
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 1 Combined with 6, 13, 16, and 22 APPROVED

**SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
 COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AND EMERGING DISEASES
 COMMITTEE ON SWINE
 COMMITTEE ON CATTLE AND BISON
 COMMITTEE ON SHEEP, GOATS, AND CAMELIDS**

**SUBJECT MATTER: Adequate Funding for Prevention, Diagnosis, and
 Response for Foreign Animal Disease Outbreaks**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As United States animal agriculture has become increasingly dependent on exports, it is imperative that there are adequate resources in place to prevent, diagnose, and respond to Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) outbreaks. For example, an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) would immediately close all export markets. The cumulative impact of an outbreak on the beef and pork sectors over a 10-year period would be more than \$128 billion. The annual jobs impact of such reduction in industry revenue is 58,066 in direct employment and 153,876 in total employment. Corn and soybean farmers would lose \$44 billion and nearly \$25 billion, respectively, making the impact on these four industries alone almost \$200 billion. A workable FMD vaccine bank can minimize the impact on livestock producers and reduce government costs of a catastrophic FMD outbreak in the United States.

State resources to address prevention of, and preparation for, FAD outbreaks and other animal disease emergencies are often inadequate. Prevention and preparation will be essential in minimizing the impacts to animal agriculture of an FAD incursion.

Laboratory capability to detect and diagnose an initial incursion of an FAD quickly and capacity to meet diagnostic needs during an outbreak response is essential to an effective response including determination of the scope of the outbreak and opportunities to continue interstate movement and resume trade. Utilization of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratories will augment the activities of the Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratories at National Veterinary Services Laboratory and Plum Island. The laboratories will need to operate synergistically for maximum effect.

While response to a FAD often includes mass depopulation of animals, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) FAD PReP plan for FMD is contingent on vaccination

for all but the smallest, localized outbreak. The United States currently does not have access to enough FMD vaccine to handle more than a very small, localized disease event. Worldwide vaccine production is limited, and there is no surge capacity to produce the millions of doses needed to address a large-scale outbreak in the United States. Iowa State University estimated it would cost \$150 million a year for five years to bring vaccine availability to the level necessary to control such an outbreak.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the USDA, the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, and State Departments of Agriculture/Animal Health Commissions to recognize the critical importance of a vaccine bank that prioritizes an adequate number of doses of FMD vaccine, including surge capacity; the NAHLN, and block grants for State animal health agencies to enhance their ability to prevent and prepare for a foreign animal disease emergency. USAHA further urges the aforementioned groups to support, to the extent legally permissible, mandatory funding of \$150 million per year for the life of the Farm Bill for the vaccine bank, \$30 million per year for the NAHLN and \$70 million per year in block grants to States to enhance their ability to prevent and prepare for a foreign animal disease emergency within the next Farm Bill.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of USAHA regarding FAD prevention, diagnosis, and response and appreciates the opportunity to respond. VS understands the importance of maintaining and improving the United States' ability to respond to foreign animal disease events. VS has closely monitored proposals developed by several animal health stakeholder groups to enhance these capabilities through the creation of new programs and additional funding within the next Farm Bill. VS has offered testimony on Capitol Hill regarding these proposals and has provided technical assistance, when requested, as Congress continues its work on the Farm Bill.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 4 COMBINED WITH 7

APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON EQUINE

SUBJECT MATTER: Microchip Identification of Imported Horses

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The United States equine industry recognizes the need for implementation of enhanced identification and traceability. Over the last five years, breed organizations such as The Jockey Club and discipline organizations such as the United States Equestrian Federation have implemented regulations requiring horses to be microchipped. Additionally, organizations such as the American Quarter Horse Association and the United States Trotting Horse Association are drafting proposals for utilization of microchips within their breed. With this increasing domestic microchip identification of horses, there is a recognized need for required microchips on imported horses.

With increased global livestock movement, the disease risk is greater to the United States horse population. This may be manifested by introduction of various diseases through imported horses. Therefore, traceability of these animals is a critical element in the protection of the United States horse population. Lack of a traceable, reliable, and permanent identification system for horses imported into the United States makes it difficult to conduct trace back of animals that are potentially infected with or exposed to an infectious disease.

The committee recognizes similar resolutions regarding microchip for imported horses were presented in 2008 (Resolution 27) and in 2014 (Resolution 16). The responses to these resolutions indicated that due to a lack of domestic use of microchips there could be no international requirement. The significant advances in implementation of required microchips in the domestic horse population warrant a change in approach to import regulations for imported horses.

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 revise the *Code of Federal Regulations* to require all equids imported into, or returning to, the United States be identified with an implanted radio frequency identification (RFID) microchip that complies with the International Organization for Standardization 11784 and 11785 standards (134.2 kHz), unless already implanted with a readable 125 kHz microchip. Universal RFID readers should be present at all import centers and border stations to read both 125 and 134.2 kHz microchips. Additionally, the USAHA urges VS to, at the time of equid importation into the United States, record microchips of imported equidae and electronically capture microchip data in a searchable database accessible to animal health officials during a disease investigation.

