and appropriate research entities to support:

- Expanded research to assess short and long-term impacts on animal, public and environmental health of existing and emerging carcass disposal methods and the development of environmentally-friendly best management practices.
- Animal agriculture emergency management funding streams to enable state and local agriculture or animal health agencies to address gaps in capacity to rapidly handle carcass surges in case of mass animal casualties, such as expanding landfill areas, establishing composting sites, and expanding rendering capacity. Equipment and systems for carcass disposal should be added to the Homeland Security Approved Equipment List to enable states to more readily respond to emergency animal carcass disposal needs.

## **RESPONSE:**

### **USDA-ARS**

ARS stands ready to assist the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) in developing a better understanding of the impact of carcass disposal methods. We will work with APHIS to understand their research needs in this area.

### **US Environmental Protection Agency**

Let me assure you that EPA shares the goal of your resolution and is jointly involved with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS) in many activities that are designed to support this important capability gap. As you may know, USDA/APHIS is the lead federal agency for animal and plant health issues including carcass disposal during foreign animal disease outbreaks and also supports other causes of animal mortalities, such as natural or man-made disasters. EPA provides technical and research support to USDA and other federal agencies on disposal issues for these events. As a result, EPA is currently working with the agencies named in your resolution on these issues in the following efforts:

- EPA and USDA/APHIS are co-chairs of the White House Foreign Animal Disease Threats Subcommittee Decontamination and Disposal working group which provides input into the US Government's planning activities for research and development to address foreign animal disease responses;
- EPA participates with USDA/APHIS and other federal agencies on the Agricultural Governmental Coordinating Council which has been actively involved in supporting exercises designed to test the government's capability to respond to emergencies involving these issues;
- EPA's National Homeland Security Research Center, working with USDA/APHIS and the Department of Defense, is jointly developing a transportable gasifier for on-farm disposal of large animal mortalities;

- EPA, working with USDA/APHIS, is developing a web-based decision support tool for responders, regulators, and other decision makers to provide information needed for determining appropriate disposal pathways for animal mortalities generated during a foreign animal disease event;
- EPA, working with USDA/APHIS and the National Renderers Association, recently initiated a project to assess fugitive emissions of biological agents from the rendering process and to develop operating procedures to return a rendering plant back to normal operation after it is used for disposal rendering in response to a foreign animal disease event;
- EPA participates with the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Food and Agriculture Sector Committee which is also involved in addressing these issues. This DHS committee is made up of all of the federal agencies mentioned in your resolution as well as representatives from the private sector; and,
- EPA is conducting a research project to assess the persistence of H5N1 avian influenza in environmental media and is investigating the use of low-cost, environmentally benign disinfectants and the effectiveness of low tech cleanup methods such as pressure washing and detergents for use in foreign animal disease responses involving the poultry industry.

As your resolution states, there are numerous research gaps related to carcass disposal. As you can see, EPA is very involved in addressing this gap and will continue to work with USDA/APHIS and other federal and state partners in supporting efforts to improve this important capability. Thank you for your associations work in bringing recognition to this important need. I am sure our joint efforts in this area will help improve this capability.

#### **INTERIM RESPONSE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services appreciates the United States Animal Health Association's interest in mass animal mortality management.

APHIS supports this resolution and has initiated several projects in collaboration with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to address some of the concerns mentioned in the first part of the resolution. APHIS is participating in a project funded by EPA and conducted by ARS at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center in New York. The project investigates the efficacy of generic disinfectants on animal pathogens on various types of surfaces. The goal of the research is to improve APHIS' biocontainment capabilities. Another Plum Island project was planned to investigate the ability of composting to inactivate foot-and-mouth disease virus. However, Canadian collaborators had conducted the same study and gave APHIS their data. Therefore, APHIS canceled the research project.

APHIS also recently funded an EPA project investigating the fugitive biological emissions (if any) from the rendering process to quantify the risk of disease transmission during rendering of diseased animals. If significant risk is found, the work will evaluate potential risk mitigation measures. APHIS and EPA are also collaborating on the development of an online agricultural biomass decision support tool that provides critical information to responders regarding the location of possible carcass disposal facilities in the United States.

In addition, APHIS often collaborates with States and universities on research projects that are funded by other agencies such as the National Institute of Food and Agriculture and DHS.

However, these projects are a small fraction of the work that is needed to ensure adequate animal emergency response capabilities. Based on work performed by the White House Subcommittee on Foreign Animal Disease Threats, the research gaps related to carcass disposal are numerous, and the projects that have been funded represent a small percentage of the total need. Therefore, APHIS concurs with the resolution and will continue to investigate resources for addressing critical capability gaps.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 3      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** FEDERAL FUNDING FOR A NATIONAL AQUATIC  
ANIMAL PATHOGEN TESTING NETWORK

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In order to protect the health of wild and cultured fish and shellfish, provide quality inspections in support of interstate and international trade, and meet challenges associated with implementation of the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP), the National Aquatic Animal Pathogen Testing Network (NAAPT) is needed. The participating laboratories would all use standardized protocols for the detection of pathogens important in interstate and international trade and to the natural aquatic resources of the nation, or included in the NAAHP. These protocols would specify a standard approach to pathogen detection, calibration and operation of all relevant equipment, and the collection, handling, transport, storage, and preparation of samples for testing. Rather than attempt to establish a NAAPT in a single step, the program should begin with a trial period to demonstrate proof of concept. This effort would use viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) testing as the model for an aquatic disease diagnostic laboratory network. The goals of the trial period would be to:

- a) establish a collaborative structure to develop standardized protocols
- b) gain experience in the establishment of training programs
- c) develop methods to ensure laboratory compliance
- d) develop standardized reference materials for lab use
- e) develop proficiency testing samples for labs
- f) develop mechanisms for collecting lab results
- g) determine test accuracy and sensitivity among laboratories
- h) determine the need for formal centralized training of laboratory personnel
- i) establish a mechanism to validate future pathogen screening methodology

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) / American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Committee on Aquaculture in consultation with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), United States Department of the Interior (USDI), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries has been working to develop a plan that outlines the structure and implementation of this laboratory network.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) in partnership with the United States Department of the Interior (USDI) Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries to provide funding, facilitate, and participate in a pilot National Aquatic Animal Pathogen Testing Network.

## **RESPONSE:**

### **US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service**

As you know, the Service and the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) collaborate on many aquatic animal health issues and have a continuing Memorandum of Understanding on those issues.

The Service has an established history, infrastructure and ongoing testing for aquatic animal pathogens, especially in finfish, through our nine Fish Health Centers and our National Wild Fish Health Survey. It is my hope to expand our efforts into other aquatics, such as amphibians, in the future.

I am sure you appreciate the depth and breadth of our Agency's mission. We will continue to engage with APHIS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service, and other partners, and utilize existing staff, facilities, and funds to support the implementation of the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan and the NAAPTN. The United States Animal Health Association's resolution is an incentive and a welcome voice in support of our collective efforts.

### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is an active partner with USDA/APHIS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the development of the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP). One component of the plan is the implementation of a national laboratory network. NMFS supports the development of this network. We have dedicated resources for staff consultations with our Federal partners for the development of this network and will continue to do so.

The primary mission of our laboratories at the regional science centers is research for the protection and management of U.S. marine resources and ecosystems. Our laboratories do not have funding or other resources to conduct routine pathogen surveillance or provide diagnostic services. It is possible that, as the roles of Federal and State agencies become more defined with the evolution of the NAAHP, our laboratories will undertake a larger role in pathogen screening. NMFS is also an active participant in ICES and in the development of a strategy being put forward by the North Pacific Marine Science Organization to monitor pathogens in wild marine animals. As this strategy evolves, the roles NOAA laboratories might play in this surveillance will become clearer.

**INTERIM RESPONSE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) concerns. VS considers the development of a National Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory Network as a keystone and priority activity within the overall implementation of the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan and will continue to seek the funding flexibility necessary for aquaculture activities through all appropriate channels within the USDA. In the meantime, VS, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration have begun to review the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians/USAHA Aquaculture Committee's Draft Plan for the implementation of a national aquatic animal pathogen testing network that was submitted to VS on October 11, 2009, with the intention of implementing critical building blocks of a laboratory network this fiscal year.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 4 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL AQUATIC  
ANIMAL HEALTH PLAN

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), the United States Department of the Interior (USDOI) Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries have outlined a proposal for a National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP) for the United States. The overall objective of the NAAHP is to assist federal and state agencies and aquaculture industries, combat aquatic animal diseases, meet harmonized interstate and international standard and requirements, and assist the growth of United States aquaculture and protect natural (wild) resources.

Key elements of the NAAHP include: identifying diseases of regulatory concern; developing and validating appropriate laboratory diagnostic assays within a National Aquatic Diagnostic Laboratory Network; and, prevention, control and eradication measures for these diseases. An important component of the NAAHP is the National Advisory Committee for Aquatic Animal Health to provide the opportunity for input from all stakeholders, including representatives from wildlife, agriculture and animal health agencies, the aquaculture industry, veterinary and other fish health experts, and the federal partners.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Federal Advisory Committee for Aquatic Animal Health as described in the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP).

## **RESPONSE:**

### **USDA, APHIS**

We appreciate USAHA sharing its views on the issues in question with our Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and assure you that we will take them under

Careful consideration. We look forward to further dialogue with your organization on these and other issues as we evaluate the health needs of animals in our country and move ahead with important animal health initiatives.

We value USAHA'S longstanding partnership with USDA, and look forward to continued collaboration advancing our mutual efforts to safeguard and promote U.S. animal health.

**INTERIM RESPONSE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) appreciates the United States Animal Health Association's interest in the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP). VS considers the plan a priority to support aquaculture production in the United States. VS supports the creation of a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) for aquatic animal health as described in the NAAHP and is currently exploring options for the implementation of such a committee. These options include creating a new committee or creating a venue for aquatic animal health within an existing Secretary's Advisory Committee. VS will continue to actively pursue the establishment of an FAC for aquatic animal health.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 5, 7, 17, 24, 29, 37, 44, and 45 Combined

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF CATTLE, BISON,  
AND CAMELIDS  
COMMITTEE ON IMPORT-EXPORT  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF SWINE  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF  
POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES  
COMMITTEE ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF HORSES  
COMMITTEE ON SHEEP AND GOATS  
COMMITTEE ON BLUETONGUE AND RELATED  
ORBIVIRUSES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** FAILURE OF IMPORTING COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW WORLD  
ORGANIZATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH GUIDELINES FOR  
IMPORTATIONS OF ANIMALS

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

United States (US) livestock exporters are facing an escalation of animal health requirements by importing countries that make it difficult or impossible to export US genetic material. Many countries are using animal health protocols as bargaining chips in trade negotiations to obtain more favorable treatment for other trading items that have nothing to do with animal health. Many countries are now requiring tests for imported animals for diseases that they have in their own countries and for which they have no control programs. This is contrary to the spirit and recommendations of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code, Chapter 5.1 and article 5.1.2 outlines the responsibilities of the importing country.

