

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2008 RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 32 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON BIOLOGICS AND BIOTECHNOLOGY

SUBJECT MATTER: FUNDING FOR NEW FACILITY OPERATIONS AT THE
NATIONAL CENTERS FOR ANIMAL HEALTH

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Currently, there is inadequate funding to provide for operational expenses for the new facilities at the National Centers for Animal Health (NCAH), Ames, Iowa. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has spent over \$430 million in construction of facilities but will be forced to use mandated program budget money to pay for facility operations. This transfer of money jeopardizes and negatively impacts critical programs needed to regulate the veterinary biologics industry and to safeguard animal health in the United States.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) request sufficient money for facility operations, outside of program funding, at the new National Centers for Animal Health (NCAH).

RESPONSE:

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services appreciates the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) interest in animal health facilities. USDA has made considerable progress to date on the construction of the National Centers for Animal Health (NCAH) in Ames with the \$462 million appropriated by Congress over 6 years. Phase 1 of the consolidated laboratory facility, which includes biosafety level (BSL) 2 and 3 laboratories, was completed in September 2004. The high-containment large-animal housing facility (which has 22 rooms for animals such as bison, cattle, horses, and swine, and two necropsy areas) was completed in February 2007. USDA is projecting to take possession of Phase 2 of the consolidated laboratory facility in late February 2009. This facility will provide additional BSL-2 and BSL-3 laboratories; caged-animal facilities; administrative, office, and conference spaces; and support services spaces. Construction of the final component of the Ames Modernization Plan, the low-containment large-animal facility, began in January 2007 and is scheduled to be completed in February 2009.

Requests outlining NCAH additional operating, moving, and equipment costs, such as utilities, building monitoring systems, telecommunication infrastructure, and laboratory and animal care equipment, were submitted as part of USDA's fiscal year 2008 and 2009 budget needs. These ongoing operating needs will continue to be included in budget requests for 2010 and beyond. APHIS did request NCAH funds for essential capital equipment, increased utility costs, and contracted physical relocation within the fiscal year 2009 President's Budget. However, because we are operating under a continuing resolution, receiving those funds in FY 2009 through the appropriations process is unlikely. Additionally, it does not appear that any funding for NCAH needs were included within the President's stimulus package.

The completed complex will have almost 1 million square feet of biosafe, biosecure, and energy-efficient modern facilities that will provide state-of-the-art capabilities for research, diagnosis, and biological product evaluation, thereby enhancing USDA's ability to respond to foreign animal disease and bioterrorism threats. USDA anticipates that all phases of new construction for the Ames Master Plan will be complete in the Spring of 2009, leaving just demolition and site work to be completed during the remainder of 2009. It is USDA's goal to occupy the majority of the space by September 2009. The Agency recognizes and appreciates the USAHA's support in making this project a success.