



UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

2014 RESOLUTION

118TH ANNUAL MEETING

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RESOLUTION NUMBER: 6 AND 11 COMBINED APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON IMPORT-EXPORT
COMMITTEE ON BLUETONGUE AND RELATED ORBIVIRUSES

SUBJECT MATTER: Bluetongue, National Strategy for Animal Exports

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The importance of bluetongue and related orbivirus infections to the United States livestock industry was the focus of a recent United States Department of Agriculture Gap Analysis workshop available at: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Program/103/OrbivirusGapAnalysisWorkshopFinalFeb2014.pdf>. The global range of bluetongue virus has expanded recently, notably:

- The discovery since 1998 of at least ten new serotypes of bluetongue virus in the Southeast indicates that previously exotic viruses now are entering the United States, likely from the Caribbean Basin. Some of these viruses have now spread beyond the southeastern United States.
- The emergence of numerous serotypes of bluetongue virus into Europe since 1998 has been associated with extensive clinical disease in both sheep and cattle. Climate change is widely accepted to have played a role in the spread of bluetongue viruses into Europe through its impact on the insect vector, particularly in the Mediterranean Basin.

Endemic bluetongue virus infection has resulted in the imposition of non-tariff trade barriers to the international export of ruminant livestock from the United States. At present, there is no coordinated surveillance for bluetongue virus in the United States to detect potential introductions of new virus serotypes or document their spread. Without comprehensive surveillance it will be difficult or impossible for the United States to develop an internationally accepted regionalization strategy to facilitate livestock exports.

RESOLUTION:

Given the historic and ongoing negative impact of endemic bluetongue virus infection to the export of ruminant livestock from the United States, the United States Animal Health Association requests that the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, develop, educate and facilitate a national strategy for animal exports, possibly through regionalization supported by a national surveillance program as prescribed by the World Organization for Animal Health's (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code chapter 8.3.

INTERIM RESPONSE:

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

Currently, VS is in the early stages of determining and evaluating possible strategies for national bluetongue surveillance in ruminants to support export of ruminant livestock from the United States.