Steps should be taken to ensure that importing countries which are members of OIE follow the recommendations of the Animal Health Code.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to initiate all trade negotiations on import and export protocols with reference to

compliance with World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) guidelines and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) rules.

**INTERIM RESPONSE:**

During trade negotiations with foreign governments, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services emphasizes the importance of guidelines from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) outlined in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code. We strive to ensure that the trade protocols we propose are based on current science and OIE guidance.

However, not all countries have the same level of confidence in current science and OIE guidance, and some take a less scientific and more rigid approach to the risk associated with a certain commodity. These countries implement more stringent import restrictions than those based on science-based risk evaluations.

USDA will continue to promulgate a science-based approach and compliance with OIE guidance during all trade negotiations.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 6 and 18 Combined APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF CATTLE, BISON,  
AND CAMELIDS  
COMMITTEE ON WILDLIFE DISEASES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** INVESTIGATION OF RISK POSED BY EMERGING  
PESTIVIRUSES

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

It is well established that infection of livestock with pestiviruses causes significant losses to producers. The primary concerns are reproductive failure, persistently infected animals and the induction of immune suppression in infected animals, possibly leading to more severe disease. Several atypical pestiviruses, for example, hobi and pronghorn pestiviruses, have recently been isolated. Some of these viruses cause reproductive and immunological disease in domestic livestock. Further, it is unknown whether currently available diagnostic tests can detect and differentiate these viruses, and if currently available vaccines are protective. The risk and impact of infection of domestic animals with these atypical pestiviruses is largely undetermined. Research is needed to determine the presence, prevalence, and risk posed to domestic livestock by these emerging pestiviruses. This requires the design and validation of tests to be used in surveillance and differentiation of pestiviruses, as well as development of vaccines that will effectively protect livestock.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS) to initiate research to determine the risk and impact of emerging pestiviruses, especially those that may be difficult to differentiate from bovine viral diarrhea virus, on domestic livestock. Additionally, the USDA-ARS is urged to sustain research to determine the effectiveness of current vaccines and diagnostic assays in protecting domestic livestock industries from the detrimental effect of these viruses.

## **RESPONSE:**

### **USDA**

ARS appreciates the importance of the needs identified by USAHA in the enclosed resolutions. Research on emerging pestiviruses (Resolutions #6 and #18) is critical and beneficial in protecting the animal agriculture industry against emerging disease threats. ARS will continue our current

research on bovine viral diarrhea virus, classical swine fever, and other pestiviruses at the National Animal Disease Center (NADC) in Ames, Iowa, and the Plum Island Animal Disease Center in Orient Point, New York, and pursue opportunities to expand this work as new resources become available. Likewise, ARS has research experience with the Rift Valley Fever virus at our Arthropod Borne Animal Disease Research Laboratory (ABADRL).

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 7 Combined with 5

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON IMPORT – EXPORT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** FAILURE OF IMPORTING COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW WORLD  
ORGANIZATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE) GUIDELINES FOR  
IMPORTATION OF ANIMALS

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# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 8      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF HORSES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** CONTAGIOUS EQUINE METRITIS (CEM)

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), initiated a review of the United States' contagious equine metritis (CEM) import activities. The CEM Program Review Team was comprised of members representing VS' National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL), National Center for Import and Export (NCIE), National Center for Animal Programs (NCAHP), Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB), policy program and development staff, area offices, state veterinarians and university personnel.

The 2009 United States CEM incident involving 48 states and 991 exposed equids initiated "The First Conference of Experts on CEM" at the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) meeting in San Diego on October 9, 2009. The conference purpose and intent was to review recent developments concerning the national incident of CEM, discuss CEM protocols, review ongoing *Taylorella equigenitalis* research, and to discuss possible further CEM research and regulatory actions at the state and federal level. Concerns were addressed on the lack of consistent CEM testing and treatment protocols at both a state and federal level.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to immediately implement the recommendations of the 2007 Contagious Equine Metritis Working Group in VS Memorandum.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Service (VS) has undertaken and completed the majority of the recommendations of the 2007 Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) Working Group. Some recommendations cannot be addressed through a VS memorandum. For example, recommended changes in the testing protocols for mares and stallions require amending

the existing regulations. APHIS anticipates publication of an interim rule incorporating those changes later this year. We have completed training for laboratory personnel and State CEM coordinators. We will be using the Emergency Management Response System as a database for tracking imported horses subject to CEM testing. We have drafted a new VS memorandum regarding testing and treatment of mares and stallions; however, the memorandum includes the revised testing protocols and will not be finalized until after the interim rule is published.

The recommendations included some elements that VS cannot implement. For example, the Review Group recommended hiring a full-time employee to oversee the CEM program, which the APHIS budget and workload could not justify.

Recommendations that were best incorporated in a VS memorandum will be included in the revised testing and treatment memorandum, such as communication of horse movement and test results, revised testing protocols, and standards for CEM facilities.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 9      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND  
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** SUPPORT FOR SECTION 1433 FORMULA FUNDS FOR  
ANIMAL HEALTH AND RESEARCH

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Section 1433 Formula Funds (P.L. 95-113) have been in existence since 1977 and provide an extremely valuable source of funds for fundamental research on diseases of food producing animals. These funds are important funds for the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine and the Veterinary Science departments in the United States. In addition, some of the states with veterinary colleges have in the past provided some monies for faculty wishing to conduct food animal related research on local and emerging diseases; however these funds have been essentially eliminated in many of the states. As a result, college faculties are shifting to National Institutes of Health (NIH) research which will not support research on agricultural animals or on food safety at the farm level. Section 1433 Formula Funds have also supported training graduate students in most colleges and veterinary science departments. There are no other funds available at this time to provide this much needed support.

For a number of years the President's budget had not requested any money for Section 1433 Formula Funds, but Congress has provided approximately \$5 million annually. Recently that amount has dipped to slightly under \$3 million.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the President include the authorized level of \$10 million for Section 1433 Formula Funds (P.L. 95-113) in his Annual Budget request.

USAHA also requests the House of Representatives and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Committees fund Section 1433 Formula Funds (P.L. 95-113) at the authorized level of \$10 million per year.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 10 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND  
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL CENTERS OF  
EXCELLENCE IN FOOD SYSTEMS VETERINARY  
MEDICINE

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The 2008 Farm Bill created a new regional Centers of Excellence Program in food systems veterinary medicine. Centers of Excellence (Centers) would serve to train more veterinarians to address the needs of contemporary livestock and poultry enterprises in the United States. The Centers would also serve as research units, addressing such areas as production diseases (enterococcal mastitis and lameness in dairy cattle; porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) in swine; lameness due to bone and joint disease in poultry, etc.), animal welfare issues, and environmental contamination. The Centers would have faculty supported by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) or National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) that would be integrated with faculty from colleges of veterinary medicine to train students either regionally or nationally about the needs of contemporary livestock and poultry production units in rural America.

Collaborations with staff veterinarians from USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), Food and Drug Administration's (FDA), Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) would provide approximately 20 training exercise days per year to veterinary students rotating through the Centers. As many as 10 to 15 students would be at the Centers at any one time for rotations lasting four to 12 weeks for in-depth training during their fourth year of veterinary college. Up to 60 veterinary students would be trained at each Center in any one year. Post-graduate training for residents and graduate students would also be offered.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the President include funding for the Regional Centers of Excellence in food systems veterinary medicine in the Annual Budget and that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) develop regulations and implementation plans for the Centers.

USAHA requests that the House of Representatives and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Committees fund the Centers at \$15 million per year.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 11      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND  
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** SUPPORT FOR FOOD ANIMAL RESIDUE AVOIDANCE  
DATABANK

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank (FARAD), in existence since 1982, develops and maintains a unique food safety databank that provides information to veterinarians, livestock producers, and state and federal regulatory and extension specialists on avoiding both animal drug residues and environmental contaminants in meat, milk and eggs. FARAD's databank provides information regarding the time-course of drug and chemical depletion in blood and tissues of animals following the routine use of drugs in animal agriculture, for the extra-label use of drugs in animal agriculture, and during food contamination emergencies which might arise from exposure to environmental toxins, particularly pesticides, either accidentally or intentionally introduced into the food supply. Additionally, FARAD provides rapid response assistance through both its telephone hotline and web access for inquiries concerning residue issues that affect food animal health and food product contamination. FARAD provides assistance in trade matters by maintaining databanks of foreign drug approvals and it trains veterinary students and veterinary medical residents in the principles of residue avoidance.

Congress funded FARAD at \$1 million for fiscal year 2010.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the President to request and the United States Congress to fund the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank (FARAD) at \$2.5 million annually.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 12 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND  
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** INCREASED FUNDING FOR EXPANDED RESEARCH FOR THE  
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY NATIONAL  
CENTER FOR FOREIGN ANIMAL AND ZOOLOGIC DISEASE  
DEFENSE

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (FAZD Center) is a Department of Homeland Security national academic center of excellence involving a coalition of seventeen academic institutions. The FAZD Center cooperates with the Department of Energy's national laboratories and other federal institutions to address the priority needs of the United States (US) related to natural or intentional introduction of exotic animal diseases into this country. The FAZD Center is currently developing vaccines and diagnostics for foot and mouth disease, avian influenza and Rift Valley fever and is moving toward future validation and licensing of these products. It has developed the capacity to address a substantially broader agenda. The FAZD Center is developing analytic tools that inform decision makers assessing the consequences of alternative policy and regulatory decisions to protect, intervene, and recover from outbreaks of exotic disease, including a focus on methods to enhance continuity of business during and after outbreaks of these diseases. The FAZD Center provides education and outreach programs for 100 graduate students and hundreds of private sector operators and government officials on these diseases at both regional and national levels.

