

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 30 APPROVED

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF  
POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

**SUBJECT MATTER:** CONTAINMENT OF VERY VIRULENT INFECTIOUS  
BURSAL DISEASE VIRUS IN CALIFORNIA

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

A very virulent strain of infectious bursal disease virus (vvIBDV) was identified in the Netherlands in the late 1980's. In short order this virus spread throughout Europe, Asia and Latin America. This disease results in mortality, severe damage to the immune system and resulting secondary infections and severe performance shortfalls in both table egg and meat type chickens. Mitigation strategies, including increased biosecurity and vaccination, are expensive and only partially effective. The United States (US) has been spared this disease but an incursion has been identified in a presently confined area of California. While the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) does not distinguish among strains of infectious bursal disease virus (IBDV) and IBDV is not a program disease, it is critical that this presently small focus of infection be contained and eliminated from US soil before it has the opportunity to spread further.

## **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 apply all necessary resources to assist the State of California in eliminating very virulent infectious bursal disease virus (vvIBDV) from California. Further, the USAHA urges USDA-APHIS-VS to support the validation and distribution of a real-time reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) for the detection and differentiation of vvIBDV for use in a national surveillance program.

## **INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) regarding infectious bursal disease virus (IBDV).

The 'classic strains' of IBDV are known to be present in the United States, and the disease caused by this virus has been controlled by use of USDA-approved vaccines. However, very

virulent IBDV (vvIBDV) has only recently been identified in the United States, and many commercial IBDV vaccines typically are ineffective against the vvIBDV strains. The efficacy of these commercial IBDV vaccines against vvIBDV must be strategically studied with respect to vaccine strain, application technique, and vaccination of breeders imparting maternal antibody.

In December 2008, an index case of vvIBDV was identified in two pullet farms in Northern California, exhibiting 34 percent and 26 percent mortality and gross pathology consistent with vvIBDV. The virus isolated had a 98 percent match to the European and Asian vvIBDV strains and the pathogenicity study confirmed vvIBDV. During 2009, several additional flocks in Northern California were confirmed with vvIBDV following what appeared to be a novel introduction of this virus. The State of California, in cooperation with the poultry industry, implemented mitigations to include strict farm biosecurity measures, cleaning and disinfection after flocks were locally marketed, passive and observational surveillance looking for clinical signs, and a vaccination strategy following European vaccine protocols (inside and outside infected zones) with various IBDV vaccines.

VS recognizes the efforts of the State of California and the poultry industry to control vvIBDV and has been working with California to contain and eliminate this disease before it spreads. Although classic IBD is not a USDA program disease or a reportable disease, VS has been working cooperatively with the California Department of Food and Agriculture, California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS), and the California poultry industry to fund and support epidemiological studies and field surveillance for vvIBDV. In fiscal years 2009 and 2010, APHIS provided \$70,000 (through March 2010) to support several ongoing activities of the California Poultry Study Group, such as development of an epidemiology study, enhanced field surveillance, mitigation strategies, and research and development. This includes support of the CAHFS Laboratory to conduct vaccine trials, validation of diagnostic tests, sample collection recommendations, environmental sampling trials, and testing of available disinfectants. Specifically, CAHFS Laboratory is working on the development and validation of an rRT-PCR test for the detection and differentiation of vvIBDV as a surveillance diagnostic tool.

VS will continue to work with the State of California to provide available resources toward the goal of prevention, control, and elimination of vvIBDV from U.S. poultry.