FINAL RESPONSE:

VS recognizes the significant advances in implementation of required microchips in the domestic horse population. However, we do not anticipate changing our import regulations to require all horses imported into, or returning to, the United States be identified with an implanted RFID microchip at this time. Our current identification requirements for imported horses follow requirements for domestic movement, as outlined in the National Animal Identification System. Acceptable forms of identification include: microchips, tattoos, and descriptions (including markings). Horses do not require microchips for domestic interstate movement; however, some imported horses have RFID implants when they arrive in the United States. When a microchip is present, VS plans to use the VS Process Streamlining (VSPS) import module to capture microchip numbers on these horses. Upon request, VS personnel will provide State Animal Health Officials with available VSPS microchip information in the event of a disease outbreak.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 5 APPROVED AS

AMENDED SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON EQUINE

SUBJECT MATTER: Equine Infectious Anemia Testing for Horses Imported through Southern Border Ports

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Horses imported from Mexico have been identified as a high-risk population of horses that pose a significant risk to the health of the national equine population. Over the past few years, there have been numerous horses confirmed to be infected with Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) at the southern border ports. Mexico importers recognize the issue and one importer has suggested to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) port veterinarian that positive horses identified in the United States be branded to prevent dissemination of disease.

USDA policy is to reject entry of EIA positive horses and their cohorts. However, while awaiting test results these positive horses remain in the border pens with insect vectors, which have the potential to spread disease to all horses in the pens at the Mexican border. These exposed horses enter the United States incubating disease and have the potential to distribute EIA infection throughout the United States. Additionally, once rejected the exposed horses are not tracked or monitored and have the potential for re-presentation at the same border port or another Mexican border port. Lastly, the official EIA test used for entry purposes is the agar gel immunodiffusion test, which has the potential for not identifying early incubation of the disease agent. With the prevalence of disease in Mexico, the border port identification challenges, the lack of vector control at the ports and the challenges in diagnostic testing, additional measures are necessary to protect the health of the United States equine population.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to take the following actions regarding equine entering through the southern border ports:

1. Implement a 45-90 day pre-import negative EIA Agar Gel Immunodiffusion

(AGID) test requirement for all equidae entering through a Southern Border Port. Test must be performed by a laboratory approved by the National Government Animal Health Authority.

2. Require a statement on the importing health certificate that states, "Between the time of EIA test and export, the equid has not been on an EIA infected premises or exposed to an EIA positive equid."
3. The positive equid and all exposed equidae in the lot with the EIA reactor animal shall be requested to be microchipped and the identification information be recorded in a searchable database. This database shall be developed to have the ability to identify and recognize these equidae and prevent the exposed equidae from being allowed entry for 45 days.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The UDSA, APHIS, VS recognizes the concerns of the U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA) on equines entering through the Southern Border Ports and interest in protecting the health of the U.S. equine population from EIA. We appreciate the opportunity to respond.

VS requires all equidae imported into the United States to be tested for EIA at their entry points into the United States. VS does not evaluate the diagnostic laboratory infrastructure and capability of other countries related to EIA. As a result, we do not recognize pre-testing from any of our trading partners.

VS is reviewing the protocol for biosecurity standards for equine quarantine stations at the southern border. We inform Mexican animal health authorities of every instance of equines testing positive at the border for EIA. In addition, VS will continue to ask for pre-entry approval from destination States for potentially EIA exposed Mexican equines, and will not allow entry before such authorization is obtained.

VS will not require all EIA-positive horses and their cohorts at Mexican entry ports to be identified with implanted radio frequency identification microchips at this time. Such horses are not allowed to legally enter the United States. As such, VS has no authority to require such action. VS uses the VS Process Streamlining (VSPS) import module to capture microchips when they are detected in horses presented for entry. Upon request, VS personnel will provide State Animal Health Officials with available VSPS microchip information in the event of a disease outbreak.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) and State Departments of Agriculture, Animal Health Commissions, and Boards of Animal Health to set a mandatory date of January 1, 2021, to discontinue allowing visual only tags (including NUES tags) to be applied as official ID and a date of January 1, 2023, for all cattle and bison which are currently required to be officially identified under the rule to have electronic official ID tags which meet the standards defined by the USDA.

USDA shall be responsible for determining the specifications of the electronic official ID tags and reading equipment on or before July 1, 2019, after consultation with technology companies, industry, and other countries that have successfully implemented electronic ID programs. Official electronic ID tags must be read at the speed of commerce. Cattle and bison shall be identified prior to or when they leave their premises of birth or at the first point of commingling. Traceability to the premises of birth shall be maintained. Federal and State cost sharing shall be considered.

Federal/State Agencies, Industry, and Technology Companies shall ensure cost sharing for this project.

FINAL RESPONSE:

VS understands the challenges that arise from the use of visual-only tags as official identification (ID). VS supports the recommendation from this resolution to move to an electronic identification system for official ID in cattle by 2021. Specifically, prior to discontinuation of visual only tags as official identification, a plan is needed that addresses the multitude of very complex issues related to the implementation of a fully integrated electronic system. VS envisions developing this implementation plan with input from stakeholders, including USAHA, the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, State officials, and industry groups. The plan should focus on several key objectives, including, but not limited to, technology and data standardization, transitional solutions, a timeline for implementation, and funding.

APHIS has taken the following actions related to this resolution:

1. Analysis of the costs associated with metal NUES tags to reflect the full cost associated with the manual collection of tag numbers and the inability to retire these numbers after slaughter, due to expense compared to the cost of radio frequency identification (RFID). The draft report of this analysis is in the clearance process at this time. APHIS will now begin analyzing the costs associated with implementation and use of RFID as official ID to complete the cost comparison.
2. A timeline is set for the discontinuation of providing free tags to States and accredited veterinarians. APHIS will continue to distribute the remaining inventory of metal tags in the APHIS warehouse until stock is depleted. During this transitional time, APHIS is researching information on RFID costs and cost sharing with stakeholders.