In the five years of its existence, the FAZD Center has brought together an integrated team of scientists and educators that uses an integrated approach to produce knowledge, analytic tools and specific products contributing to the solution of the most pressing problems related to the prevention, intervention, and recovery from the introduction of exotic animal diseases in the US. The ability to exploit the previous investment and current capacity of the FAZD Center team is threatened by a projection of serious erosion of funding in future years.

Funding for the FAZD Center has been reduced from an earlier \$6 million per year to \$4.2 million for FY2009. The indicative budget for the FAZD Center from FY2010 through FY2014 is \$4 million per year. This level of core funding for the FAZD Center is insufficient to maintain the integrity and momentum of the multi-institutional team that has been established.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges Congress to appropriate funds to restore support for the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (FAZD Center) to \$6 million per year for FY2010 – FY2014. USAHA requests the United States Department of Homeland Security (USDHS), Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate maintain the integrity and momentum of the FAZD Center to meet the pressing needs for protection against intentional or accidental introduction of exotic animal disease into the United States.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 13 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND  
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** REVIEW OF COMPENSATION FOR RESEARCH AND  
DIAGNOSTIC VETERINARIANS

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Veterinarians are employed in the United States Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Interior, Justice, Veterans Affairs and in the Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Smithsonian, and the United States Agency for International Development.

Veterinarians with advanced scientific training and expertise, including advanced degrees and board certification credentials, are critically needed for the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases, as the first line responders for many human health issues and as a workforce for ensuring a safe global food supply. The research and diagnostic testing they conduct ensures animal diseases are rapidly identified and vaccines developed. In order to attract and retain these scientists additional compensation is required.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Interior, Justice, Veterans Affairs, and the Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Smithsonian, and the United States Agency for International Development to adjust salaries to achieve parity with other health professional salaries in order to appropriately compensate, recruit and retain veterinarians, including those with advanced degrees or board certification, in high priority research fields, diagnostic fields, and disease surveillance, prevention and control.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 14 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND  
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** VETERINARY MEDICINE LOAN REPAYMENT  
PROGRAM

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) was established by Congress in 2003 by the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA) and is a student loan repayment program for veterinarians who practice in underserved areas. This loan repayment program is to be administered by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), an agency within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Secretary of Agriculture can determine veterinary shortage areas in rural practice, urban practice, federal and state government agencies, and discipline areas. Recently highlighted awareness of bioterrorism and foreign animal disease threats to public health and food safety has heightened the urgency for a fully-funded and implemented program. The VMLRP also creates a reserve corps of veterinarians available for mobilization in the event of an animal disease emergency or disaster.

USDA published interim final regulations to govern the program in the July 9, 2009 Federal Register. Veterinarians participating in the program will be required to practice in designated areas of veterinarian shortages which will be published in the Federal Register.

Adequate funding for VMLRP is \$20 million annually. Congress awarded the program modest appropriations in fiscal years 2006 (\$495,000), 2007 (\$495,000), 2008 (\$868,875) and 2009 (\$2,950,000). The President recommended \$3 million for fiscal year 2010. Congress appropriated \$4.8M for the VMLRP in the fiscal year 2010 Agriculture Appropriations Bill.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Congress fund the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) (PL 108-161) at \$20 million for fiscal year 2011.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 15 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND  
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** VETERINARY PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE AND  
EDUCATION ACT

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

There are critical shortages of veterinarians working in public health and rural practice disciplines such as bioterrorism and emergency preparedness, environmental health, food safety and security, food production systems, regulatory veterinary medicine, diagnostic laboratory medicine and biomedical research. There are only 28 veterinary medical colleges in the United States, and they do not have sufficient capacity to meet all of these needs.

All of these colleges are operating at maximum student capacity due to space limitations for teaching, diagnostics, and research. Laboratories, teaching hospitals, veterinary research facilities, and animal diagnostic areas are built specifically for use with animals ranging from laboratory animals, livestock species, and wildlife.

HR 2999, The Veterinary Public Health Workforce and Education Act addresses these critical needs by providing:

- A competitive grant program for academic veterinary institutions for
  - New construction and/or new equipment
  - Expansion of post-Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) training opportunities
  - New faculty salaries
  - Curriculum development
  - Scholarships
- Programs to support faculty recruitment and retention
- A rotating fellowship program run by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS)
- A Division of Veterinary Medicine and Public Health at the Health Resources and Services Administration

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) supports the Veterinary Public Health Workforce and Education Act and urges the United States Congress to pass this legislation.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 16 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND  
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT MATTER:** VETERINARY SERVICES INVESTMENT ACT

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The Veterinary Services Investment Act (VSIA) was introduced in the House of Representatives on July 31, 2009 and is expected to be introduced in the Senate at the end of September 2009. The VSIA will help ensure a stable and safe food supply for citizens in the US.

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) reports that 60 percent of the veterinary school graduates in 2009 entered private practice of which only five percent opted to practice large-animal medicine. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has predicted a veterinarian shortage in the coming years. This shortage already exists in parts of rural America and shows signs of worsening unless current trends are reversed.

This legislation will establish a new competitive grant program to relieve veterinary shortage situations and support veterinary services. It will help address the challenges faced by America's farmers and rural communities which rely heavily on large animal veterinarians. Grants awarded under the program may be used for a variety of purposes including:

- Promoting recruitment, placement, and retention of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, students of veterinary medicine and students of veterinary technology.
- Assisting veterinarians with establishing or expanding practices for the purpose of equipping veterinary offices, sharing in the overhead costs of such practices, or to the establishment of mobile veterinary facilities where at least a portion of such facilities will address education or extension needs.
- Providing financial assistance for veterinary students, veterinary interns and externs, fellows and residents, and veterinary technician students to attend training programs in food safety or food animal medicine to cover expenses other than tuition.
- Establishing or expanding accredited veterinary education programs, veterinary residency and fellowship programs or veterinary internship programs or veterinary internship and externship programs in coordination with accredited colleges of veterinary medicine.

- Programs for tele-veterinary medicine where such practices shall at least in part contribute to veterinary extension, education, or research.
- Assisting the office or position of a state veterinarian or animal health official to coordinate veterinary services and food protection issues.
- Assessments of veterinarian shortage situations and preparation of applications for designation as a shortage situation.
- Continuing education and extension, including distance-based education, for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other health professionals needed to strengthen veterinary programs and enhance food safety.
- Recruiting and retaining faculty at accredited colleges of veterinary medicine.
- Programs, in coordination with universities or local educational agencies, to encourage students in secondary schools to pursue a career in veterinary medical or science professions.

VSIA will be administered by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), an agency within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Secretary of Agriculture shall award a preference to applications that document coordination between or with the state, national allied or regional veterinary organizations, or specialty boards recognized by AVMA; the applicable accredited veterinary education institution, accredited department of veterinary science, or department of comparative medicine; or the applicable state veterinarian or animal health official (or its equivalent); and will use the grant funds to help meet veterinary workforce or food protection needs.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Congress pass the Veterinary Services Investment Act (VSIA). This action will help to meet this nation's demand for large-animal veterinarians and rural America's need for services provided by veterinarians.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 19 and 43 Combined APPROVED AS AMENDED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON WILDLIFE DISEASES  
COMMITTEE ON SHEEP AND GOATS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT OF BIGHORN  
SHEEP/DOMESTIC SHEEP DISEASE

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Disease has had a significant impact on many bighorn sheep populations. Although evidence indicates that contact with domestic sheep appears to increase the likelihood of epizootics in bighorn sheep, the overall contribution of domestic sheep to bighorn health problems is not clear. At the 2007 United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) meeting in Reno, Nevada, Resolution 15 (combined with 64) was approved. In response to the resolution, the Committees on Wildlife Diseases and Committee on Sheep and Goats established a working group comprised of representatives of state and federal animal health agencies, wildlife and public land managements, the American Sheep Industry and Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (now the Wild Sheep Foundation). The working group has developed recommended practices for raising domestic sheep and goats on public lands where contact between domestic sheep and bighorn sheep may occur and has delivered the report to both committees. The resolution proper however urges the United States Secretary of Agriculture and the United States Secretary of the Interior to seek resources through the President's budget to fund research to better elucidate the epidemiology and pathogenesis of bighorn/domestic sheep disease interactions. To date no additional research funds have been made available.

The Chairs of the Committee on Wildlife Diseases and Committee on Sheep and Goats now will charge the current Working Group on Domestic and Wild Sheep Disease Interactions, or assemble a new working group of similar composition, to develop and prioritize recommendations for research that would best answer questions regarding epidemiology and pathogenesis of bighorn/domestic sheep disease interactions and bighorn mortality prevention.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Department of the Interior's (USDOI) research agencies seek resources including cooperative efforts with non-governmental organizations to fund research to better elucidate the epidemiology, pathogenesis and prevention of disease in bighorn sheep associated with bighorn-domestic sheep and goat interactions. Cooperative proposals should be solicited from state and federal agencies, universities and other research organizations. The USAHA also requests that funding organizations consult the prospective working group report on research prioritization to assist in determining the highest and most promising priorities.

## **RESPONSE:**

### **USDA-ARS**

ARS is also supportive of USAHA Resolutions #19 and #43, concerning the need for research to elucidate interactions between domestic and bighorn sheep. We are aware of the need to

address disease epidemiology and pathogenesis of disease and mortality in bighorn sheep and have the ability to pursue research and collaborative activities to develop diagnostic and intervention strategies as funds become available.

#### **INTERIM RESPONSE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association and appreciates the opportunity to respond. VS has conferred with colleagues at the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and both agencies are aware of the need for research on diseases in bighorn sheep and interactions between bighorn sheep and domestic sheep. VS will support this research through the National Animal Health Monitoring System sheep study by sending samples from domestic sheep.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

We agree with the USAHA that additional information regarding the epidemiology, pathogenesis and prevention of disease in bighorn sheep associated with bighorn-domestic sheep and goat interactions would be valuable. Work in this area can benefit from collaboration among all parties concerned. The DOI will take the USAHA working group's recommendations under advisement and encourage cooperative efforts among State and Federal agencies, universities and research organizations.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 20 and 26 Combined APPROVED AS AMENDED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON WILDLIFE DISEASES  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AND EMERGING DISEASES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** ENHANCE DEVELOPMENT OF RISK ASSESSMENT MODELS  
BY DETERMINATION OF UNITED STATES WILDLIFE  
SUSCEPTIBILITY TO RIFT VALLEY FEVER VIRUS

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) identifies Rift Valley Fever (RVF) as the third most important foreign animal disease threat to United States (US) livestock. RVF is an insect-transmitted viral (arboviral), zoonotic disease that is endemic and epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa. The recent outbreaks and spread of RVF from Africa to the Arabian Peninsula have raised concerns of the potential introduction of this arbovirus into the US. In addition, the potential for RVF virus being used as a bioterrorism agent is widely recognized. RVF virus infection of cattle, sheep, and goats can result in very high abortion rates and 70-100 percent newborn mortality. The number of hospitalized human cases is usually less than 1 percent, but in the Saudi Arabia epidemic the mortality rate was 13.9 percent demonstrating the potential severity of an RVF outbreak. Vision loss from retinitis occurs in approximately 10 percent of human patients either during acute febrile illness, or up to four weeks after. The spread of West Nile Virus to the Western hemisphere illustrates the natural ability of arboviruses to establish themselves in new ecosystems. Wildlife species are important components of the epidemiology of many arboviral diseases. There is no information of the US wildlife susceptibility to infection, clinical disease, or potential as reservoirs for RVF virus.

## RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture Research Service (ARS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate, and the US Department of the Interior's (USDOI) research agencies, working with universities and other agencies, establish, expand and/or coordinate research programs to:

- Determine the potential of United States (US) wildlife to become affected by Rift Valley Fever (RVF) virus
- Determine the potential role of US wildlife as reservoir hosts for RVF

**RESPONSE:****USDA, ARS**

ARS will seek opportunities to include research on wildlife transmissibility at ABADRL.

**INTERIM RESPONSE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association and appreciates the opportunity to respond. VS has conferred with colleagues at the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and ARS has agreed to include research on wildlife transmissibility of Rift Valley fever at the ARS laboratory in Laramie, Wyoming.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

Rift Valley Fever Virus is an important foreign animal disease which could have devastating economic and ecological effects if introduced into the United States. We agree that more information is needed to determine: 1) the potential for native wildlife in the United States to be affected by Rift Valley Fever Virus; and 2) what role, if any, U.S. wildlife would play as reservoir hosts. The DOI is a member of the interagency Foreign Animal Disease Threats Subcommittee of the National Science and Technology Council Committee on Homeland and National Security. The subcommittee has been involved in efforts to model the potential movement of foot and mouth disease in the United States. We will share this USAHA resolution with the subcommittee and encourage them to pursue similar activities related to Rift Valley Fever Virus. In Africa, the DOI U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has been using information on environmental conditions and key risk indicators, monitored through satellite and in situ observations, to develop models that would improve early warning systems for epizootic Rift Valley Fever. These tools could potentially be applied to other parts of the world including North America if the disease became endemic here.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 21 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON PARASITIC DISEASES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** CONTINUED UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE SUPPORT FOR SCREWORM ERADICATION  
ACTIVITIES

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The screwworm eradication program is a monument to the success of science, the government and the private sector cooperating for the benefit of mankind. Such cooperation has resulted in the eradication of screwworm in the United States (US) (1966), Mexico (1984) and Central America (2006). The Commissions for the Eradication and Prevention of Screwworm (COPEG in Panama and COMEXA in Mexico) was created between the US, Panama and Mexico as part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Regional Plan for screwworm eradication in Central America. The COPEG and COMEXA eradication efforts should be supported in a capacity sufficient enough to permit the screwworm program to completely eradicate the screwworm in Jamaica, Cuba and any other infested location in the region to further protect the US borders. The continued existence of the screwworm in remote areas presents a constant threat to the US.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States House of Representatives and Senate Agriculture Appropriation Committees to provide appropriate funding to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to better protect the homeland by fully supporting screwworm eradication activities in Central America, Cuba, and the Caribbean Islands to assure the total eradication efforts are ultimately successful in the region.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

The USDA screwworm program currently produces sterile flies in a new state-of-the-art facility in Panama and disperses those flies over the Darien Gap to uphold the biological barrier between

Central and South America. The Program also maintains a back-up production facility in Mexico to preserve the pest-free status of North and Central America. These eradication and prevention activities save the United States billions of dollars each year.

APHIS is committed to the continuation of this successful program and will continue to evaluate the possibility of future expansion to include eradication of screwworm flies in the Caribbean countries that remain infested.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 22 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON TUBERCULOSIS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** NATIONAL BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS ERADICATION PROGRAM

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The current National Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) Eradication Program has had tremendous success in eliminating bovine TB from the United States. However, now that every state has previously achieved “free” status, and available federal funding continues to decline, it is time to update the program to more effectively address risks of reintroduction and to provide flexibility to States. New program standards are needed to maximize disease prevention, while minimizing unnecessary impacts on business.

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) recognizes the need to make significant changes in the National TB Eradication Program and generally supports the concepts and priorities outlined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) in the July, 2009 document, *A New Approach for Managing Bovine TB: VS' Proposed Action Plan*.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to expedite review of comments on this *VS Proposed Action Plan* and immediately propose new rules which include: measurable program performance standards; program flexibility to address variables within states and regions; mitigation requirements that address the risk of tuberculosis (TB) transmission from imported cattle, wildlife reservoirs and other potential sources; and implement effective and timely program oversight in cooperation with state and industry partners and consider the establishment of a state-industry oversight board.

USAHA urges USDA-APHIS-VS to carefully review the report and discussion items from the USAHA sponsored meeting in Denver, July 20-21, 2009, *The Future of the National Tuberculosis Program*, and incorporate this input, especially on items where consensus was reached, into the revised TB program rules.

USAHA urges USDA-APHIS-VS to prioritize completion of this rule and to expedite the rule-making process with the goal for completion within two years.

USAHA also supports the concept of a Federal Order, but only as a short-term interim step during this rule making process, in order to allow USDA-APHIS-VS the flexibility to suspend downgrading states' “free” status and to suspend interstate movement requirements for Modified Accredited Advanced states. USAHA urges USDA-APHIS-VS to develop this Federal Order in cooperation with State Animal Health Officials.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) would like to thank the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) Committee on Tuberculosis (TB) for its support of the concepts and priorities outlined in *A New Approach for Managing Bovine TB: VS' Proposed Action Plan*. This concept paper was published October 5, 2009, in the *Federal Register*, and we accepted comments through December 4. We are summarizing the 70 online and 246 mailed comments we received, and we expect to complete this process in February 2010.

Based on input we received from the public meetings conducted in December 2008, the report from USAHA's *The Future of the National Tuberculosis Program* meeting, and the written comments regarding our action plan, we are developing regulations to support this new approach. The development of these new regulations for the TB program is considered a high priority for VS in 2010. However, amending the regulations for a new approach will take several years.

In the meantime, VS will implement several interim measures that effectively mitigate disease spread while minimizing the negative impact of the existing State status system. One such measure is to suspend the automatic reclassification of States or zones to a lower status when States are unable to depopulate TB-affected herds or when States identify two or more affected herds within 48 months (9 CFR 77.7(c)). This suspension would not prevent States from having their status upgraded when the necessary requirements are met. Secondly, we would suspend the movement and testing requirements associated with modified accredited advanced status (9 CFR 77.10). The suspension of these regulations would apply only to States that have achieved accredited-free status in the past and would be contingent on States continuing to meet certain conditions to mitigate the risk of disease transmission. These interim measures would be in effect until VS proposes regulations for review and public comment and issues final rules.

VS will continue to work closely with stakeholders to obtain input on the proposed strategies, program standards, surveillance plans, and other policy concepts before publishing any proposed regulations and throughout the regulatory process.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION – 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 23      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON TUBERCULOSIS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** EXPEDITED APPROVAL OF NEW BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS ANTIBODY TESTS BY THE CENTER FOR VETERINARY BIOLOGICS

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Infection with *Mycobacterium bovis* (*M. bovis*) continues to plague the United States cattle industry with a significant number of tuberculosis (TB) infected herds detected in five states in 2009. The caudal fold tuberculin (CFT) test is the primary screening test used in the bovine TB program. A major disadvantage of this test is that it requires cattle to be handled twice, once for the injection and a second time to “read” the test. Further, the person injecting and reading the test must also be adequately trained and sufficiently experienced to “read” the test accurately. Experience is critical; determining a “response” may be subjective, especially if the response to the injection is small.

Currently, Bovigam® is one official supplemental test used in cattle herds with the approval of the State Animal Health Official and Area Veterinarian In Charge (AVIC). This test may be used under direction of the Designated TB Epidemiologist and with concurrence of the Regional TB Epidemiologist. However, this test requires specialized sample shipping and processing and should only be conducted on blood samples collected between three and 30 days after injection for the CFT test.

The lack of funding for herd depopulation has the potential to increase test and remove routines for herds under TB quarantine. Also, regional or risk-based herd approaches would create additional opportunities for targeted testing scenarios using new diagnostic tools. The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) has recognized in recent years through discussion and resolution that many companies are generating promising data on antibody-based TB diagnostics that would assist with the potential new realities of managing bovine TB.

Serum sample-based antibody tests represent viable alternatives to current TB test methods and many such tests have demonstrated promising results. Antibody detection tests offer the following advantages over current methods:

- An antibody test can be performed in any diagnostic laboratory, and given the Approximate 2-3 hour test protocols; reliable and more consistent results can be provided same or next day
- Testing serum samples requires no additional manipulation such as sensitization with PPD, timing or shipping constraints
- Serum samples currently being collected for other diagnostic or surveillance purposes (Johne’s, brucellosis, bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV), etc.) would be sufficient for use in a TB antibody test
- Collecting serum samples for laboratory-based testing eliminates the need to make two visits to each animal in order to read skin test responses
- This method allows convenient repeat testing as there is no 30 or 60-day gamma interferon skin test window

- Typical antibody test formats provide objective, numerical results, removing subjectivity and variability associated with reading the skin test

While the pathway to a Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) diagnostic kit license is well-defined, CVB continues to experience resource challenges that contribute to the delay in approving new diagnostic tools urgently needed by the cattle industry.

#### **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) to work with bovine tuberculosis program staff to prioritize and expedite the review of new *Mycobacterium bovis* antibody tests submitted to CVB for approval.

