

United States Animal Health Association – 2004

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 25 **APPROVED**

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF SWINE

SUBJECT MATTER: EMERGING SWINE DISEASE RESPONSE MECHANISM

DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2004

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The need for a coordinated, comprehensive and real-time surveillance system for domestic and emerging swine diseases in the United States has been recognized for some time. The Swine Futures Project (SFP), a multi-year government-industry partnership, developed recommendations for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that would meet the needs of the pork industry. The final report, issued in 1999, provided key recommendations to develop and implement a comprehensive surveillance plan for the prevention and control of diseases affecting the U.S. pork industry and to establish a system to rapidly detect and respond to emerging animal diseases.

Today there is no defined, coordinated response mechanism for assisting industry with emerging disease investigations. Emerging diseases may go undiagnosed due to the lack of epidemiological resources as well as financial resources to further the investigation beyond a certain battery of tests reported only to the attending veterinarian and producer. The only current mechanism for coordinated assistance is to initiate a foreign animal disease (FAD) investigation, which evokes an emergency response.

Veterinary Services' Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH)/Center for Emerging Issues has taken the lead in developing an Emerging Animal Health Issues System which provided guidelines for handling emerging diseases within Veterinary Services (VS). Recently, VS has created the National Center for Animal Health Surveillance at CEAH to coordinate surveillance activities and develop a national surveillance system.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) calls on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), through the efforts of the National Center for Animal Health Surveillance (NCAHS) and the Center for Emerging Issues (CEI), to work with industry and state animal health officials to develop a defined mechanism to detect, investigate, evaluate and respond to emerging diseases in swine and provide the necessary resources (monetary and non-monetary) to support these activities.

RESPONSE:

The Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS), National Center for Animal Health Surveillance (NCAHS), in collaboration with the National Pork Board (NPB) and State animal health officials, has developed a model State swine health advisory committee charter. State swine health advisory committees anticipate providing State level grassroots leadership on swine health issues including emerging diseases. Nine swine producing States were involved in the charter development (AR, IA, IL, IN, MN, NC, NE, OH, and SD). The VS Center for Emerging Issues (CEI) is developing a proposal for a VS response mechanism for emerging/non-foreign animal disease investigations. A collaborative effort underway between CEI and NPB, to develop the emerging disease response plan, is temporarily on hold, due to changes in NPB staffing. However, we expect this effort to resume by June 2005.