



RESOLUTION NUMBER: 14 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON SWINE

SUBJECT MATTER: Sustainable Diagnostic Supply Chains and Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

African swine fever has spread throughout Europe, Russia, and Asia since 2007 despite ongoing efforts by numerous countries to control the disease. Greater than 50% of the global swine population is at risk for this high morbidity/high mortality disease. The implications for food and economic security in the pork sector are severe. Fortunately, the Western hemisphere has yet to be impacted, but preparation for the emergence of the virus in this hemisphere should occur.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted diagnostic and health system limitations. Lack of adequate testing capabilities and a shortage of sampling supplies interfered with the early response to the pandemic, but the United States Food and Drug Administration's ability to evaluate and approve novel diagnostics for emergency use allowed for rapid resolution of that deficit. A similar program for animal health may be needed for rapid evaluation of suspect premises to properly assess risk.

Diagnostic efforts to detect SARS-CoV-2 appear to demonstrate that mass testing can overcome lower sensitivity thresholds associated with some diagnostic tests and diagnostic samples. Surveillance that uses repeat testing of easily available samples may be more accurate than surveillance that limits itself to single individual tests that are difficult to obtain.

Outbreak readiness must include secondary options and logistic supply plans, particularly for sampling and diagnostic purposes. United States (US) animal agriculture requires this to be a critical part of planning for catastrophic swine diseases as US commercial systems are highly integrated, have efficiency built on animal movement, and include millions of animals.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the Strategy and Policy and Diagnostics and Biologics units of the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, to work through the National Animal Health Laboratory Network and its membership to support and advance the following efforts to ensure a sustainable supply of necessary diagnostics for use during an African swine fever outbreak:

- Review the lessons learned to date from the appropriate United States (US) public health entities (Centers for Disease Control, Food and Drug Administration, Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA)-certified laboratories, public health groups) to identify issues of concern and apply novel approaches that would be beneficial for emergency preparedness in the animal agricultural arena.
- Develop a publicly available list of approved commercial diagnostic tools for use in control of an animal disease outbreak and provide guidance on how and when they should be used.
- Develop emergency use authorization guidelines to rapidly assess new diagnostic assays for World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) reportable transboundary animal diseases foreign to US herds and flocks.
- Evaluate the validity of realistic and sustainable surveillance scenarios using diagnostic assays on aggregate samples (oral fluids, processing fluids and other sample types) compared to individual animal sampling to ensure that on farm testing is implementable.