3. Provide funding for the Kansas Cattle Trail Pilot Project. The Kansas pilot project is a cooperative project with Kansas livestock growers, Kansas State University, the Kansas Department of Agriculture, and USDA. This project will design and create a model for national traceability in beef cattle with an industry-State-Federal partnership of information collection and sharing that will serve as a guide for other States and private entities. The project will include data sharing between private entities, State, and Federal regulators, and will demonstrate traceability to birth herd, tag retirement, and points between, as well as the value-added components of traceability.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 9 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON FARMED CERVIDAE

SUBJECT MATTER: Brucellosis Testing in Farmed Cervidae

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Over the last 50 years of bovine brucellosis eradication in cattle in the United States, elk and bison in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) have been an impediment to the completion of the Program. Whitetail deer, mule deer, and elk in the other 47 brucellosis-free States have never been identified as being either a reservoir for the disease or a public health risk in regard to being infected with *Brucella abortus* or transmitting the agent.

The elk in the GYA are not privately owned or controlled, and it is presently illegal to trap, possess, or transport these free-ranging elk privately. Therefore, they cannot legally enter animal commerce channels and are not an issue in regard to interstate shipment of brucellosis-infected elk.

In 2013, the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) membership approved a resolution to eliminate interstate *Brucella* testing requirements for whitetail deer and mule deer.

RESOLUTION:

1. The USAHA urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to eliminate brucellosis testing requirements for interstate movement of farmed elk, red deer, and other cervid species that originate outside of the GYA if and when a federal rule for Brucellosis is published.
2. The USAHA urges State regulatory officials to eliminate brucellosis testing requirements for interstate movement of farmed elk, red deer, and other cervid species that originate outside of the GYA.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, APHIS, VS recognizes the concerns of the USAHA regarding brucellosis testing requirements for interstate movement. We appreciate the opportunity to respond. At this time, we continue to review the comments we received concerning the proposed rule for brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis, and we will consider this resolution as we determine next steps.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 10 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON FARMED CERVIDAE

**SUBJECT MATTER: Farmed Cervid Tuberculosis Herd Certification
Testing Intervals**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The primary objective of the cervid bovine tuberculosis (TB) herd accreditation program is to eliminate *Mycobacterium bovis*, the causative agent of bovine TB, in farmed cervids as part of a comprehensive approach to eradicate bTB in domestic cattle and bison in the United States. All farmed cervids destined for interstate movement are required to be tested for bovine TB.

To establish an Accredited Free herd in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Cervid bovine TB Herd Accreditation Program, the entire herd of cervids over 12 months of age must have two negative tests in 9 to 15 month intervals. The accreditation is valid for 33 to 39 months from the original anniversary date and a negative whole herd retest must be performed in that period of time to maintain the accredited herd status. Animals from Accredited Free herds are allowed to be moved interstate at any time without additional testing. Details on the bovine TB testing requirements for interstate movements of cervids from monitored herds, qualified herds, and accredited herds from modified accredited States and zones are provided in the federal regulations (Title 9 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 77 and 86) and in the 1999 Uniform Methods and Rules (UM&R) on Bovine TB Eradication.

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 modify the tuberculosis test requirements for maintaining cervid accredited herd status described in Title 9 CFR Part 77.35 to allow the test interval to be extended to 5 years for certain cervid herds if all of the following requirements have been met:

1. The cervid herd has continuously maintained accredited status for at least 6 years following initial herd accreditation.

2. Since initial herd accreditation, all non-natural additions to the accredited cervid herd have come from other accredited cervid herds only.
3. No evidence of bovine TB has been disclosed in either cattle or cervidae (wild or farmed) in the State or zone within the State in which the cervid accredited herd is located for the most recent 6 years.

Further, if bovine tuberculosis has been disclosed in either cattle or cervidae (wild or farmed) in a State or designated zone within the State in which the cervid accredited herd is located within the most recent 6 years, the test interval for maintaining cervid accredited status will be 3 years.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, APHIS, VS recognizes the concerns of the USAHA and appreciates the opportunity to respond. The resolution pertains to a section of the CFR that was included in the proposed rule for brucellosis and bovine TB. At this time, VS continues to review the comments we received concerning the proposed rule, and we will consider this resolution as we determine next steps.

At USAHA's request, VS conducted an analysis of bovine TB testing in farmed cervids in the United States between fiscal years 2011-2017. The primary objectives of this analysis was to describe VS' current surveillance activities and to develop a prevalence estimate for bovine TB in farmed cervids. This information will be used to inform the appropriate testing interval for bovine TB accredited and monitored farmed cervid herds. Additional objectives for the analysis include assessing testing trends that occurred subsequent to approval of the serologic test in 2013 and to evaluate States' testing data relative to the current State status, per requirements in title 9, *CFR*, Part 77 Subpart C.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 12 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON BIOLOGICS AND BIOTECHNOLOGY

SUBJECT MATTER: Standards for Labeling Requirements for Fetal Bovine Serum

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The animal serum industry and its products, especially Fetal Bovine Serum (FBS), have suffered reputational damage over the years due to issues with product integrity and traceability. In 2006, serum producers organized the International Serum Industry Association (ISIA), which established ethics and industry standards and set the stage for improving the industry's reputation through audit and certification processes.

