

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to allow expanded use of the interferon gamma release assay (IGRA) in epidemiologic investigations and as an adjunct test for interstate movement. Furthermore, USAHA requests that USDA-APHIS allow National Animal Health Laboratory Network laboratories to resume the use of IGRA to provide reliable, efficient alternatives to testing at lower fees.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS understands the criticality of reliable test results in a timely manner, particularly in epidemiologic investigations and to support interstate animal movement. Due to ongoing logistical concerns with the original gamma interferon assay, APHIS has been evaluating an alternative, the Quantiferon Gold (QFT) assay. The QFT assay could significantly advance our tuberculosis diagnostics, using fewer laboratory resources and reducing critical shipping needs. The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) is soliciting USAHA and State Animal Health Official support for assistance with the assay validation and trials. Statistical evaluation will be enhanced with additional confirmed positive samples from naturally infected animals in domestic herds. The NVSL already has over 300 presumptive positive samples available to evaluate sensitivity and over 500 presumptive negative samples to evaluate specificity. APHIS will provide a report on this effort at the annual meeting.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 3 APPROVED

**SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**SUBJECT MATTER: United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and
Plant Health Inspection Service Chronic Wasting Disease
Program Standards**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Program Standards for the chronic wasting disease (CWD) Federal Rule (9 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 55 & 81) was published in 2012, along with a policy document known as the Program Standards. As originally published, the document's introduction noted "These Program Standards will be reviewed at least annually by representatives of the cervid industry and appropriate state and federal agencies."

The Program Standards have been reviewed just once since their inception. A working group was convened in July 2016 with the product published as the second edition of the Program Standards in May 2019. Thus, it has been more than five years since a working group of stakeholders has reviewed the Program Standards document. Since 2016, CWD research in cervids has evolved, which is not included in the existing Program Standards, nor does the Program Standards include flexible language that provides opportunity to adjust policy based on unique scenarios, new scientific advancement and/or innovative techniques developed by state animal health officials. Furthermore, recent years demonstrate the complexity of CWD in farmed cervid populations with significant variance in discovery and trace circumstances, which is amplified by differences in specific cervid species. Meanwhile federal indemnity money continues to fall short of allowing a state to execute agreed-upon herd plans without practical alternative recommendations.

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 revise the document entitled, "Chronic Wasting Disease Program Standards". This should include establishing a Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Program Standards Working Group to review and revise the document so it more appropriately reflects the language of the Code of Federal Regulations that supersedes the program standards. The review should also take into consideration the needs of producers and regulatory officials charged with implementation of a program that focuses on minimizing risk, not eradication, of CWD in the United States. USAHA urges USDA-APHIS-VS to establish the timeline based on an expectation to

publish the third edition of the Program Standards by the end of the 2022 calendar year. USAHA suggests that the CWD Program Standards Working Group should be made up of representatives from and appointed by each of the following organizations: (1) the Exotic Wildlife Association, (2) the North American Elk Breeders Association, (3) the North American Deer Farmers Association, (4) the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, (5) the USDA-APHIS-VS and (6) the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS is still evaluating this request and the availability of resources needed to conduct a review and revision of the CWD Program Standards. The evaluation was put on hold due to resource limitations as a result of APHIS' response to the 2022 highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak.

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AND EMERGING ANIMAL DISEASES
COMMITTEE ON SWINE

SUBJECT MATTER: Foreign Animal Disease Response Swine Movement Data Guidance

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

African swine fever (ASF) has spread throughout Europe, Russia, and Asia since 2007 despite ongoing efforts by numerous countries to control the disease. Most recently, ASF has been diagnosed in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, the first occurrences in the Western Hemisphere since the 1980s. Should a case be diagnosed on a swine farm in the United States (US) a 72-hour standstill will occur to allow for a clear understanding of where the disease is and what high risk contacts have occurred. The data needed for this standstill is pig movement data, which may include date of movement, origin of pigs, destination of pigs, and number of pigs moved. This data is not currently compiled in such a format by producers, and they are attempting to determine how to prepare data so it is available should a case be diagnosed.

There are numerous databases that can be used to collect and organize data today. State animal health officials (SAHOs) may use Emergency Management Response System (United States Department of Agriculture), CoreOne, USAHerds, or other systems for outbreak response, and producers have an option to use AgView, Rapid Access Biosecurity application (RABapp), or internal data management methods to provide SAHOs and federal veterinarians needed information to allow them to quickly assess the scope and scale of the outbreak.

