

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2008 RESOLUTION

---

**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 10 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** USAHA/AAVLD JOINT COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL HEALTH  
INFORMATION SYSTEMS

**SUBJECT MATTER:** NATIONAL LIST OF REPORTABLE ANIMAL DISEASES  
WORKING GROUP

---

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The Committee is tasked with evaluating animal disease information systems that provide information to stakeholders for activities and decisions related to maintaining the health of animals and people, controlling and eradicating disease, and assuring the well-being of animals and profitability of animal industries. In 2007 the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requested that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), in cooperation with state animal health officials and industry, develop a United States (US) National List of Reportable Animal Diseases (NLRAD). The NLRAD should include appropriate reporting criteria. The List of Diseases Notifiable to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) should be used as a starting point in developing a US NLRAD.

A NLRAD will provide one standardized national reportable animal diseases list, demonstrate to trading partners and other countries that the US has a uniform national list of reportable diseases, assist in meeting international reporting obligations and validate the US required international reporting to the OIE as well as required export certifications, and improve zoonotic and endemic animal disease reporting in the US.

The USDA-APHIS-VS has recognized USAHA's concerns. The National Surveillance Unit (NSU) is drafting a list of diseases that may be considered nationally reportable, using the list of diseases notifiable to the OIE as a starting point. NSU has conducted background research on required disease reporting guidelines in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and in other pertinent agreements and memorandums.

After consulting with USDA-APHIS-VS legal counsel, NSU determined that USDA-APHIS-VS does not have the authority to implement a mandatory list, but does have authority to develop voluntary guidelines. NSU will continue developing the list, form a working group of stakeholders, and explore the possibility of rulemaking that would formalize the list and authority. The working group will provide periodic progress reports to the VS Management Team and the USAHA/American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Committee on Animal Health Information Systems (AHISC).

The National Animal Health Reporting System (NAHRS) is an effort of the USAHA, AAVLD and USDA to establish a nationwide reporting system for the occurrence of clinical cases of certain monitored diseases in order to meet national and international needs and obligations for animal

health surveillance and disease monitoring. The NAHRS subcommittee of the AHISC includes many stakeholders (state and federal regulatory agencies, veterinary diagnostic laboratories and commodity working groups) and has developed specific methods and rules, including diagnostic and reporting criteria, which may be leveraged to create the NLRAD.

#### **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) task the existing National Animal Health Reporting System (NAHRS) Subcommittee of the USAHA/American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Committee on Animal Health Information Systems, with support from the National Surveillance Unit (NSU), with developing the National List of Reportable Animal Diseases (NLRAD). This list should include identification of the diseases to be included on the NLRAD as well as the case definitions and reporting criteria for each disease on the list.

#### **RESPONSE:**

##### **USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) appreciates the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) interest in reportable diseases. VS supports tasking the National Animal Health Reporting System (NAHRS) subcommittee of the USAHA/American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Joint Committee on Animal Health Information Systems with developing a proposed National List of Reportable Animal Diseases (NLRAD). The NAHRS subcommittee has been actively involved in U.S. animal disease reporting since 1997 and includes broad representation from Federal, State, and industry commodity groups. Thus, the NAHRS committee is well suited for developing the NLRAD and reviewing associated case definitions and reporting criteria. An informal consultation with APHIS legal counsel confirmed that the Federal authority to implement a mandatory, comprehensive NLRAD, as currently written, may be limited; thus, this effort would require a voluntary/cooperative approach or clarified authority. With this in mind, VS' National Surveillance Unit (NSU), in collaboration with the NAHRS Steering Committee, will coordinate the development of a NLRAD, including the required case definitions and reporting criteria for each disease on the list. NSU will also continue to explore the necessary rulemaking to formalize the NLRAD and authority. NSU has already begun efforts to organize the NLRAD Working Group and develop case definitions/reporting criteria for several likely diseases.

An NLRAD would help to strengthen and support VS' mission to protect the health of livestock in the United States and improve trade of animal products. VS agrees that the list would assist in supporting international trade, standardize minimum State reporting requirements, assist in meeting OIE reporting obligations, and improve zoonotic and endemic animal disease reporting.