In 2013, an incident occurred via discovery that over a five-year period (2008-2013) an estimated 280,000 liters of FBS had been adulterated and mislabeled. United States and European authorities were alerted and measures were taken to recall the unused products. The company involved has since gone out of business, but the consequences of this incident on research projects, diagnostic lab results, and vaccine producing companies is still unknown. It is possible that years of research may have been adversely affected, as well as the accuracy of diagnostic test results, safety of vaccines, and the reproducibility of protocols. The recall alert stated that FBS may have been adulterated with "adult bovine serum albumin of United States origin, water and/or cell growth promoting additives...in varying portions...ranging from 23 to 50 percent of the products composition..." Furthermore, it appeared that some lots were inaccurately represented as to their origin. Estimates were that the company involved in this incident controlled up to 25 percent of the worldwide market for FBS.

Because the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) does not have authority to directly regulate the serum industry and animal serum products, their involvement in this incident and other reported cases is limited to preventing the adverse effects questionable products may have on individual licensees of Veterinary Biologic products. FBS used by researchers, constituting approximately one third of all serum produced and used in the United States, is not regulated. Therefore, in most cases, the serum producer is not held accountable by USDA in the event of issues with its products and their potential adverse effects.

RESOLUTION:

The USAHA urges the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to study the possibility of requesting authority and/or amending existing regulations, which would support standards for labeling requirements for all Fetal Bovine Serum products, as well as penalties and recall responsibilities.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, APHIS, VS recognizes the concerns of the U.S. Animal Health Association and appreciates the opportunity to respond. Since FBS does not fit the definition of a veterinary biologic under the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act or the corresponding regulations, VS would likely not obtain regulatory authority over all FBS without major statutory change and rulemaking. In addition, VS' current budgets do not allow expansion of mission into other areas such as regulatory oversight of FBS, which would require significant resources to be considered effective. Although VS can directly regulate FBS imports, we would need additional regulatory authority, rulemaking, personnel, and budget to regulate FBS movements, both imported and solely domestic, for issues beyond introduction and spread of infectious livestock diseases, such as labeling/mislabeled and/or adulteration with materials not posing a livestock disease risk.

APHIS is examining ways to strengthen regulatory oversight within its existing scope of authority. VS' Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) recently tightened policy on sourcing of all ingredients of animal origin used in the manufacture of veterinary biologics in an effort to increase the safety of licensed products. Additionally, CVB is working with the veterinary biologics industry to update existing testing requirements for ingredients of animal origin, including FBS. The net result of these CVB initiatives will be more rigorous regulatory oversight of all ingredients of animal origin, including FBS. In addition, VS' National Import Export Services is reassessing its import requirements for FBS to the extent that current authority, budget, and technology allow. The ISIA is developing new methodology for verifying country of origin of bovine serum, and VS is keeping abreast of these developments.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 14 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON SWINE

SUBJECT MATTER: State Animal Health Official and Submitting Veterinary Diagnostic Lab Access to Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Records Reported from the National Animal Health Laboratory Network Labs and the National Veterinary Services Laboratory to the United States Department of Agriculture's Laboratory Messaging Service

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Laboratory Messaging Service (LMS) is a database application that serves as the centralized point of receipt for electronic veterinary diagnostic records being reported from National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) labs to the USDA. LMS also receives test results being reported from cases forwarded from NAHLN labs to the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) for further diagnostic testing. Significant advances have been made in the NAHLN's ability to electronically transfer (message) veterinary diagnostic records from NAHLN labs and NVSL to LMS. These stepwise improvements in connectivity between veterinary diagnostic laboratories (VDLs) and USDA represent great progress towards establishing seamless and scalable systems of reportable disease veterinary diagnostic information transfer between United States VDLs and veterinary medical officials. However, USDA does not currently have an effective application for providing State Animal Health Officials (SAHOs) electronic access to the VDL records received into LMS that have originated from animals or farm sites in their respective States. Similarly, NAHLN labs do not have electronic access to diagnostic results from case submissions in which they forward onto NVSL for further testing. Permissioned access solutions are needed to bridge this gap in connectivity that exists between the USDA's LMS, SAHOs, and VDLs.

The USDA response to a previous resolution referred to USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services (VS) doing an assessment of 2016 capabilities and initial requirements. The response then included the intention to pilot test a State-based reporting solution to provide SAHOs with electronic access to veterinary diagnostic laboratory results that have been electronically reported to USDA, APHIS, VS using the VS LMS during the spring of 2018. Pending the successful pilot, the web-based software would be fully deployed by October 1, 2018.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians encourage the USDA to:

1. Work with SAHOs and industry to determine the requirements for a web-based reporting software solution and then develop an application that provides SAHOs electronic access to veterinary diagnostic laboratory records originating from animals or farm sites within their respective States that have been reported from NAHLN labs or USDA, APHIS, NVSL to USDA's Laboratory Messaging Service,
2. Provide veterinary diagnostic laboratories electronic access to diagnostic results from case submissions which that same veterinary diagnostic laboratory has forwarded onto USDA, APHIS, NVSL for further testing, and
3. Work with SAHOs and industry to ensure the full deployment of the web-based software solution resulting from the 2018 pilot project if the project meets the previously determined launch date of October 1, 2018.

FINAL RESPONSE

The USDA, APHIS, VS recognizes the USAHA concerns and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

VS led a working group with the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials to determine the requirements for web-based reporting, focusing on using Federal data streams for swine surveillance, which include data from our NAHLN laboratories and the NVSL via the Laboratory Messaging Services. The project goals included: 1) demonstrate VS capabilities for swine reporting using Tableau, 2) identify the primary questions the States have from VS swine surveillance, 3) identify gaps from VS capabilities versus State questions, 4) design and prototype State dashboards, and 5) design and prototype public dashboards. In addition to developing a prototype for the new reporting, the series of meetings opened new opportunities for sharing data across State and Federal Government and to the public, creating more transparency and facilitating information flow from VS.