#### **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) is fully supportive of the resolution to expedite the review of new bovine tuberculosis (TB) antibody tests. Toward this end, a working group has revised the VS TB Program Memorandum 552.40, "Evaluation of Tests Proposed for Official Use in the Bovine Tuberculosis Eradication Program," which is being distributed for review and clearance. This memorandum provides guidelines for the evaluation of tests proposed for official use in the Bovine TB Eradication Program. It has been revised to describe the protocol for VS' field studies and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of various parties during the evaluation of tests. The working group members included individuals representing the TB Scientific Advisory Subcommittee of the United States Animal Health Association, the Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB), the National Veterinary Services Laboratories, and the TB Program. Additionally, the CVB has designated one senior staff veterinarian to facilitate and expedite the review of all *Mycobacterium bovis* antibody test kit applications.

VS continues to support the creation of a serum bank for research and validation of new tests for TB antibody detection. The bank will provide well-characterized serum samples with skin test results from uninfected animals, and skin test, histopathology, and TB culture results for samples from infected animals. The samples will assist researchers in developing serologic tests for bovine TB while meeting industry criteria for timely validation of new tests. Our goal is to obtain blood from 250 TB-infected cattle, 1,600 uninfected cattle, and 1,600 uninfected white-tailed deer.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 24 Combined with 5

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF SWINE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** FAILURE OF IMPORTING COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW WORLD  
ORGANIZATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE) GUIDELINES FOR  
IMPORTATION OF ANIMALS

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# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 25 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF SWINE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** MARKET SWINE SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) approved Resolution 45 during the 2007 Annual Meeting in Reno, Nevada calling for United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to continue funding in support of market swine surveillance sampling. The Resolution outlined in detail the importance of market swine surveillance to the swine industry as an efficient and cost-effective means of sample collection to support on-going disease control efforts and as an integral part of any comprehensive swine surveillance program. The Resolution requested USDA-APHIS-VS maintain funding for market swine surveillance in Fiscal Year (FY) 08 and in FY 09 and increase funding in future years to enhance and integrate the program into a comprehensive swine surveillance system.

USDA-APHIS-VS responded to the Resolution and expressed agreement with the industry regarding the importance of maintaining market swine surveillance as "an important surveillance sampling stream that needs to be included in a comprehensive swine surveillance program." The response identified market swine surveillance as important "because of the ability to identify and test large populations on a daily basis" and recognized the program's cost effectiveness and efficiency "compared to time-consuming and costly down-the-road or first-point collection testing regimens." Furthermore, the agency indicated its desire to include market swine surveillance as a component in the developing comprehensive swine surveillance program.

While USDA-APHIS-VS communications would indicate the agency's recognition of the value of market swine surveillance and its desire to continue funding for the program, the swine industry is concerned that future funding may be in question. Loss of this funding could result in a cessation of sample collection and loss of resources and personnel. Discontinuation of this program would jeopardize on-going disease surveillance efforts and future disease elimination and eradication projects. This decision also negates the considerable efforts the industry has undertaken to improve this surveillance stream through premises identification and expanded surveillance objectives beyond pseudorabies and swine brucellosis. The industry strongly supports continued efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive swine surveillance system which would incorporate market swine sampling as one of the critically important surveillance streams.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to maintain funding for market swine disease surveillance and encourages the integration of market swine surveillance as an important sampling stream in a comprehensive swine surveillance program.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) agrees that market swine surveillance is an important surveillance sampling stream that needs to be included in comprehensive swine surveillance program. USDA also appreciates efforts by industry to assist with development of comprehensive swine surveillance objectives and premises identification initiatives that support comprehensive surveillance objectives.

Commercial abattoirs are a sampling point of interest because of the ability to identify and test large populations of finishing swine from many regions of the country on a daily basis. The abattoir is the first point of concentration for a large percentage of market swine under the current industry structure. Producers prefer the passive nature of this process compared to time-consuming and costly down-the-road or first-point collection testing regimens. Packers have been willing to participate in sampling programs as they see this as an opportunity to improve the health status of their supplier herds. State and Federal regulatory agencies have also recognized the efficiency of this sampling stream versus other more traditional sample procurement systems.

VS will endeavor to include market swine surveillance as a component in the developing comprehensive swine surveillance program.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 26 Combined with 20

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AND EMERGING DISEASES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** ENHANCE DEVELOPMENT OF RISK ASSESSMENT MODELS  
BY DETERMINATION OF UNITED STATES WILDLIFE  
SUSCEPTIBILITY TO RIFT VALLEY FEVER VIRUS

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# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 27 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF  
POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** PROPOSAL TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE POULTRY  
TUMOR VIRUS AND GENETIC DISEASE RESISTANCE  
RESEARCH PROGRAMS

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture Research Service (ARS) programs are critically important for the future of animal agriculture. The Avian Diseases and Oncology Laboratory's (ADOL) research programs and services are vital for the future well-being of the United States (US) and global poultry industry. The need for continuous research related to poultry tumor virus and genetic resistance to disease is and will continue to be at the forefront for enabling the US poultry industry to provide a safe, economic and wholesome protein source for consumers in this country and abroad. Poultry and allied industry stakeholders across the US are very concerned about maintaining and enhancing ADOL's research programs and service capabilities. Although Congress restored the funding in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Bill, it is not known whether budgets subsequent to FY 2010 will include these USDA-ARS-ADOL programs.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture Research Services (ARS) continue to place a high priority on the Avian Diseases and Oncology Laboratory's (ADOL) tumor virus and genetic resistance to disease programs. Further, the USAHA urges the House of Representatives and Senate Agriculture Appropriation Committees to provide funding to ensure that the USDA-ARS-ADOL poultry research capabilities are preserved and enhanced to maintain their ability to continue research in these important areas. In particular, the USAHA requests the addition of \$1 million in annual appropriations to USDA-ARS to 1) add a DVM/Ph.D. pathologist to address research in Marek's disease and 2) add additional funding to support the integrated research needed to identify and investigate the genes directly involved in resistance to Marek's disease, all subgroups of Avian Leukosis Viruses and general disease resistance.

## **RESPONSE:**

**USDA-ARS**

Concerning ARS poultry research at the Avian Diseases and Oncology Laboratory, ARS will consider your input as we develop our future budget requests. We plan to continue research on priority poultry diseases and will increase this work as resources permit.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 28 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF  
POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FUNDING FOR  
NOTIFIABLE AVIAN INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has provided funds for states to establish notifiable avian influenza surveillance in multiple avian compartments. State animal health organizations have been successful in implementing surveillance programs for their resident avian populations, some of which had previously lacked organized disease surveillance.

The success of the surveillance partnership effort is evidenced by the elimination of H7N2 avian influenza from the northeast live bird market system. Additionally, recent introductions of H7N9 avian influenza into commercial poultry flocks in four states have been successfully managed to reduce the impact on the marketability of United States (US) poultry due to early detection and rapid response by states whose capabilities have been strengthened by federal notifiable avian influenza cooperative agreement surveillance funding.

The risks to the US poultry industry remain as prevalent and challenging as when the surveillance programs were first initiated. The ongoing potential for virus introduction by wild birds into a growing backyard mixed species flocks along with spread of the urban chicken phenomena, increases in alternative housing for smaller commercial poultry enterprises and confirmed notifiable avian influenza reports from fourteen other countries continues to pose an eminent threat to the US commercial poultry industry. This ongoing threat is best addressed through federally supported surveillance for notifiable avian influenza.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to maintain adequate funding and risk based allocation to states to fully support the national notifiable avian influenza domestic poultry program. Further, the USAHA urges Congress to continue to appropriate these monies to USDA-APHIS-VS for the notifiable avian influenza program.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association. The Voluntary H5/H7 Low Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (LPAI) Prevention and Control Program was initiated in fiscal year (FY) 2004 following serious outbreaks of LPAI H7N2 in Pennsylvania (1996 through 1998) and in Virginia (2002) and the recognition of the increased risk of introduction and spread of avian diseases, notably avian influenza, by movement of poultry into the live bird marketing system (LBMS) in the Northeastern States. The 2002 LPAI H7N2 Virginia outbreak was associated with interstate transport of domestic poultry to live bird markets and resulted in the depopulation of approximately 4.7 million birds and losses to the Virginia poultry industry of approximately \$140 million.

The H5/H7 LPAI program includes prevention and control activities in the commercial poultry industry administered through the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPPI) and the LBMS administered through VS poultry program staff. This is a voluntary program supported through APHIS cooperative agreements with participating States. In FY 2009, 42 States participated in the NPPI commercial poultry component, 28 States in the upland game bird component, and 41 States in the LBMS component of the program.

The ongoing efforts of VS and the participating States have identified and eliminated H5/H7 LPAI infections in commercial poultry flocks and also have resulted in a marked decline in the incidence of H5/H7 LPAI viruses in the LBMS, particularly in New Jersey and New York. In FY 2009, there were only four cases of live bird markets positive for LPAI (H5) in New York. The program did not receive any reports of positive LBMS sectors from other participating States.

Securing funding to support the H5/H7 LPAI Program is an ongoing process. From FY 2006 to FY 2008, the Program received LPAI yearly budget allocations averaging \$14.0 million. Approximately \$7.0 million in additional HPAI 'supplemental' funding also has been allocated in the yearly budget to enhance surveillance in higher risk areas such as birds raised outdoors (backyard flocks, animal auctions, upland game birds, etc). In FY 2009, these LPAI and HPAI funds were consolidated to a notifiable avian influenza (NAI) budget line item to better integrate and maintain adequate funding and risk-based allocation to participating States for NAI surveillance, prevention, and control activities.

APHIS will continue to request additional and sufficient funds to maintain and support the H5/H7 NAI Program. The final amount of appropriated funding is at the discretion of the U.S. Congress.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 29 Combined with 5

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF  
POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** FAILURE OF IMPORTING COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW  
WORLD ORGANIZATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)  
GUIDELINES FOR IMPORTATIONS OF ANIMALS

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# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 30 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF  
POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** CONTAINMENT OF VERY VIRULENT INFECTIOUS  
BURSAL DISEASE VIRUS IN CALIFORNIA

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

A very virulent strain of infectious bursal disease virus (vIBDV) was identified in the Netherlands in the late 1980's. In short order this virus spread throughout Europe, Asia and Latin America. This disease results in mortality, severe damage to the immune system and resulting secondary infections and severe performance shortfalls in both table egg and meat type chickens. Mitigation strategies, including increased biosecurity and vaccination, are expensive and only partially effective. The United States (US) has been spared this disease but an incursion has been identified in a presently confined area of California. While the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) does not distinguish among strains of infectious bursal disease virus (IBDV) and IBDV is not a program disease, it is critical that this presently small focus of infection be contained and eliminated from US soil before it has the opportunity to spread further.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to apply all necessary resources to assist the State of California in eliminating very virulent infectious bursal disease virus (vIBDV) from California. Further, the USAHA urges USDA-APHIS-VS to support the validation and distribution of a real-time reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) for the detection and differentiation of vIBDV for use in a national surveillance program.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) regarding infectious bursal disease virus (IBDV).

