



# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

2013 RESOLUTION

117<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 17-23, 2013 ~ SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 6 - APPROVED**

**SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON BLUETONGUE AND RELATED ORBIVIRUSES**

**SUBJECT MATTER: VACCINE AND VECTOR CONTROL METHODS FOR THE VARIOUS STRAINS OF BLUETONGUE AND RELATED ORBIVIRUSES**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Bluetongue and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease viruses have become a concern to both traditional and non-traditional livestock producers and wildlife biologists because of new serotypes, increased reports of clinical disease in cattle, farmed cervids and several wildlife species, and increased geographical range. The committee encourages the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service to develop a vaccine and vector control methods that will protect against all known strains of these viruses.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service allocate resources to support Bluetongue and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) research at the Arthropod-Borne Animal Diseases Research Unit in Manhattan, Kansas, focusing on understanding the pathogenesis of the disease to facilitate the development of a vaccine and/or vector control methods to adequately protect the livestock industry from all strains of EHD.



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education, and Economics  
Agricultural Research Service

January 15, 2014

Dr. Stephen K. Crawford  
President  
United States Animal Health Association  
4221 Mitchell Avenue  
Saint Joseph, Missouri 64507

Dear Dr. Crawford:

Thank you for your letter of November 21, 2013, to Dr. Edward Knipling summarizing the resolutions that were passed at the most recent annual meeting of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA), and that request involvement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Dr. Knipling retired from Government service recently, thus please accept my response as the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Acting Administrator.

ARS appreciates the opportunity to speak to the USAHA resolutions. I can assure you that we share the concerns of USAHA members and will do all that we can to protect the health of America's farm animals, and thus, the American consumer. Allow me to address the points individually.

- **Resolution 1:** USAHA requests that ARS allocate resources to support Bluetongue and epizootic hemorrhagic disease research at the Arthropod-Borne Animal Diseases Research Unit, in Manhattan, Kansas.

**Response:** USDA in collaboration with the Department of Interior (DOI) organized a gap analysis workshop for international experts on orbiviruses. Workshop participants met at the Arthropod-Borne Animal Diseases Research Unit, in Manhattan, Kansas, May 14–16, 2013. They assessed countermeasures to effectively control and mitigate the impact of an outbreak of an emerging strain of orbivirus with epizootic potential, with special emphasis given to Bluetongue virus and epizootic hemorrhagic disease virus. A report of proceedings from the workshop that also highlights research priorities is expected to be completed and issued in January 2014. ARS will use its available resources to work with Federal and university partners to implement the research prioritized in the workshop report.

- **Resolution 2:** USAHA urges ARS and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to research, develop, and validate genetic strain typing capabilities for *Theileria equi* and *Babesia caballi* (equine piroplasmosis organisms).  
**Response:** The ARS Animal Disease Research Unit in Pullman, Washington, is working with university partners researching both causes of equine piroplasmosis and their genetic makeup.
- **Resolution 3:** USAHA requests that USDA and the DOI establish a panel to determine research needs and identify and prioritize intervention strategies to control chronic wasting disease.  
**Response:** ARS is will work with APHIS and DOI scientists to organize a workshop of experts at which they will assess gaps in our knowledge about chronic wasting disease and establish research needs and intervention strategies.
- **Resolution 4:** USAHA urges Congress to provide appropriate funding to ARS to construct new facilities at the Knippling-Bushland United States Livestock Insects Laboratory in Texas.  
**Response:** ARS appreciates the support of USAHA for updated laboratory facilities in Texas. ARS has established a Capital Investment Strategy (CIS) to prioritize its funding requests to Congress for new or updated facilities. Requests for a replacement facility will be based on the CIS, which in turn is based on both facility condition and program priority. ARS sees the program in Kerrville as a high-priority because of the condition of the facility; nevertheless, appropriations for facilities in general have been limited in the current tight budget environment.

I appreciate that USAHA members make significant contributions to ensuring animal health and food safety in the United States. Rest assured that USDA is working diligently to provide practical and effective solutions to the challenges recognized by USAHA members, and we look forward to working with you and other officials to solve them.

Sincerely,



CAIRD E. REXROAD, JR.  
Acting Administrator