Our next steps will include working with our leadership and APHIS Legislative and Public Affairs on release processes, adherence to USDA web standards, and the communication process for initial release and updates to the dashboards. VS intended to roll out the swine health dashboards prior to USAHA 2018 and will continue to roll out dashboards for additional commodities and programs after the initial swine dashboards are released.

NVSL continues to enhance electronic reporting by 1) improving the usability of VS strand, including increasing the number of records returned from 2000 to 4000 and adding fields as needs arise, and 2) prioritizing requests for use of information technology resources to improve messaging from NVSL LabWare Laboratory Information Management System to USDA's Laboratory Messaging Service.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 15 APPROVED AS AMENDED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON SWINE

SUBJECT MATTER: A Nationally-Coordinated Bio-Surveillance System that Rapidly Delivers Real-Time Data for Analysis to Improve Foreign Animal Disease Detection

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As United States animal agriculture has become increasingly dependent on exports it is imperative that there are adequate resources in place to prevent, diagnose, and respond to Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) outbreaks. For example, an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) would immediately close all export markets. The cumulative impact of an outbreak on the beef and pork sectors over a 10-year period would be more than \$128 billion. The annual jobs impact of such reduction in industry revenue is 58,066 in direct employment and 153,876 in total employment. Corn and soybean farmers would lose \$44 billion and nearly \$25 billion, respectively, making the impact on these four industries alone almost \$200 billion.

These costs can only be mitigated if the United States can mount a swift and thorough response once FMD is detected within our borders. Delay in detection of FMD or any other regulatory FAD risks a fatal delay in response.

On April 12-13, 2017, more than twenty-six representatives from the United States swine industry, State Animal Health Officials (SAHOs), Federal Animal Health Officials, and academia came together for a common priority to discuss protecting swine health and developing a national bio-surveillance system for the U.S. swine industry. Specific key elements and recommendations captured in the final report from the discussions at the workshop can apply to all animal protein species. The group agreed that a national surveillance vision should be risk-based, real-time, reliable (accurate information), efficient, representative, and integrate data in a timely manner so disease events can be identified quickly.

Some Cross-species Key Elements of an Optimal Risk-Based Comprehensive Disease Preparedness System

1. Supports prevention, preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery from foreign and emerging animal diseases of concern.

2. Includes a process for prioritizing, evaluating, implementing, and revising surveillance objectives.
3. Includes feed and other common production inputs.
4. Utilizes standardized, electronic, real-time data capture for data that will support risk-based preparedness.
5. Facilitates communication between existing industry, State, and federal disparate response and database systems.
6. Produces timely action oriented executive summary information for “rapidly digestible situational awareness.”

FADs, including FMD, classical swine fever and African swine fever, are often clinically (visually) indistinguishable from other endemic, non-regulatory diseases. A twenty-first century approach to FAD surveillance is needed to quickly identify an outbreak and achieve meaningful disease response and business continuity capabilities that will drive sustainable production in the United States animal protein industries in the event of a foreign animal disease that threatens to disrupt trade and commerce.

RESOLUTION:

The USAHA urges the USDA to collaborate with stakeholders to organize and facilitate a meeting of animal protein commodity organizations, State Animal Health Officials (SAHO), and other critical stakeholders to discuss the following key elements to help achieve progress in developing an optimal nationally-coordinated bio-surveillance system that rapidly delivers real-time data for analysis to improve foreign animal disease detection.

Some Across-species Key Elements of an Optimal Risk-Based Comprehensive Disease Preparedness System

1. Supports prevention, preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery from foreign and emerging animal diseases of concern.
2. Includes a process for prioritizing, evaluating, implementing, and revising surveillance objectives.
3. Includes feed and other common production inputs.
4. Utilizes standardized, electronic, real-time data capture for data that will support risk-based preparedness.
5. Facilitates communication between existing industry, State, and federal disparate response and database systems.
6. Produces timely action oriented executive summary information for “rapidly digestible situational awareness.”

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the USAHA’s concerns and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS is committed to a comprehensive and integrated surveillance (CIS) approach to animal disease surveillance that connects and engages VS and other partners involved in animal health. A full CIS system will allow us to efficiently assess animal health in the United States, including emerging and foreign animal diseases.

Although many foundational pieces for CIS are in place, much work remains for VS to establish fully functioning CIS for all commodities.

We would note that different animal commodities have accomplished CIS to different degrees of success, and each animal commodity has different needs. One of our priority projects is developing commodity-based communication plans to coordinate outreach with external stakeholders to develop strategies and implementation for CIS. These draft communication plans align with the ideas and incorporate many of the key elements expressed in this resolution. We support the resolution to collaborate with stakeholders to organize and facilitate a meeting of commodity organizations, SAHOs, and other critical stakeholders to discuss CIS and the key elements outlined in the resolution.

VS has additional high-priority projects which support the elements of preparedness system prevention, preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery from foreign and emerging animal diseases of concern. This includes continuing to move the National List of Reportable Animal Diseases (NLRAD) forward through the rule-making process and planning for its implementation. VS is striving to improve various aspects of surveillance data capture, quality, management, analysis, and reporting. This includes laboratory submissions and avian influenza surveillance reporting. VS will deploy improved surveillance reporting this year through comprehensive surveillance reports. VS has completed evaluations of national surveillance systems for pseudorabies, swine brucellosis, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, cattle brucellosis, farmed cervid brucellosis and tuberculosis, and scrapie. VS plans to complete the evaluation of surveillance for swine foreign diseases in fiscal year 2018 and initiate its evaluation of cattle tuberculosis surveillance. VS is also working on outbreak preparedness by analyzing the performance of aggregate tests, such as molecular testing of bulk tank milk samples for dairy cattle and oral fluids for swine, and determining their value and potential uses in outbreak situations.

