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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 25      APPROVED**

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

**SUBJECT MATTER:            Accelerated Research and Development for Support of  
Integrated Eradication efforts of the Cattle Fever Tick**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Cattle Fever Ticks (CFT), known scientifically as *Rhipicephalus* (formerly *Boophilus*) *annulatus* and *Rhipicephalus microplus*, threaten the profitability and viability of the United States (US) livestock industry. These ticks transmit the agents causing bovine babesiosis, or cattle tick fever, and anaplasmosis, which can kill cattle. A dire need exists to find sustainable solutions for the current emergency situation with CFT in the US.

Efforts by the Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program (CFTEP) have historically concentrated in the Permanent Quarantine Zone located in south Texas since CFT were eradicated from the rest of the US in 1943. Preventing the re-emergence of CFT into the US however is complicated because;

- CFT in Mexico continuously attempt to expand to the north
- CFT can be resistant to certain chemicals (also known as acaricides) used to kill ticks
- Complex interactions between CFT and exotic weeds along the transboundary region
- Stray livestock and wildlife crossing the Rio Grande from Mexico
- The significant increase of CFT infestations in White-Tailed Deer (WTD) and Nilgai.

WTD and Nilgai come in contact with cattle, and preserve CFT populations in the environment. These changes have recently led to multiple outbreaks of CFT involving cattle deep into South Texas, with the potential for this livestock pest to re-establish throughout the Southern US.

Integrated management practices that consider the new ecology of CFT and adaptation of precision agro-ecological practices are required to address the livestock-wildlife interface aspect of the problem. Development of novel technologies is also required to eliminate acaricide-resistant CFT.

In collaboration between the CFT response, research and stakeholder communities, the following CFT priority research objectives have been developed, along with a projected annual research expenditure of approximately \$15 million dollars;

**Research Objectives:**

1. Discovery and testing of new vaccines for control of cattle fever ticks and the Babesia pathogen
2. Develop alternative treatment methods for cattle
3. Field treatments for horses, corrals, pens, and pasture loafing areas
4. Develop methods for control of cattle fever ticks on Nilgai antelope
5. Improve effectiveness of treatments for infested deer
6. Identify, evaluate and release biological control agents from native range of cattle fever ticks in Southeast Asia and Europe.
7. Improve diagnostic detection of tick-infested/infected animals and pastures
8. Evaluation of rangeland vegetation that affects survival of cattle fever ticks
9. Development of artificial rearing systems for ticks to accelerate testing of vaccines, acaricides and biological control agents.
10. Outreach to South Texas ranchers, hunters and landowners to integrate eradication tactics and document sustainability of best practices

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture, the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, and State Departments of Agriculture/Animal Health Commissions to recognize the critical importance of developing new and innovative technologies and tools to assist Cattle Fever Tick (CFT) responders in their ongoing fight to eradicate the CFT from Texas and the United States.

USAHA further urges the aforementioned groups to support to the extent legally permissible, mandatory research funding of \$15 million per year for the life of the next United States Farm Bill to help ensure achievement of the identified research objectives.