



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education, and Economics  
Agricultural Research Service

December 29, 2017

Ms. Barbara C. Determan  
President  
United States Animal Health Association  
4221 Mitchell Avenue  
St. Joseph, Missouri 64507

Dear Ms. Determan:

Thank you for your letter of November 28, 2017, in which you discussed United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Resolution 24, "Development and Implementation of a Cattle Fever Tick Control Program in Mexican States Bordering Texas."

As you know, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), which is the chief intramural research agency of the U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA), conducts research on bovine babesiosis at the ARS Animal Diseases Research Unit in Pullman, Washington, and on cattle tick control and eradication at the ARS Knipling-Bushland U.S. Livestock Insects Research Laboratory in Kerrville, Texas. Our work is focused on delivering science-based and environmentally sustainable tools that can be used by the Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program to keep the United States free of cattle fever ticks. Research includes a range of activities:

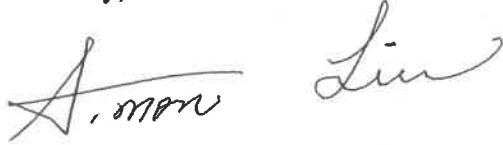
- evaluating new compounds for controlling cattle ticks, including formulations to be used for ticks that have developed resistance to current commercial acaricides;
- testing non-invasive procedures such as near-infrared spectroscopy of livestock fecal samples for evidence of cattle tick infestations;
- determining how ticks are transported into the United States and developing methods to prevent their importation;
- testing new vaccines to determine their efficacy in cattle and to see if they can also be used to minimize the impact of wildlife as tick reservoirs;
- reducing habitat favorable for cattle ticks;
- conducting collection expeditions for natural enemies of cattle ticks that might be used to develop biobased-control strategies; and
- determining how global climate change may affect cattle tick control efforts in south Texas.

ARS will continue to work with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, partners in Mexico, and other regional officials to ensure the current cattle tick exclusion zone remains an effective barrier for keeping cattle ticks out of the United States and to develop new strategies that enhance and expand the success of these efforts.

Ms. Barbara C. Determan

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts about this important issue. We look forward to continuing our work with USAHA and other organizations to protect and promote U.S. livestock health and production.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. Young".Handwritten initials "fcp" in cursive script.

CHAVONDA JACOBS-YOUNG  
Administrator