Finally, CIS for the swine commodity group has been a long standing goal, with intermittent progress. More specific to preparedness and swine CIS, VS is conducting a formal validation of reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) in oral fluids for detection of classical and African swine fever and foot-and-mouth disease. This work is conducted in collaboration with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and major swine laboratories participating in the National Animal Health Laboratory Network. VS has identified many aspects of “next steps” for CIS in swine, which are significant projects or build-outs. In the event that Farm Bill funding becomes a reality, it may be time to strategically address what priorities different parties concur on to achieve CIS.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 17 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON CATTLE AND BISON

SUBJECT MATTER: Permitted Research on *Brucella Abortus* as a Select Agent

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Select Agent regulations restrict possession, transfer, and use of select agents and toxins to protect the Nation from terrorist attacks. The restrictions have been highly effective in limiting access to dangerous agents and toxins by unauthorized individuals. Unfortunately, opportunities for important research on *Brucella abortus*, a disease endemic in Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) wildlife, has also been severely limited by these same regulations. The National Academy of Sciences recently published a report titled, "Revisiting Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area," and concluded that brucellosis research is not only critical but should be expanded in response to the spread of brucellosis in the GYA.

Brucella abortus research restrictions have recently been clarified in an August 18, 2017, memo from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) titled, "FSAP Policy Statement: Non-Exclusion of Study-Related Activities Involving Naturally Infected Animals." The memo clarified that it is not permissible to:

- "Remove an animal which is naturally infected with a select agent from its natural environment to an artificially established environment for the purpose of the intentional exposure or introduction of a select agent to a naïve or experimental animal, or
- Introduce a naïve animal to a natural environment where there is an animal which is naturally infected with a select agent for the purpose of the intentional exposure or introduction of a select agent to the naïve or experimental animal."

These limitations leave the Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3) Agricultural Research Service facility at Ames, Iowa as the only United States facility capable of conducting brucellosis pathogenesis studies in a laboratory setting. Further, these restrictions preclude any pathogenesis studies under field conditions based on natural transmission of disease in either wildlife or livestock. Therefore, studying vaccine response in cattle, elk, or domestic bison in the GYA due to natural infection is no longer possible.

As the disease is continuing to expand, the tools previously available to address the

problem have become unavailable.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) strongly urges that within the Select Agent regulations, the USDA and the DHHS permit brucellosis research studies on pathogenesis under field conditions in endemic areas based on natural transmission of disease. Further, the USAHA urges the USDA and DHHS to vigorously work to remove *Brucella abortus* from the select agent list.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the USAHA and appreciates the opportunity to respond. The Agriculture Select Agent Service (AgSAS) recognizes the importance of continued research to evaluate vaccine efficacy and pathogenesis of brucellosis. After careful evaluation of the biosafety and biocontainment factors of various brucellosis studies involving livestock and naturally infected animals, AgSAS, along with their partners in the DHHS, issued “FSAP Policy Statement: Non-Exclusion of Study-Related Activities Involving Naturally Infected Animals” on August 18, 2017.

The policy statement specifically addresses the use of negative or naïve animals for the purpose of intentional transmission studies by exposure to and comingling with naturally infected animals. This policy addresses the concern of transferring select agents to a negative animal in studies not performed in compliance with the select agent regulations. AgSAS offers to review new study proposals to ensure compliance with select agent regulations.

USDA also continues to collaborate with DHHS to consider delisting *Brucella abortus*, which will assist in future brucellosis research efforts.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 18 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

SUBJECT MATTER: H5/H7 LOW PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA RESPONSE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) is the Federal Government's poultry disease control program administered in cooperation with State Animal Health Officials and poultry producers. The General Conference Committee (GCC) of the NPIP is the Official Federal Advisory Committee to the Secretary of Agriculture on matters pertaining to poultry health. Among other duties, the GCC is responsible for advising and making recommendations to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) on maintaining adequate NPIP funding to enable the Senior Coordinator to fully administer NPIP Provisions, advise USDA, APHIS with respect to administrative procedures and interpretations of the NPIP Provisions as contained in title 9 *Code of Federal Regulations*, and to serve as a direct liaison between the NPIP and the United States Animal Health Association.

In 2002 H7N2 Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) was identified in North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia costing producers hundreds of millions of dollars. A surveillance program was not in place to detect the potential spread of Avian Influenza (AI). In response, the NPIP LPAI program was created to provide an incentive for regular AI surveillance and to protect poultry producers through indemnification and compensation should H5/H7 LPAI be found.

AI remains a concern for poultry producers in the United States with the H5N2 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in 23 States in 2014–2015; H7N8 HPAI/LPAI in Indiana in 2016, H5N2 LPAI in Wisconsin in 2017, and H7N9 HPAI/LPAI in Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky, and Georgia in 2017. The NPIP is the only federal program responsible for H5/H7 LPAI surveillance, response, and containment activities. HPAI flocks are fully indemnified and compensated by USDA, APHIS, VS; however, indemnity and compensation for H5/H7 LPAI flocks is under discussion by VS. Disruption of indemnity and compensation for H5/H7 LPAI can result in loss of confidence and trust, and could potentially create a harmful impact on future responses to H5/H7 LPAI. This loss of confidence and trust discourages poultry producers (commercial, independent growers, and small flocks) from fully complying with NPIP testing programs and cooperating with State and federal regulatory authorities.

