



# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

2014 RESOLUTION

118<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 16-22, 2014 ~ KANSAS CITY, MO

---

**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 16 AND 23 COMBINED APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF HORSES  
COMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION

**SUBJECT MATTER:** Record and Electronically Capture Radio Frequency Identification on Imported Horses

---

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

With increased global livestock movement there is an increase in disease risk to the United States' horse population. Horse diseases considered high risk include, but are not exclusive to, equine piroplasmiasis, contagious equine metritis, dourine, glanders, equine infectious anemia, African horse sickness, equine viral arteritis and Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis.

A lack of a reliable and traceable permanent identification system for horses imported into the United States makes it difficult to conduct trace back of animals that are potentially positive or exposed to an infectious disease. There is an immediate need to establish a standard method of permanent identification and traceability for all horses imported into the United States. A 2014 United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, Investigative and Enforcement Services investigation in California led to the detection of an Equine Piroplasmiasis positive Spanish Purebred Horse with a microchip originating in Spain. The lack of microchip recording and electronic capture on import records at the time of importation delayed the investigation of potentially exposed horses as the microchip had to be traced through manufacturers to verify the origin of the horse. Recent equine disease events involving horses imported to the U.S. demonstrate the risk of importation of various diseases. Therefore, traceability of these animals is a critical element in the protection of the U.S. horse population.

## **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 18

85 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 USDA-APHIS-VS to, at the time of equid importation into the United States, record microchips of imported horses and electronically capture microchip data in a searchable database accessible to animal health officials during a disease investigation.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

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

APHIS does not anticipate changing import regulations to require microchips on all imported and exported horses at this time. Identification requirements for imported or returning horses follow requirement for domestic movement. Acceptable forms of individual identification include microchips, tattoos, and descriptions including markings. Because microchips are not required for domestic interstate movement of horses, microchips are not required for import. Some imported horses do have radio frequency identification when they arrive. When a

microchip is present, APHIS plans to use the Veterinary Services Process Streamlining (VSPS) import module to capture microchip numbers, when available, on imported horses. Microchip information in VSPS is accessible to VS personnel and will be provided to State Animal Health Officials on request in the event of an outbreak.