It is unclear to producers how state and federal officials can receive data, what data is needed and in what format, as well as what is the most efficient way data can be received by the state, even if there are multiple methods in which the state will receive information. This lack of clarity hinders the ability of producers to be prepared to share data for an ASF outbreak. This is likely a concern for all livestock producers for any foreign animal disease detection in the US.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association requests the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services' Strategy and Policy's National Preparedness Incident and Coordination Group work with industry and state animal health officials (SAHOs) in the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials' African Swine Fever Working Group:

1. To develop clear guidance that is uniform across states for producers that details what movement data will be needed at the start of an incident that requires a state or federal response and for an ongoing outbreak situation;
2. To determine what data submission formats would be acceptable; and
3. To determine in what manner data should be shared with SAHOs to be most efficient.

This information should be posted on a publicly facing website that is easily accessible to all producers.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS will work with the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials' African Swine Fever Working Group to identify the movement data elements needed from producers in a foreign animal disease outbreak and determine how to submit the information. APHIS will post any guidance developed on the FAD PReP website.

APHIS is currently engaged with several third-party providers to develop multiple data submission options for data submissions and movement between state and federal entities. Project progress through fiscal year 2022 includes developing and testing automated movement messages from VS Enterprise Message Service (EMS) to the Emergency Management Response System (EMRS) and a process to submit, approve, and validate movement against permit requests in EMS. As progress continues, producers will have opportunities to work with third-party providers to format their movement data for electronic messaging. APHIS will also continue to adjust the project based on input from the USAHA Subcommittee on Information Standards—Permit Data Standards Working Group as it develops permit data standards in a separate effort.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 10 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON EQUINE

**SUBJECT MATTER: Equine Viral Arteritis Competitive Enzyme Linked
Immunosorbent Assay Test Development**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Recent announcement of Veterinary Medical Research & Development (VMRD) ceasing production of the competitive enzyme linked immunosorbent assay (cELISA) for equine viral arteritis (EVA) is of great concern, as there is no other entity producing the cELISA test kit for EVA. The EVA cELISA is critical for the equine industry, especially in situations where a toxic serum sample results in an invalid compliment fixation test. The importance of the cELISA was highlighted in 2019 in horses destined to compete in the Pan American Games. Twelve horses with toxic sera were deemed negative only by the EVA cELISA and allowed to be exported to compete. Without the EVA cELISA test, these animals would have been denied entry and not able to compete.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, National Veterinary Services Laboratory to develop an equine viral arteritis competitive enzyme linked immunosorbent assay test for equine viral arteritis.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) previously evaluated the Veterinary Medical Research and Development (VMRD) EVA cELISA prior to VMRD's announcement to discontinue production of the assay. NVSL is performing initial verification testing of the IDvet ID Screen Equine Viral Arteritis Indirect ELISA, an alternate assay candidate, and initial data looks promising. Barring issues, APHIS anticipates the verification data to be completed this fall and an update will be presented to the committee during the annual meeting.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 11 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON EQUINE

SUBJECT MATTER: Venezuelan Equine Encephalomyelitis Import Parameters

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

With the recent detection of Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis (VEE) in Mexico, the United States (US) equine industry is at risk for disease entry and spread. The last VEE outbreak in the US in 1971 resulted in equine mortalities and significant economic impact due to cost of disease prevention and control measures, as well as movement restrictions of US equids. Prompt action by the US to prevent VEE introduction is critical.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) informs governments of animal disease occurrences, control methods, and related studies and provides a forum to harmonize regulations to facilitate trade in animals and animal products. The OIE chapter on VEE (Chapter 12.11.3) states that veterinary authorities of VEE-free countries may prohibit wild and domestic equine importation and transit through their territories from VEE-infected countries. Free countries may also prohibit the importation of domestic and wild equine oocytes and embryos from VEE-infected countries.

According to the OIE, The Veterinary Authorities of importing countries should require the presentation of an international veterinary certificate attesting that:

1. Vaccinated animals:
 - a. Were vaccinated against VEE not less than 60 days prior to shipment and were clearly identified with a permanent mark at the time of vaccination;
 - b. Were kept in a quarantine station in the country of origin under official veterinary supervision for three weeks prior to shipment and remained clinically healthy during that period; any animal which showed a rise in temperature (taken daily) was subjected to a blood test for virus isolation, with negative results;
 - c. Were protected from insect vectors during transportation to and from the quarantine station and during the quarantine period;
 - d. Showed no clinical sign of VEE on the day of shipment;
2. Unvaccinated animals:
 - a. Were kept in a quarantine station in the country of origin under official veterinary supervision for three weeks prior to shipment and remained clinically healthy during that period; any animal which showed a rise in

- temperature (taken daily) was subjected to a blood test for virus isolation, with negative results;
- b. Were subjected to a diagnostic test for VEE with negative results conducted not less than 14 days after the commencement of quarantine;
 - c. Were protected from insect vectors during transportation to and from the quarantine station and during the quarantine period;
 - d. Showed no clinical sign of VEE on the day of shipment.