Without dedicated funding for LPAI indemnity and compensation, there is no incentive for producers to participate in voluntary NPIP programs.

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) provide a clear policy on H5/H7 Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) indemnity, compensation, and Initial State Response and Containment Plans. USAHA requests that policy be developed with input, participation, and feedback from the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) Participants, Official State Agencies, and the NPIP, General Conference Committee. Changes will be presented to delegates for discussion and voting at the 2018 NPIP Biennial Conference. In addition, the USAHA requests that Congress appropriate new, no-year, mandatory fiscal appropriations dedicated for LPAI indemnity and compensation to ensure continued participation in NPIP H5/H7 LPAI programs.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, APHIS, VS recognizes the concerns of the USAHA and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS updated the proposed policy for indemnity/compensation payments for LPAI based on comments from stakeholders who attended the August 2017 poultry stakeholder meeting in Riverdale, Maryland.

APHIS and poultry stakeholders met again on March 27, 2018, in Atlanta, Georgia, and APHIS presented the newly updated LPAI indemnity/compensation proposed policy documents to industry for input. APHIS further updated the proposed policy based on feedback received.

VS submitted a proposal during the 2018 NPIP Biennial Conference held in Franklin, Tennessee, on June 26-28, 2018. We submitted this proposal primarily to allow for flexibility of indemnity/compensation payments. The voting delegation amended the proposal during the conference to state that the amount of indemnity/compensation to be paid for LPAI shall be 100 percent. The proposal was approved and submitted to USDA for approval and inclusion in title 9, *Code of Federal Regulations*. At this time, USDA has not made a decision on this proposal. All proposals that come out of the Biennial Conference must be approved by USDA and go through the regulatory rule making process. The workplan is currently in the clearance process within VS.

APHIS revised Guidance Document 8601.2—*Development and Approval of Initial State Response and Containment Plans for H5/H7 LPAI*. The revised document clarifies procedures, adds resource materials, and provides additional recommendations to assist States in developing operational response plans. APHIS has provided the new guidance documents to all State Animal Health Officials and NPIP Official State Agencies. In fiscal year (FY) 2017, funding for the avian health commodity line item was \$55,340,000. In FY

2018, a \$7.5 million funding increase brought the total to \$62,840,000 million. Congress allocated the additional money to pay for losses due to LPAI.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 23 APPROVED AS AMENDED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON WILDLIFE AND CAPTIVE WILDLIFE

**SUBJECT MATTER: Annual Reporting on Chronic Wasting Disease
Epidemiological Data**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) has been recognized in wild cervids since the 1980's. Availability of complete epidemiological information is critical for evaluating the effectiveness of science-based disease control programs. Access to pertinent information from epidemiological investigations across the country in wild populations is imperative to developing success strategies for managing the disease.

More comprehensive information is needed on CWD epidemiology in the affected wild populations. Analysis of data from CWD affected populations across the country will improve risk assessment. Comprehensive epidemiological data evaluation may potentially identify factors contributing to the detection of CWD, enhance mitigation strategies to reduce the likelihood of CWD in new populations, and facilitate its earliest detection when it is present.

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) and other appropriate federal and State agencies to work cooperatively to assemble, analyze, summarize, and make available annually to the Committee on Wildlife and Captive Wildlife at the USAHA meeting all pertinent information from epidemiological investigations of CWD in cervid populations (including wild, free-ranging, and captive). Specific information requested may include:

1. Compiled CWD testing data from each State to include:
 - a) Overall State testing numbers of each susceptible species tested;
 - b) Number of CWD positive tests found annually in each State;
 - c) Overall State testing in wild populations;
 - d) Prevalence of CWD in positive populations;
 - e) Population totals for each susceptible species of wild herds in each State;
 - f) Demography of positive and negative animals in infected herds;

- g) Results from all tissues that were tested;
 - h) Duration of monitoring prior to detection of the first case - including numbers of animals in the herd, numbers tested, and numbers not tested;
 - i) Results of trace-forward and trace-back investigations; and
 - j) All other pertinent data that will enhance risk assessment of CWD in cervids and identification of effective mitigation measures.
2. Compiled data should also be posted on the USDA website.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, APHIS, VS recognizes the concerns of the USAHA and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

VS will continue to share pertinent information from epidemiological investigations of CWD detected in farmed cervid herds to the Committee on Wildlife and Captive Wildlife at the annual USAHA meeting. We will also make this same information available on the USDA website. However, VS does not plan to initiate data collection activities to obtain the requested information for wild, free-ranging population through State wildlife agencies.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 24 APPROVED

**SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON PARASITIC AND VECTOR
BORNE DISEASES**

**SUBJECT MATTER: Development and Implementation of a Cattle Fever Tick
Control Program in Mexican States Bordering Texas**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program (CFTEP), established in 1906, is the oldest livestock pest eradication program in the nation. CFTEP's mission is to eradicate fever ticks from the United States and to prevent re-establishment of cattle fever ticks in the United States. A permanent quarantine zone was established along the Texas side of the Rio Grande in 1943. Cattle fever ticks were eradicated from Texas in 1946, except for incursions across the river into the permanent quarantine zone and the free areas of Texas.

