
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 3 APPROVED

SUBJECT MATTER: Import Health Requirements for Live Aquatic Animals

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

At present, there are only United States (US) federal import health requirements for the importation of live salmonid species and their gametes [United States Fish and Wildlife Service], as well as eight cyprinid species considered susceptible to Spring Viremia of Carp Virus [United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)]. All other live aquatic animals are entering the US with no US federal requirements with regard to animal health. In 2019, USDA responded to the first detection of Tilapia Lake Virus (TiLV), which was linked to infected fingerlings imported from Thailand. These fingerlings entered the US and the destination state legally with no mandatory health requirements, even though the country of origin was known to be positive for TiLV. Further, over the last several years, detections of World Organisation for Animal Health-listed pathogens and other emerging pathogens, such as Red Sea Bream Iridovirus, Infectious Hypodermal and Hematopoietic Necrosis Virus, and Ostreid Herpesvirus, have been linked to imports. The impact of these detections are felt by domestic industry because of animal loss, facility quarantines, export bans, and the need for enhanced surveillance. Import controls would not be intended to ban trade but to ensure that aquatic animals entering the US are healthy and do not pose risks to domestic aquaculture production or natural resources.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) immediately initiate a comprehensive pathways risk analysis for the introduction of World Organisation for Animal Health-listed pathogens from imported live fish, mollusks and crustaceans. Regarding prioritized pathogens, and with support of the domestic industry, USDA-APHIS-VS should implement appropriate import health requirements necessary to mitigate the risk of introduction.