In addition, animals may be isolated in the importing country for seven days under official veterinary supervision. Any animal which shows a rise in temperature (taken daily) shall be subjected to a blood test for virus isolation.

The OIE recommendations are science based guidance to ensure the importing countries can protect their animal agricultural industries.

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 implement the following requirements for equids imported from Mexico:

- Equids must be clinically healthy, subject to a blood test for Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis (VEE) virus detection with negative results a minimum of 14 days prior to importation and show a temperature less than 101.5F and no signs of VEE on the day of shipment.
- Equids must remain under veterinary supervision and remain clinically healthy between blood sampling and day of shipment.
- Any equid showing a rise in temperature shall be subject to a blood test for virus detection for VEE.
- Seven days pre-import and during the seven day import quarantine period equids must remain in a vector free environment. During the entire period, all equids shall be monitored for clinical signs.
- If equids do not appear clinically healthy or if a temperature of 101.5F degrees or greater is detected, equids must be subject to a blood test for virus detection for VEE.
- Additionally, we urge USDA-APHIS-VS to be vigilant in ongoing monitoring of the VEE situation in equids in Mexico and base any future requirements or restrictions on detections in Mexico.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. In July 2021, APHIS implemented a 7-day quarantine requirement for equids imported from Mexico into the United States, per title 9, Code of Federal Regulations, part 93.308(a)(1). APHIS also implemented a requirement that quarantined equids from Mexico that are febrile (101.5F degrees or greater) or display clinical signs of illness consistent with VEE infection will be subject to a blood test for VEE virus detection. If an importer chooses not to test or the test result is non-negative, APHIS will refuse entry to the entire shipment. APHIS is evaluating import requirements for equids from VEE-endemic countries and welcomes additional recommendations from the committee.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 12 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON EQUINE

**SUBJECT MATTER: Specimen Storage Bank for Non-Negative Samples from
Horses during Import Quarantine**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Infrequent situations arise when horses test non-negative for either dourine or glanders during the import quarantine period. Since these diseases are considered foreign animal diseases, horse samples are submitted solely to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) for testing. This process potentially limits further research as retention time, space and requirements for handling samples with potential foreign animal disease (FAD) classification likely results in discarded samples over time. A specimen storage bank, located at USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL in Ames, Iowa could facilitate investigation of these non-negative samples, which would further understanding of the non-negative test results in these horses, improve diagnostics, and advance import testing protocols. USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL banking of samples for future collaborative research and investigation under USDA permit with samples made available for testing at designated research labs ensures the USDA and the United States equine industry is advancing equine health and diagnostic capabilities.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to create a storage bank for non-negative specimen samples collected from horses in import quarantine.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS acknowledges and supports the initiative to catalog and store equine samples determined non-negative by serodiagnostic testing for piroplasmiasis, dourine, and glanders. The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) has routinely stored diagnostic samples from imported and rejected horses as far back as 2009. Future efforts will focus on continued retention and more formal cataloging of well-characterized sera to establish a serum bank available to external groups for research purposes. Furthermore, antisera for piroplasmiasis, dourine, and glanders from laboratory inoculations are available as standard items in the NVSL Reagent Catalog.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 13 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON EQUINE

SUBJECT MATTER: Tiered Import Referral Hospital

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The continued recognition of adverse health events in imported equine creates a strain on the limited number of approved equine referral hospitals for imported horses. Industry recognizes the need for additional referral hospitals, however, the current standards for the referral hospitals limits the interest or availability of hospitals. Febrile horses which test negative for the imported horse diseases (equine infectious anemia, piroplasmiasis, dourine, and glanders) should be considered lower risk than imported horses lacking test results. Less stringent standards should be applied to referral hospitals accepting horses which are negative for equine infectious anemia, piroplasmiasis, dourine, and glanders.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to develop a tiered approval system for referral veterinary hospitals accepting horses for treatment from import quarantine facilities. Standards for each tier would be based on relevant risk. USAHA further requests that state animal health officials and industry stakeholders be involved in the discussion and development of such standards.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. Veterinary facilities that provide medical or surgical interventions for imported horses of unknown health status must meet the same facility standards applied to permanent, privately owned quarantine facilities in title 9, Code of Federal Regulations, section 93.308(c). These requirements ensure adequate safeguards are in place to prevent the transmission of animal diseases or disease agents, into, within, or from the facilities. APHIS convened a working group, which met several times in 2022 and is making substantial progress in identifying challenges and potential options for the development of a risk-based, tiered approval system for referral veterinary hospitals accepting horses for treatment from import quarantine facilities. The working group welcomes additional collaboration with USAHA, state animal health officials, and industry stakeholders.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 14 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON EQUINE