The establishment of the permanent fever tick quarantine zone in 1943, created a buffer zone between Mexico and the rest of the United States to prevent and/or limit the incursion of fever ticks into the fever tick "free" areas of country. Since that time, successful maintenance of the permanent quarantine zone has been based on the systematic inspection and treatment of cattle maintained within the zone to detect and eradicate incursions of fever ticks from endemically infested wildlife hosts and cattle from Mexico. From the onset of the CFTEP, 100 percent treatment of all cattle on infested premises has proven to be the most effective method of eradicating cattle fever ticks. The successful eradication of fever ticks from the United States in 1946, was primarily attributable to the 100 percent treatment requirement.

However, in the last twenty years, factors such as changes in land use transitioning away from cattle production to wildlife, recreational uses, and increasing wildlife populations, especially white-tailed deer, elk, red deer, and Nilgai antelope, have complicated and challenged fever tick eradication efforts and thus, successful maintenance of the permanent quarantine zone. The CFTEP has incorporated additional treatment and preventative treatment methodologies, such as ivermectin-treated corn for treating white-tailed deer, treatment of cattle with doramectin, and the use of a fever tick vaccine in cattle to help offset the impact of these challenges, but has not completely mitigated the challenges because there are not any available treatments for fever tick

infested Nilgai antelope and some other cattle fever tick hosts.

Despite the incorporation of new methodologies into the existing eradication program, fever tick infestations, both within and outside of the permanent quarantine zone, are expanding. The largest contributing factor to the expansion is the fever tick burden present on Mexican origin wildlife and livestock populations located along the Rio Grande in Mexico. Mexico does not have a fever tick eradication or control program that would decrease the fever tick population/burden on wildlife and livestock on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande. When coupled with the inadequacy of the Rio Grande river as a barrier, especially, for cattle fever tick infested wildlife, the unchecked fever tick population in Mexico will continue to cross the Rio Grande on infested wildlife and livestock, overwhelming the capability of the CFTEP to successfully maintain the efficacy of the buffer created by the permanent quarantine zone and resulting in ongoing incursions of fever ticks into the “free” areas of Texas, and potentially the rest of the United States.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and Agriculture Research Service (ARS) to collaborate with Mexican National Animal Health Officials, Mexican State Animal Health Officials from the Mexican states that border Texas, and Mexican livestock and wildlife industry representatives. Specifically, USAHA would like USDA to develop and implement a fever tick control or eradication program that will reduce or eliminate the fever tick population along the Mexican side of the Rio Grande river, and thus the threat of fever tick incursion presented by wildlife and livestock populations across the Rio Grande from the permanent quarantine zone in Texas.

FINAL RESPONSE:

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

In December 2016, APHIS, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and Mexico hosted a joint Tick Summit attended by Federal and State entities, academia, and industry. During the summit, APHIS discussed the current status of tick issues in the United States and Mexico, as well as new advances that may help to improve tick programs on both sides of the border. APHIS worked with Mexico to draft a bilateral strategic tick plan, which is undergoing formal review. APHIS and Mexico’s Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries, and Food will roll out the plan to the Bi-National Committee after final approval

On August 15, 2018, the United States and Mexico signed a Joint Strategic Plan for the Control and Eradication of Invasive Cattle Fever Ticks *Rhipicephalus (Boophilus) microplus* and *R. (b) annulatus*, 2017-2021. Additionally, to address the threat of fever

tick incursion presented by wildlife and livestock populations across the Rio Grande from the permanent quarantine zone in Texas, APHIS is working with the United States Customs and Border Protection, ARS; the Texas Animal Health Commission, Mexico's National Health Service, Food Safety and Food Quality, Mexico's National Research Institute in Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock, Mexican border States, and industry partners to start a dialogue on the movement of ticks on animals across the Rio Grande. On September 5-6, 2018, all stakeholders met for the "Ticks on the River" meeting in Laredo, Texas.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 26 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON PARASITIC & VECTOR BORNE DISEASES

SUBJECT MATTER: Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease and Blue Tongue Virus Data

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) and Blue Tongue Virus (BTV) are caused by a virus of the genus *Orbivirus* and are considered some of the most significant diseases affecting North American cervidae. The EHD and BTV viruses are wide spread and periodically cause serious epidemics in the cervid species. The diseases are carried by biting flies and occur on a seasonal basis.

These diseases infect and kill thousands of farmed and free ranging deer each year. There is little data compiled and disseminated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) that details the estimated number of deaths related to known EHD/BTV infections and the specific strains per State. Strains of EHD and BTV vary by State and by year.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services (VS) to prepare a descriptive report to present at the 2018 USAHA Annual Meeting and each annual meeting, thereafter. The report shall include the following data that is available:

- 1) Number of estimated farmed cervid deaths related to EHD BTV per State and cervid species in the previous year.
- 2) Number of estimated wild cervid deaths related to EHD and BTV per State and cervid species in the previous year.
- 3) Strains of EHD and BTV that have been known to be found in each State for both farmed and wild cervidae in the previous year.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The USDA, APHIS, VS recognizes the concerns of the USAHA and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

VS could report annual summary results for strains of epizootic hemorrhagic disease and blue tongue virus identified through testing performed at the National Veterinary Services Laboratories. However, this report would not be representative of all testing performed by State and other laboratories, nor would it include information about deaths associated with these viruses. VS would need to devote considerable resources to contacting State laboratories and wildlife agencies to obtain the requested information. Further, the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) of the University of Georgia's College of Veterinary Medicine regularly reports the requested information in its Quarterly Newsletter "SCWDS Briefs" available at <http://vet.uga.edu/scwds/briefs>. VS funds a cooperative agreement with SCWDS, which partially funds this work. In light of these factors, VS does not plan to initiate the data collection activities required to be responsive to this resolution.