

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2004

**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 12                      **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** ADEQUATE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE STATE-FEDERAL INFECTIOUS SALMON ANEMIA PROGRAM AND INDEMNIFICATION IN THE NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

**DATES:** OCTOBER 27, 2004

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Salmon aquaculture is a multi-million dollar agricultural industry in the United States. An October 2004 study<sup>1</sup> indicated that the farm gate value of Maine salmon aquaculture was about \$50 million. The Maine industry is rebuilding after an economically-devastating outbreak of Infectious Salmon Anemia (ISA), a disease caused by Infectious Salmon Anemia Virus (ISAV), in 2001-2002. In 2000, the reported farm gate value of Maine salmon farms was \$100 million annually. The current epizootic has caused losses totaling millions of dollars. ISA is recognized as a foreign animal disease and has been diagnosed on Maine salmonid fish farms again recently.

In November 2001, the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) 2001 Resolution No. 04, called upon the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to, among other things, develop a USDA-APHIS ISA program which supports an ISA surveillance and monitoring plan component and an indemnity plan component. The final USDA-APHIS ISA program draft was approved on April 30, 2002. In December 2002, following the USDA's determination that Federal assistance was necessary to effectively control this disease, which posed a threat to animal health and the U.S. economy, \$8.3 million was released from the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to be used for indemnity payments, program activities such as: depopulation and disposal; clean up and disinfection; establishment of surveillance programs; epidemiology and diagnostic support; and training for producers and veterinarians.

The USDA-APHIS ISA protocol has been universally implemented on Maine salmonids farms, and until recently, no significant outbreak of ISA has occurred in U.S. waters although the pathogen was detected at several sites in the Cobscook Bay area in 2003 and early 2004. Among the likely reasons that ISAV loads in the marine environment have increased are disparities between U.S. and Canadian disease management protocols. While standardization of approach is being actively pursued on both sides of the international border, the situation in recent months has resulted in limited depopulation and disposal of pre-market fish from several Maine farms. An outbreak of ISA again appears imminent in Cobscook Bay.

Although some amount of indemnification is anticipated from the USDA for the most recent losses of young fish at Maine salmonid farms, the CCC funds are nearly exhausted. ISA is neither a simple nor transient phenomenon. The administrative and surveillance components of the ISA program have been funded by USDA for the near term but continuity of indemnity funding is also needed for the important purpose of encouraging farmers to swiftly eliminate infected stock before the appearance of clinical disease occurs and dramatically increases losses. USDA-APHIS must therefore act quickly to provide long-term financial support for surveillance, monitoring and indemnification to assist Maine salmonid growers in effectively implementing the ISA program standards.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to begin to work immediately to

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<sup>1</sup> Economic Impact of Aquaculture in Maine, Planning Decisions Research & Planning (www.planningdecisions.com), October 14, 2004, O'Hara, Lawton and York

establish sufficient, annual funding for the long-term maintenance of the USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services (VS) Infectious Salmon Anemia program including indemnification for losses incurred by U.S. salmonid growers in the implementation of the program.

**RESPONSE:**

The President's budget proposals and the Congressional appropriations for fiscal years (FY) 2005 and 2006 did not include funding for an Infectious Salmon Anemia (ISA) program. The Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS), has continued to operate the ISA program in FY 2005 using the remaining Commodity Credit Corporation funds received to combat ISA in 2002. By the end of FY 2005, we will deplete this emergency funding. VS continues to support and will continue to seek appropriated and/or emergency funds, including reinstating indemnity, for the ISA program.