

## UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2007

**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 6      APPROVED**

**SOURCE:**                      COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

**SUBJECT MATTER:**        FUNDING FOR VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC  
SEPTICEMIA SURVEILLANCE

**DATES:**                      RENO, NEVADA, OCTOBER 18 – 24, 2007

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) has historically been considered to be the most serious viral disease of salmonids reared in freshwater environments in Europe. More recently, VHS has been associated with marine finfish species, and most recently has become an emerging disease of freshwater fish in the Great Lakes region of the United States and Canada.

VHS was first detected in the Great Lakes region in the Bay of Quinte, Lake Ontario, in 2005, and was subsequently detected in an archived 2003 sample from Lake St. Clair. VHS virus also was detected in Lake St. Clair in 2005 and in Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake St. Clare and the St. Lawrence River in 2006 in a variety of fish species. The virus has also been documented from inland waters in New York (Consensus Lake, Skaneateles Lake, Little Salmon River in Mexico, Oswego County, the Seneca - Cayuga Canal, and an isolated farm pond in Ransomville, Niagara County), Wisconsin (Lake Winnebago), and Minnesota (Budd Lake near Harrison, MN). Prior to 2003, isolations of VHS virus (VHSv) were limited in North America to saltwater finfish from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, including Chinook and coho salmon, Pacific herring, Atlantic herring and cod. Since 2005, the list of species known to be affected by VHSv has risen to more than 40, including a number of ecologically and recreationally important fish. In many instances, VHSv has been associated with extensive fish mortality, albeit only in wild fish.

Because of the threat of this emerging disease to farmed species, a surveillance program must be developed, immediately implemented and then maintained to minimize potential risks and help prevent impacts of this disease on aquaculture fish species in the United States.

### **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests the United States Department Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

(APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) and the United States Department of Interior (DOI), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) obtain the necessary funding to develop, implement and maintain a national viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus (VHSV) surveillance program to determine changes in the geographic distribution of VHSV and the fish species affected. Additionally, the information that is collected through this surveillance program should be disseminated to commercial and public aquaculture managers.