



UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Resolution

114th Annual Meeting ~ November 11-17, 2010

Minneapolis, MN

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 48 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON SHEEP AND GOATS

SUBJECT MATTER: NEED FOR APPROVED RADIO-FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION IMPLANT SITE FOR GOATS AND SHEEP

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Currently there is no United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety Inspection Service, feasible, approved site for radio-frequency identification (RFID) implants in goats and only one approved implant site for sheep. Goats are inquisitive animals and often chew or tear identification tags from the ears of other animals; ear tags may be lost from sheep and goats from field fencing, feed bunks, etc. LaMancha goats have very small external ears and neither ear implants nor ear tags are suitable for identification, leaving tail tattoos as the only identification option for producers. Torn ears from accidental tag removal and damage from ear tag infection raise owner concerns about animal welfare.

Permanent identification is required for regulatory programs and breed registration. Many goat owners wish to use electronic implants to take advantage of advancing technology. However, producers who wish to use RFID implants currently have no feasible approved option for goats and only a single option for implant site for sheep.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food Safety Inspection Service and United States Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration work with USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, Scrapie Program staff, American Dairy Goat Association, American Goat Federation and other representatives of the goat and sheep industries to identify and approve appropriate sites for radio-frequency identification implants for goats and sheep.

RESPONSE:

American Dairy Goat Association

An ADGA task force has been appointed to consider this matter and we will contact you soon with a response.

USDA FSIS

FSIS is the public health regulatory agency in USDA responsible for ensuring that meat, poultry, and processed egg products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled. FSIS enforces the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products

Inspection Act, which require Federal inspection and regulation of meat, poultry, and processed egg products prepared for distribution in commerce for use as human food.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to provide you with information regarding our current and planned involvement with this project. Dr. William Shaw, Division Director, and Dr. Bharat Patel of FSIS Risk, Innovations, and Management Division, Office of Policy and Program Development, will be the Project Managers working on this project. They will be contacting the United States Animal Health Association regarding RFID implant sites for goats and sheep.

INTERIM RESPONSE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) appreciates the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) regarding appropriate ways to identify goats and sheep. VS supports USAHA's request that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) investigate appropriate sites for radio frequency identification (RFID) implants for sheep and goats in the United States. VS will help industry, the FDA, and FSIS address the primary issues that include tissue adulterants, implant sites, and the official numbering system assigned to RFIDs in sheep and goats.

American Goat Federation (AGF)

In our recent Board meeting we approved your request for our input on this resolution and would greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide input on other issues related to goats as well. We look forward to working with you on this issue and will provide timely input as requested. We interpret your resolution that you will request our input in a future meeting or other organized way at some point in the future. We look forward to working with you on this project.

FINAL RESPONSE:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) appreciates the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) about appropriate ways to identify goats and sheep.

VS supports USAHA's request that the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) investigate appropriate sites for radio frequency identification (RFID) implants for sheep and goats in the United States, and we have contacted FSIS to offer our assistance. VS has approved one RFID implant device (approved by Food and Drug Administration) for use as official ID in the National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP) when applied at the sites currently approved by FSIS.

Other requirements for the use of RFID implants in the NSEP are available online at www.eradicatescrapie.org/Educational%20Resources/PDFs%20&%20PPTs/Goat%20ID%20Microchip%20Addendum.pdf.