



UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

2016 Resolution

120th Annual Meeting

October 13-19, 2016 ~ Greensboro, NC

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 43

APPROVED

SOURCE:

COMMITTEE ON SHEEP AND GOATS

SUBJECT MATTER:

Ensuring Sound Science-Based Animal Health Policies

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Science-based animal health policies are fundamental to the United States Department of Agriculture in their efforts to issue decisions, develop regulations, and identify diagnostic test needs.

In some cases, policies and decisions are justified by in-house studies that are not subject to a rigorous outside and independent scientific review. In other cases, potential conflicts of interest develop when a study that serves as the foundation for a regulatory decision has been published in a scientific journal with an editorial board that includes individuals from government agencies through which the decision will be issued.

Clear and sound evaluation criteria for scientific studies used to support federal animal health policies are key to retaining public trust and confidence in agency actions.

RESOLUTION:

To ensure the development of science-based animal health policy, the United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the United States (US) Department of Homeland Security and the US Department of Interior to establish Department-wide criteria for evaluating research that is used to support animal health policy decisions. The following actions would help establish sound evaluation criteria and help increase trust and confidence in the policy making process:

- Initiate an independent and unbiased review of the science and/or methodologies used to support broad policy decisions.
- Establish a validation process for prediction models, risk assessments, spread models, or other diagnostic or analytical methods that are to be used.
- Require any studies proposed to be undertaken by an agency or department, intended to be used to justify or direct animal health policy or decision making, be subject to an independent scientific review which would be consistent with a previously established rigorous outside, independent review processes in place for evaluation of competitive grant proposals at USDA.