UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION
2015 RESOLUTION
119TH ANNUAL MEETING
OCTOBER 22-28 2015 ~ PROVIDENCE, RI

RESOLUTION NUMBER: **21** **APPROVED**

SOURCE: **COMMITTEE ON TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES OF POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES**

SUBJECT MATTER: **Use of Ventilation Shut Down for Mass Depopulation of Poultry to Control Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In the event of a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak, control of further spread to uninfected poultry through rapid depopulation is essential to limit the number of birds that may die as a result of continued spread between poultry facilities. The current United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) goal is to depopulate infected flocks within 24 hours of diagnosis to limit this spread, relieve the suffering of the diseased flock and limit exposure of personnel to the virus.

Depending upon the nature of the poultry facility involved and equipment/supply availability, it may be necessary to employ ventilation shut down (VSD) to achieve depopulation within the time frame desired. Due consideration must be given to the factors described in USDA-APHIS "Ventilation Shutdown Evidence & Policy September 18, 2015" to determine if VSD will result in timely depopulation. It must be realized that timely depopulation is preferable to a slow death from HPAI and the release of catastrophic amounts of HPAI virus. There are situations where VSD, like other depopulation methods, may be difficult or impossible to employ. Judgement and additional research are needed. USDA-APHIS VSD Reference Link: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/ventilationshutdownpolicy.pdf

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests regulatory authorities employ ventilation shut down (VSD) if appropriate and as needed for control of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in order to achieve depopulation within 24 hours of diagnosis if other methods of mass depopulation cannot achieve this goal.

USAHA requests that the Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH) conduct a risk assessment to determine the outcome if VSD had been employed where appropriate in the 2015 United States HPAI outbreak.

USAHA requests that the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) and conduct research to determine the conditions under which VSD may be appropriately employed and what additional measures may make the use of VSD more clearly defined.

INTERIM REPOSNE:

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

respond. VS is committed to determining the most effective methods of achieving depopulation within 24 hours of a presumptive positive diagnosis of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in poultry flocks. In support of this goal, the Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH) is conducting several analyses to assess the impact of delayed depopulation on the risk of disease transmission and outbreak spread using information from the 2015 H5N2 HPAI virus outbreak in the United States. In addition, CEAH is working closely with the VS National Preparedness & Incident Coordination Center to evaluate measures relevant to decision-making on the various approaches to achieving rapid depopulation of infected poultry, including the time between disease onset and presumptive diagnosis, time between presumptive diagnosis and complete depopulation, and viral amplification and transmission risks on affected farms over time. Based on the results of these analyses, VS will determine specific research needed to address data gaps and improve decision-making regarding the use of ventilation shutdown to achieve rapid depopulation (within 24 hours).