The 'classic strains' of IBDV are known to be present in the United States, and the disease caused by this virus has been controlled by use of USDA-approved vaccines. However, very

virulent IBDV (vvIBDV) has only recently been identified in the United States, and many commercial IBDV vaccines typically are ineffective against the vvIBDV strains. The efficacy of these commercial IBDV vaccines against vvIBDV must be strategically studied with respect to vaccine strain, application technique, and vaccination of breeders imparting maternal antibody.

In December 2008, an index case of vvIBDV was identified in two pullet farms in Northern California, exhibiting 34 percent and 26 percent mortality and gross pathology consistent with vvIBDV. The virus isolated had a 98 percent match to the European and Asian vvIBDV strains and the pathogenicity study confirmed vvIBDV. During 2009, several additional flocks in Northern California were confirmed with vvIBDV following what appeared to be a novel introduction of this virus. The State of California, in cooperation with the poultry industry, implemented mitigations to include strict farm biosecurity measures, cleaning and disinfection after flocks were locally marketed, passive and observational surveillance looking for clinical signs, and a vaccination strategy following European vaccine protocols (inside and outside infected zones) with various IBDV vaccines.

VS recognizes the efforts of the State of California and the poultry industry to control vvIBDV and has been working with California to contain and eliminate this disease before it spreads. Although classic IBD is not a USDA program disease or a reportable disease, VS has been working cooperatively with the California Department of Food and Agriculture, California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS), and the California poultry industry to fund and support epidemiological studies and field surveillance for vvIBDV. In fiscal years 2009 and 2010, APHIS provided \$70,000 (through March 2010) to support several ongoing activities of the California Poultry Study Group, such as development of an epidemiology study, enhanced field surveillance, mitigation strategies, and research and development. This includes support of the CAHFS Laboratory to conduct vaccine trials, validation of diagnostic tests, sample collection recommendations, environmental sampling trials, and testing of available disinfectants. Specifically, CAHFS Laboratory is working on the development and validation of an rRT-PCR test for the detection and differentiation of vvIBDV as a surveillance diagnostic tool.

VS will continue to work with the State of California to provide available resources toward the goal of prevention, control, and elimination of vvIBDV from U.S. poultry.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 31 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE ORGANIZATIONAL  
EVOLUTION

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The recently appointed Undersecretary for Research, Education, and Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Rajiv Shah, told the United States House of Representatives Agriculture subcommittee at a congressional hearing, that as "Chief Scientist" that "the next six months will be of great organizational evolution" as he reviews research conducted by USDA scientists as well as grants given to external research bodies. Shah said that he sees the chance "to bring about transformative change in the way we do science at USDA." He said he will focus resources around priority areas, seeking breakthroughs in food safety, food security, climate change, biofuels and human nutrition; he feels this change will generate real benefits for the people.

The Undersecretary failed to mention the importance of a critical component of USDA, Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) historical focus: the ongoing animal disease research performed by USDA scientists, often in collaboration with scientists at universities or the private sector under the umbrella of the agency's ARS. This work has proven essential to maintain the health and well-being of the nations' animal industries through the development and implementation of methods to diagnose, control, eliminate and eradicate emerging, regulatory, foreign, exotic and zoonotic diseases. These efforts must be maintained to protect our national animal and human health, enhance food safety, minimize pathogen load and sustain the safe, affordable food supply we produce for national and global consumption.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the Undersecretary for Research, Education, and Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recognize the importance of the efforts and accomplishments of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) regarding animal disease and animal health research and acknowledge by providing a robust budget and administrative support to fund ARS sponsored research for animal disease which benefits human and animal health, food and environmental safety, and abundant, affordable food for our nation and global partners.

*\*This resolution was passed by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Board of Delegates, October 12, 2009, San Diego, California.*

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 32    **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON BRUCELLOSIS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** CONSORTIUM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF BRUCELLOSIS  
SCIENCE

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

After over six decades of eradication efforts and expenditure of several billion dollars, brucellosis (*Brucella abortus*) has nearly been eliminated from this nation's cattle herds. The last remaining reservoir for *Brucella abortus* in the United States is in the wild bison and elk in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA). In the last few years, the disease has spilled over from those affected wildlife to cattle populations in the states surrounding the GYA, thus threatening the ultimate success of the National Brucellosis Eradication Program. Current vaccine and diagnostic technologies to eliminate this disease in free ranging elk and bison are inadequate. To address this issue, a Special Committee of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) was formed. In August 2005, this Committee held a working symposium of scientists to identify the research needs for new and improved brucellosis vaccines, vaccine delivery systems, and diagnostic tests for use in elk and bison. The summary of the results of that working symposium were published in a document entitled the USAHA Laramie Agenda. The total cost of the needed research identified in the Laramie Agenda is substantial. However, funds for their research were not readily available.

As a follow-up to the USAHA Laramie Agenda, funds were provided by the legislature of the state of Wyoming to develop a framework for brucellosis vaccine and diagnostic test development. As a result, the Consortium for The Advancement of Brucellosis Science (CABS) was initiated, assembling brucellosis researchers and scientists from across the nation. The purpose of this Consortium is to evaluate the current status of brucellosis research with a focus on immunology, vaccines, and diagnostic tests; to identify gaps in research; and to develop a road map for advancing brucellosis science. As part of this effort, two subgroups will be formed; a scientific team (which has already been formed) and a stakeholder's group. The purpose of the stakeholders group will be to provide feedback to the scientific team, and to work to obtain funding for the research priorities identified. Endorsement of CABS by USAHA and its stakeholders will be a key to success.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) endorse formation of the Consortium for The Advancement of Brucellosis Science (CABS) and participate in a meeting with CABS included on the agenda for the 2010 USAHA Government Relations meeting in Washington DC, in order to identify long-term support to CABS, including but not limited to financial, political, and regulatory support.

**INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) is supportive of the efforts of the Consortium for the Advancement of Brucellosis Science (CABS) in its goal to extend the research efforts as outlined in the 2006 United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Laramie Agenda. VS intends to further collaborate with CABS through the activities of the VS, Agricultural Research Service, and the Research Priorities Brucellosis Working Group. VS will meet with the USAHA Government Relations Committee to discuss CABS during the 2010 meeting in Washington, D.C.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 33      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON BRUCELLOSIS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** STANDARDIZATION OF BRUCELLA ABORTUS TESTING FOR  
ELK

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

During the last 10 years, the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) states, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, have sustained *Brucella abortus* (*B. abortus*) infections in livestock with the most likely cause being a transmission from brucellosis infected elk. The GYA states have embarked on risk mitigation and surveillance programs in cattle to ensure that new cases are rare, and will be detected rapidly should they occur. The wildlife agencies in the three GYA states are likewise conducting aggressive wildlife surveillance to better understand the rate of infection and the distribution of brucellosis exposed wild ungulates.

The states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming use varying protocols for defining brucellosis exposed elk which creates difficulty in comparing surveillance results between states. As the National Brucellosis Eradication Program evolves from a state-by-state to a regional concept, uniformity in elk testing protocols and case definitions of a brucellosis exposed elk is increasingly important. Standardization of testing protocols for the purpose of classifying elk as brucellosis-exposed is important to monitor the rate of disease of wild ungulate populations across the three states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming and to facilitate risk-based decisions on livestock management and surveillance.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to work with the Department of Interior, and the wildlife agencies of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, to develop a standardized brucellosis testing protocol and serological case definition for a brucellosis exposed wild elk. Furthermore, USAHA urges the USDA-APHIS and Agricultural Research Service (ARS) to commit laboratory capacity, and personnel to this effort.

## **RESPONSE:**

### **USDA, APHIS**

We appreciate USAHA sharing its views on the issues in question with our Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and assure you that we will take them under careful consideration. We look forward to further dialogue with your organization on these and other issues as we evaluate the health needs of animals in our country and move ahead with important animal health initiatives.

We value USAHA'S longstanding partnership with USDA, and look forward to continued collaboration advancing our mutual efforts to safeguard and promote U.S. animal health.

### **USDA, ARS**

With regard to Brucella research, we acknowledge that this work is important and plan to continue to take advantage of our broad programmatic expertise and resources in these areas at the NADC in Ames, Iowa. Our current program focuses on diagnostic and vaccine development for *Brucella abortus* and *Brucella suis*, and we will expand our work to address emerging needs as opportunities arise.

### **INTERIM RESPONSE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) is currently evaluating validation data from the fluorescent polarization assay (FPA) and buffered acidified plate antigen (BAPA) tests for use in serologic testing of elk. This evaluation is expected to be complete in 2010. If validated, VS, in collaboration with the National Park Service and the State wildlife agencies of Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, will begin the development of standardized protocols for testing elk using these tests. These protocols, as well as test interpretation guidelines, will be provided to the United States Animal Health Association Brucellosis Scientific Subcommittee for review and input before further distribution.

Additionally, VS will continue to collaborate on brucellosis research activities through the VS, Agricultural Research Service, and the Research Priorities Brucellosis Working Group.

### **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

We agree that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is the appropriate agency to take the lead on developing a standardized brucellosis testing protocol and serological case definition for brucellosis-exposed wild elk. The DOI scientists in the UGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center have been working closely with researchers and managers at the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and Yellowstone National Park to understand the dynamics of brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Past work includes a historical analysis of how the seroprevalence of brucellosis in elk around the feedgrounds of Wyoming is affected by population size, density, snowpack and the artificial feeding regime. Some current projects include: 1) interactions of stress, disease, and artificial feeding in elk; 2) GPS tracking of elk around the Wyoming feedgrounds; and 3) modeling elk brucellosis in the Northern Range of Yellowstone National Park. We believe interagency collaboration is important for better understanding of disease transmission. We will continue to encourage our scientists to look for opportunities to work with their colleagues at the USDA to further this work.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 34    **APPROVED**  
**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON BRUCELLOSIS  
**SUBJECT MATTER:** SWINE BRUCELLOSIS IN CATTLE

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Swine brucellosis (*Brucella suis*) is an infectious disease of swine that can also affect humans and cattle. Swine brucellosis is considered endemic in the United States (US) feral swine population. Swine brucellosis infection in cattle causes economic losses to the beef and dairy industries and in cattle can interfere with the interpretation of serologic (blood) tests used to diagnose *Brucella abortus* (cattle brucellosis) in the US cattle population.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) take actions to increase research on cattle infected with *Brucella suis*, to include but not limited to transmissibility studies, development and implementation by the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) of differentiating serologic tests, development of effective vaccines for cattle, and development of better control mechanisms for the disease.

