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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 12    APPROVED**

**SUBJECT MATTER:            Contagious Equine Metritis Import Quarantine Program  
State Reviews**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), initiated a review of the United States' Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) import program in 2007. The resulting report included comments describing program deficiencies regarding regulatory oversight and accountability.

The USDA's current method of assessing the infrastructure and relevance of approved state CEM programs remains unclear. Thus, the review team's report recommended that the USDA's CEM Coordinator devise a more coherent system of review of states approved for the CEM Import Quarantine Program. To date, no reports of reviews conducted by the USDA regarding current state CEM programs have been received. Furthermore, state CEM coordinators agree that in order to accurately identify CEM carrier stallions, it is crucial that all stallion breedings be observed by regulatory personnel. Deficits in the CEM program could put domestic equine populations at an increased risk of disease and affect the trade status of the United States equine industry; it is imperative to implement credible and measurable means of periodically ensuring that all facilities within approved states conform to and remain compliant with the established standards.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to conduct on-site visits and reviews of states approved for Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) import quarantine. The review should include an assessment of the state's regulatory procedures and processes, including but not limited to direct state or federal oversight of test-breeding of stallions and the standard operating procedures utilized by CEM import quarantine facilities. Furthermore, the USAHA requests that the USDA-APHIS-VS provide a report of state reviews at the annual USAHA Committee on Equine meeting and have this report available to all equine stakeholders.

**INTERIM RESPONSE:**

USDA, APHIS, VS appreciates the recommendation from USAHA and the opportunity to respond. The USDA APHIS National CEM program incorporates specific import

requirements for horses imported from CEM affected regions and for CEM quarantine and testing that is completed in state approved facilities.

All components of the CEM program are being evaluated. On January 1, 2020, the updated guidance document for CEM testing at approved quarantine facilities became effective. As part of this guidance, all approved states must sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreeing to comply with CEM quarantine and testing requirements as outlined in 9 CFR part 93.301. State reviews will occur if there is noncompliance with the MOU.

Currently, thoroughbred horses imported for permanent entry from France, Germany, United Kingdom and Ireland may be imported under a CEM testing exemption if all pre-export requirements are fulfilled. APHIS regularly works with all four countries to ensure pre-export testing and movement restrictions are still being upheld.

APHIS is committed to the National CEM program and is consistently working to improve this program so that horses from CEM-affected regions do not endanger our domestic equine population or industry.

#### **FINAL RESPONSE:**

USDA, APHIS, VS appreciates the recommendation from USAHA and the opportunity to respond. The APHIS National CEM program incorporates specific import requirements for horses imported from CEM-affected regions and for CEM quarantine and testing completed in State-approved facilities.

All components of the CEM program are being evaluated. On January 1, 2020, the updated guidance document for CEM testing at approved quarantine facilities became effective. As part of this guidance, all approved States signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreeing to comply with CEM quarantine and testing requirements as outlined in title 9, *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), section 93.301. At this time, all States comply with requirements in the MOU and the CFR. We look forward to conducting State reviews if noncompliance should occur.

Thoroughbred horses imported for permanent entry from France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Ireland may be imported under a CEM testing exemption if all pre-export requirements have been fulfilled. APHIS is continuing discussions with the above countries to ensure pre-export testing and movement restrictions are upheld for thoroughbred horses to continue under this exemption.

APHIS is committed to the National CEM program and is working to improve this program so that horses from CEM-affected regions do not endanger the U.S. domestic equine population or industry.