## **RESPONSE:**

### **USDA-ARS**

With regard to *Brucella* research, we acknowledge that this work is important and plan to continue to take advantage of our broad programmatic expertise and resources in these areas at the NADC in Ames, Iowa. Our current program focuses on diagnostic and vaccine development for *Brucella abortus* and *Brucella suis*, and we will expand our work to address emerging needs as opportunities arise.

### **INTERIM RESPONSE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services and the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) continue to collaborate on identifying *Brucella suis* research needs through a yearly APHIS-ARS Research Priorities meeting and working group meetings throughout the year. ARS projects are ongoing and include characterizing pathologic and immunologic responses of cattle to infection with *B. suis*. In addition, efforts are focusing on developing differential serologic tests that can distinguish *B. suis* from *B. abortus* infections in cattle.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 35 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON BRUCELLOSIS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BRUCELLOSIS CONCEPT PAPER PUBLISHED OCTOBER 5, 2009 IN  
THE FEDERAL REGISTER

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Following a highly successful *Brucella abortus* (*B. abortus*) eradication program, the nation's livestock are free of brucellosis. Wild ungulates in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) represent the last focus of infection of *B. abortus* in the United States, and these wild ungulates are able to transmit *B. abortus* to other wild ungulates and livestock through infected products of parturition. However, current federal brucellosis rules do not recognize the continuing and variable risk from a wildlife vector.

Depopulation of affected herds does not eliminate the risk of re-infection, and the Brucellosis Class Status system based on state boundaries needs additional review.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to proceed with revising brucellosis rules consistent with the published concept paper, and continue to solicit input from USAHA prior to, during, and following the rule writing process. Further, USAHA urges USDA-APHIS-VS to proceed with an interim rule that, includes but is not limited to, removal of the mandatory downgrade of state brucellosis status with two *Brucella abortus* (*B. abortus*) affected herds detected within a two year period, and the elimination of the requirement for mandatory depopulation of affected herds.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) appreciates the support of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) of the brucellosis concept paper and our plans to revise regulations. VS is drafting an interim rule that reflects the changes endorsed by USAHA, including removing the provision requiring downgrade of State status from Class Free to Class A if two or more herds are found to have brucellosis within a 2-year period or if a single brucellosis-affected herd is not depopulated within 60 days. In addition, the new rule will reduce the amount of testing required to maintain Class Free status for States that have been Class Free for 5 or more years and have no known *Brucella abortus* in wildlife. These changes will eliminate surveillance redundancies and allow us to focus on States and areas of greater risk for spreading brucellosis. These changes are also aligned with the plan outlined in the concept paper to shift from a State-by-State

surveillance program to a national surveillance program that will demonstrate the disease-free status of U.S. cattle.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 36      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON BRUCELLOSIS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** REVIEW OF SELECT AGENT STATUS FOR *BRUCELLA ABORTUS*

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Introduction: With the reclassification of the state of Montana from brucellosis Class Free to Class A in 2008, the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) states of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming have sustained livestock brucellosis infections from a brucellosis infected wildlife reservoir that resulted in loss of status during the last 10 years. These reclassifications have cost the nation millions of dollars in additional testing costs, loss of trade and decreased market value. Further research in vaccine development and other aspects of *Brucella abortus* (*B. abortus*) control is needed.

Benefits of additional research: Greater understanding of vaccine technology, transmission, immune system response including diagnosis of animals in the “dormant” state of *B. abortus* infection are critical to:

- Accomplish the goal of the brucellosis eradication program;
- Implement regionalization of brucellosis disease management;
- Collect and archive samples for studies on Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals (DIVA) diagnostics;

Further, increased understanding of *B. abortus* will assist management of *Brucella suis* and *B. abortus* in feral swine.

Current Limitations: Although further efforts in vaccine research and other aspects of *B. abortus* control are needed, current regulations and restrictions have nearly abolished these efforts. Guidelines from the Center for Veterinary Biologics for challenge studies necessitate 20 challenged animals, and 10 control animals, however, there are no facilities in the nation that can accommodate research on *B. abortus* in a covered research facility as is required by the Select Agent rule.

Building new facilities is costly, dependent on congressional appropriations, and not able to meet current research needs in a timely manner. Alternatively, the Outdoor Facilities Requirements developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), in principle, allows research on *B. abortus* to be conducted outside, however, the logistical and economic burdens make the implementation of the requirements impractical.

Summary: It is essential that *B. abortus* research be enhanced to better protect captive and free-ranging bovines and cervids, as well as to accomplish the USDA goal of eradicating *B. abortus* from the United States.

Delisting *B. abortus* from the select agent list is supported by characteristics of the organism which include: 1) little potential for aerosol transmission; 2) disease is treatable with readily available antibiotics; 3) the agent can easily be acquired from infected wildlife populations regardless of Select Agent status; 4) availability of highly sensitive and specific diagnostic tests for humans and livestock. These characteristics have allowed thousands of infected ungulates to roam the landscape in the GYA, with no public health consequences, but dramatic ramifications following rare transmissions to livestock,

and 5) based on existing need relative to the minimal potential for public health and national security risk.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) and the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support additional research on *Brucella abortus* (*B. abortus*) by removing *B. abortus* from the Select Agent List.

## **RESPONSE:**

### **DHHS, CDC**

As you may know, the "Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002, Subtitle A of Public Law 107-188 (42 U.S.C. 262a; the Bioterrorism Act)," requires the HHS Secretary to review and republish the Select Agent list on a biennial basis. HHS has already begun that review and plans to soon publish in the *Federal Register* an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking to ask for public input regarding, among other things, whether any of the currently listed select agents should be removed from the list. I have forwarded your letter to Dr. Robbin Weyant, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Select Agents and Toxins, so that your request can be incorporated into the current evaluation process. To that end, CDC would also be interested in your organization's views regarding *B. abortus* and the criteria listed in the Bioterrorism Act; including whether you believe *B. abortus* could be weaponized for use against humans.

Please be aware that there are attenuated strains of *B. abortus* (Strains RB51 and 19) that are excluded from the Select Agent regulations because these strains do not pose a severe threat to public health and safety. Information regarding excluded strains of select agents can be found at: [http://www.selectagent.gov/Select%20Agents%20and %20Toxins%20Exclusions.html](http://www.selectagent.gov/Select%20Agents%20and%20Toxins%20Exclusions.html).

### **INTERIM RESPONSE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services recognizes the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) concerns. Subtitle B, section 212(a)(2) of the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002, requires the USDA to conduct a biennial review of the list of select agents and toxins and to revise the list as necessary. APHIS quantitatively and objectively evaluates each agent using a method developed in accordance with the law. This process involves bringing together scientific government experts to evaluate each agent using certain criteria. The last review was completed and published in the *Federal Register* on October 16, 2008. Currently, APHIS is conducting another review of the select agent list. It is expected that APHIS, in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will develop a proposed rule, which will be open for public comment, from this biennial review in late 2010, which will make changes to the list of select agents.

Before implementing the select agent regulations, APHIS regulated the interstate movement and importation of *Brucella* in accordance with the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act and the Animal Health Protection Act. All importation and interstate movement of *Brucella* must occur under a USDA permit. In addition, laboratory inspections are required and APHIS will determine, based on the nature of the work and agent, what type of bio-safety level the facility will need to meet for the intended work. As a component of the containment requirements, maintaining a secured entry into laboratories and security on inventories of the agents was also required, in addition to controlling access to the agents.

Appropriate bio-safety protocols and facility requirements must be met to prevent dissemination of the agent into the environment.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 38 APPROVED AS AMENDED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL WELFARE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CENTER FOR ANIMAL WELFARE BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE, ANIMAL CARE

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Animal welfare is recognized as a complex issue by governments, national and international bodies, academic institutions, and individuals throughout the world. Public awareness and increased emphasis on animal welfare has given the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) additional responsibilities. Those responsibilities have been delegated to the Animal Care (AC) unit, the unit within USDA-APHIS responsible for enforcing the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and regulations and the Horse Protection Act (HPA) and regulations. To respond to the additional responsibilities, the AC unit was authorized to establish a Center for Animal Welfare to provide the critical leadership necessary to effectively respond to animal welfare issues. The focus of the newly established unit will support the current mission of AC including the AWA and HPA, while developing a national resource for the collaboration on international animal welfare issues and providing scientific and technical expertise.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) encourages the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to provide leadership, serve as a national resource for policy development and analysis, develop training, science, and technology on animal welfare topics, and be recognized as a collaborating center for the World Organization of Animal Health (OIE) and other international entities. USDA-APHIS, Animal Care (AC) should continue to enhance the well-being of animals covered by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the Horse Protection Act (HPA).

## **RESPONSE:**

**USDA, APHIS**

We appreciate USAHA sharing its views on the issues in question with our Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and assure you that we will take them under careful consideration. We look forward to further dialogue with your organization on these and other issues as we evaluate the health needs of animals in our country and move ahead with important animal health initiatives.

We value USAHA'S longstanding partnership with USDA, and look forward to continued collaboration advancing our mutual efforts to safeguard and promote U.S. animal health.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 39      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL WELFARE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** SUPPORT FOR THE AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL  
ASSOCIATION *RESPONSE TO THE FINAL REPORT OF THE  
PEW COMMISSION ON INDUSTRIAL FARM ANIMAL  
PRODUCTION*

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production (PCIFAP) published a report on April 29, 2008, *Putting Meat on the Table: Industrial Farm Animal Production in America*, on the impacts of animal agriculture in the United States. In June 2008, the Northeast United States Animal Health Association (NEUSAHA) passed a resolution calling for the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) to request that PCIFAP include the technical reports it had commissioned but not received at the time of publication and that PCIFAP re-evaluate its findings based on said reports. Said resolution was not approved by the membership at the 2008 USAHA annual meeting.

According to the PCIFAP website, <http://www.ncifap.org/about/>, the group 'was formed to conduct a comprehensive, fact-based and balanced examination of key aspects of the farm animal industry.' In a letter to the editor of the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association published on October 15, 2008, Robert P. Martin, Executive Director of PCIFAP states, "The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production (PCIFAP) was a two-year study funded by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to recommend solutions to the problems created by concentrated animal feeding operations in the areas of public health, the environment, animal welfare, and rural communities." Mr. Martin's comment appears contradictory to the notion that the group was convened to 'conduct a comprehensive, fact-based, and balanced examination' of the situation when he infers that there was a predetermined agenda to 'recommend solutions to the problems'.

In the past year, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has done a thorough and excellent job at reviewing each of PCIFAP's recommendations in its *Response to the Final Report of the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production* released in August 2009; <http://www.avma.org/advocacy/PEWresponse/>.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) supports the findings of the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA) *Response to the Final Report of the Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production* released in August 2009.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 40 APPROVED  
**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION  
**SUBJECT MATTER:** NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Animal disease events threaten the economic viability of the animal industries of the United States and the ability of the animal industries to produce a secure source of food, fiber and other important animal products for our nation. The lack of reliable livestock traceability inhibits state animal health officials from efficiently and effectively managing and responding to animal disease events. The primary goal of an animal traceability system is the ability to respond quickly and efficiently to disease outbreaks by tracing individual livestock movements rapidly and accurately, which can only be accommodated by assigning a unique identification number to all livestock premises. The cost of implementing an animal identification system is a concern to many livestock owners, and there is additional concern that an identification system may cause a loss of their ability to keep pace with the speed of commerce in the marketplace. There is also a concern about the security of data held in the system.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) strongly encourages the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to incorporate the following vital components in an animal identification system.

- Require all livestock producers who transport livestock interstate or participate in disease control and eradication programs within the Title 9 CFR to have a livestock location identifier.
- Allow maintenance of state databases and develop standards whereby the state data systems will be compatible in order to facilitate rapid and effective epidemiological efforts in livestock traceability. This data may be held at the state level unless and until there is a need for the information to be shared in the event of a disease investigation.
- Continue to recognize and encourage the use of official permanent individual or group animal identification for official traceability systems.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services recognizes the merit that animal identification provides to animal disease traceability. Secretary Vilsack has directed APHIS to implement a new framework or approach to animal disease traceability that addresses many of the concerns and suggestions stakeholders have shared.

Our first priority will be to publish in the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) a new animal disease traceability section to create a basic overarching infrastructure for the new traceability program. While existing animal identification regulations will be merged into this section, new regulations will apply only to animals moving interstate. The State or Tribal Nation of origin will need to have a system capable of tracing an animal back to the smallest epidemiological unit the State or Tribal Nation deems appropriate for zoning and disease control. The basic requirement will be that animals moving interstate must be traceable and as such identified by a method defined in the CFR or approved by the State or Tribal Nation where the animal is being shipped before beginning interstate movement. The CFR will also include clear criteria and performance measures so States and Tribal Nations know what their traceability systems must achieve and be capable of for their livestock and poultry to qualify for interstate movement.

The States and Tribal Nations will be responsible for the administration of their producers' traceability information and will determine where the information is maintained. It is possible that a State or Tribal Nation may ask the USDA to hold their traceability information as the USDA will provide free access to information systems that support traceability efforts. The USDA will assist States and Tribal Nations as requested. Connectivity and compatibility of information and identification systems is essential and USDA will be looking for ways to obtain adequate funding for the traceability activities and that the funds are administered through policies that result in the deployment of cost effective solutions.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 41 APPROVED  
**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON SHEEP AND GOATS  
**SUBJECT MATTER:** BRUCELLA OVIS RESEARCH

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

*Brucella ovis* (*B. ovis*) has continued to be a source of infertility and thereby of economic significance to the United States sheep industry. Currently available diagnostic methods have not been adequate to accurately determine the disease status of rams. Questions regarding cross-reactivity with other organisms, residual colostral antibody interference, and disparate results between laboratories complicate interpretation of the true disease status.

Additionally questions remain about the role of the ewe in the perpetuation of the disease within a flock. Many times flocks have been found to be infected following years of negative ram tests and with no ewe additions. The role of the female in *B. ovis* transmission has not been thoroughly studied.

## Resolution:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Animal Disease Research Unit (ADRU) and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) work together to develop better diagnostic tests. Also USAHA requests USDA-ARS and other institutions to do research on the pathogenesis and transmissibility of *Brucella ovis* in both rams and ewes.

## INTERIM RESPONSE:

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) supports collaborating with Agricultural Research Service (ARS) along with universities and institutions regarding research on improved diagnostic tests for ovine brucellosis. The NVSL continues discussions with the ARS Animal Disease Research Unit (ADRU) in Pullman, Washington, to develop a more specific and repeatable serological test using the competitive enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay format. NVSL can provide *Brucella ovis* cells/antigen and antisera to the ADRU for assay development and testing support. The NVSL recommends the Consortium for the Advancement of Brucellosis Science (CABS) be contacted regarding the sheep industry's need for research in *B. ovis* to request that CABS include the sheep industry's research needs as part of its mission.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 42 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON SHEEP AND GOATS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH MONITORING SYSTEM SHEEP  
STUDY

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States (US) sheep industry has been the subject of only two studies by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) in the past. In 1996, a mail survey conducted in cooperation with the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) was completed. The survey results were very helpful to the sheep industry and allied industries, plus served a needs assessment role for the more complete study in 2001 which included on-farm sample collection and diagnostic surveys. The 2001 study results have been widely used by industry and government alike as a national benchmark of US sheep industry health, disease and management issues. A timeline and draft study plan for another NAHMS sheep study to be conducted in 2011 has been established.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) proceed with a sheep study in 2011, that is both regional and national in scope and priority disease issue targeted.

USAHA also recommends that NAHMS work with industry and the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) as well as state animal health officials on study design and implementation.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services' Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH) maintains regular contact with the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) to facilitate the collection of the livestock and poultry demographics necessary for animal health decisionmaking. CEAH is incorporating the demographic data provided by NASS to begin the process of State selection in preparation for the Sheep 2011 study. The National Animal Health Monitoring System studies typically include States that represent at least 70 percent of the operations and animals in the

focus industry for a study. The 2011 study will be the third such study for the U.S. sheep industry and will allow us to identify trends in the industry.

APHIS is using a Web-based survey to collect information from stakeholders on the priorities for this study. In addition, CEAH has been in communication with researchers, university extension agents, and government agencies in preparation for determining the study objectives.

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 46      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND RABIES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AGAINST WILDLIFE RABIES

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The use of a licensed oral rabies vaccine, RABORAL V-RG® (Merial) has been effective in controlling rabies in certain wildlife rabies reservoir species. Strategic application of RABORAL V-RG eliminated domestic dog/coyote (DDC) rabies variant from the United States (US). However endemicity of this variant in Mexico has necessitated ongoing enhanced surveillance and maintenance of a barrier of vaccinated coyotes along the Texas/Mexico border to prevent reincursion of DDC rabies variant in the US. This vaccine has been effective in the eastern United States to control raccoon rabies variant and gray fox rabies variant in southwest Texas. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources also continues control programs with the ultimate goal of elimination of arctic fox rabies in western Ontario and raccoon rabies variant in Quebec along the Vermont border utilizing a new human adenovirus recombinant desoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) oral rabies vaccine, ONRAB® (Artemis) and a new bait with great success. This vaccine shows good effectiveness in fox, raccoon and skunk. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS) and the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Thomas Jefferson University continue captive wildlife studies on a new canine adenovirus (DNA) rabies glycoprotein vaccine with good success and expect field trials to be conducted in 2010. This cooperative and collaborative work continues through the partners of the North American Rabies Management Plan (NARMP) which include the United States, Canada, Mexico, Navajo Nation, state and local government agencies, private industry and academia who continue to study and plan the management, control and elimination of terrestrial rabies in North America. Current large scale projects to mitigate the adverse impact of raccoon rabies on the U.S. eastern seaboard, gray fox rabies in Texas, and domestic dog/coyote rabies on the Texas Mexico border. Current studies include the preliminary research in the control of the new bat rabies variant in skunks and gray fox in the Flagstaff, Arizona region; skunk variant rabies in the western United States; feral dog studies in the Navajo (Tribal) Nation. Data from barrier projects and rabies control associated studies inform strategic planning to assure efficient and effective utilization of resources. Appropriate funding for these projects and studies is paramount if the control and elimination of these terrestrial rabies variants in North America is to be realized.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) encourages the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS) and the United States Department of Human and Health Services (USDHHS), Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/National Center for Zoonotic and Vector Borne Enteric Diseases to request funding and resources and that Congress appropriate funding to cooperate and collaborate with their partners in the North American Rabies Management Plan (NARMP) team to study and compare the effectiveness of these three vaccines and baits in field trials to enhance the effectiveness of control and elimination of rabies in these coordinated regional wildlife rabies control and vaccination programs.

## **RESPONSE:**

### **USDA-APHIS-WS**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS), agrees with USAHA Resolution Number 46, *Strategic Initiatives against Wildlife Rabies (SIAWR)*, on the importance of conducting field trials to evaluate prospective oral rabies vaccines and baits that could demonstrate improved performance and enhance our ability to more aggressively meet National and North American rabies management goals. WS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), State and other cooperators made a serious commitment toward the elimination of canine rabies beginning in the mid-1990's, with success achieved in September 2007 when the United States was declared canine rabies free under World Health Organization (WHO) standards.

USDA, APHIS, WS recognizes the need for new or improved oral rabies vaccines and baits to more aggressively achieve rabies management goals. In 2009, WS and cooperators in New Brunswick, Canada participated in a field vaccine comparison between Raboral V-RG (Merial, Athens, GA) used in the United States and ONRAB (Artemis Industries, Guelph, ON, CA), a human adenovirus-rabies recombinant vaccine recently applied under experimental licensing in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick, Canada. The results of that study indicated a two-fold increase in seroconversion in raccoons with ONRAB. These favorable results have demonstrated a need to conduct a similar follow-up comparative vaccine study in 2010. Also, APHIS has established a fiscal year 2010 operational goal to conduct collaborative field trials to test new or improved baits or vaccines. The process has begun and prospective field sites are under consideration. Environmental assessment and regulatory compliance steps are being initiated. New baits and vaccines or improvements to the current licensed vaccine that demonstrate enhanced field performance in raccoons and field efficacy in skunks will be considered as candidates for operational use once the requisite regulatory steps have been satisfactorily completed. WS will continue to evaluate these new vaccines as current resources allow.