**SUBJECT MATTER: Development of a Veterinary Accreditation Module on
Equine Foreign Animal Diseases**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The increasing worldwide occurrences of equine foreign animal diseases and the increasing international travel of the United States (US) equine population poses a significant risk to our nation's equine population. In addition, the limited working knowledge of US equine practitioners regarding equine foreign animal diseases is of great concern; specifically, the scientific laboratory advances and changes in the understanding of disease epidemiology related to African horse sickness, glanders, and dourine. Knowledge of diagnostic technologies and appropriate testing is critical to the protection of the US equine population. Continued education and outreach to private practitioners on equine foreign animal diseases is imperative. The addition of equine foreign animal disease modules for private practitioners enables equine veterinarians, particularly those accredited veterinarians providing clinical care to horses at import centers, to develop a background knowledge and remain current in their knowledge of equine foreign animal diseases and advances the protection of the US equine population.

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 develop National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP) Equine Foreign Animal Disease modules to address the current scientific understanding, relevant need for biosecurity and epidemiology of equine foreign animal diseases of interest, including but not limited to, African horse sickness, glanders, and dourine.

Additionally, the USAHA encourages USDA-APHIS-VS-NVAP to collaborate with academic and laboratory infectious disease experts with a specialty in equine diseases, as well as the USDA-APHIS equine team and state animal health officials in module development.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

The APHIS National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP) provides 35 training modules for accredited veterinarians. Three of the modules are equine specific, and at least ten provide subject material pertinent to equine veterinarians. Module 31, *High-Impact Equine Diseases in the United States*, explains the role of the accredited veterinarian related to five high impact equine diseases in the United States, three of which are foreign animal diseases (FADs). Several NVAP modules provide information about the importance of rapid detection and prompt reporting of foreign animal and other reportable diseases.

Should the committee feel further modules are needed, we encourage USAHA to contact the NVAP to submit a proposal for development of a specific equine FAD module.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 15 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON SWINE

SUBJECT MATTER: United States Swine Health Improvement Plan (African Swine Fever-Classical Swine Fever Monitored)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services sponsored pilot project entitled, "The Development and Demonstration of a United States (US) Swine Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) modeled after the US National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP)", is moving forward in earnest.

The primary objectives of this endeavor are to develop and implement an African swine fever (ASF)-classical swine fever (CSF) Monitored Certification Program modeled after the basic tenets of the US NPIP H5/H7 Avian Influenza Monitored certification of US Commercial Poultry operations.

Figure 1. US SHIP pilot is utilizing the same basic operational structure as NPIP.



Industry, State, and Federal Partnership

The overarching purpose of this US SHIP pilot is to:

1. Enhance all three aspects (prevention, response, & recovery) of trade impacting disease (TIO) preparedness amongst participating swine producers, swine slaughter facilities, and states by proactively establishing an industry-informed and working system of operations and certification built upon well-defined program requirements for biosecurity, traceability, and disease surveillance.
2. Reduce the impact of recurring swine endemic diseases of high consequence through the sustainable advancement of sanitary standards and practices that mitigate disease spread into and between farms.
3. Provide US swine industry participants a first-hand experience in developing and participating in a "National Poultry Improvement Plan - like" program customized to meet the needs of the US swine industry.

Upon the conclusion of this pilot project, the experiences gained and operations established through the pilot could be transitioned into a more formal and ongoing platform for safeguarding, certifying, and bettering the health of US swine and longer-term competitiveness of the US swine industry.

Inaugural US SHIP House of Delegates (akin to NPIP Biennial Conference):

A formative congress of approximately 230 industry, state, and federal partners came together on August 23-24, 2021 in Des Moines Iowa to participate in the inaugural US SHIP House of Delegates (HOD) meeting.

This inaugural US SHIP HOD comprised of US swine industry participants representing the interests of swine industry stakeholders across the states expressing interest in participating in this US SHIP Pilot Project. The 28 states expressing an interest in the US SHIP Pilot include more than 99% of the domestic swine in the US.

Delegates considered and finalized the initial (Year 1) program standards required for conferring the ASF-CSF Monitored certification to participating swine production sites and slaughter facilities. Additionally, seven resolutions advocating for a series of initiatives (working groups and project work) to be pursued were passed. The findings and recommendations stemming from these initiatives will be brought forward for consideration at the second US SHIP HOD meeting to be held in September 2022. These resolutions center on a number of higher-order items related to biosecurity, traceability, and sampling and testing (surveillance).

A complete listing of the Year 1 program standards and resolutions passed at the inaugural US SHIP HOD is available on the US SHIP website (usswinehealthimprovementplan.com).

Next Steps:

Each state electing to participate in the pilot is in the process of determining the entity that will administer (house) the US SHIP Official State Agency (OSA) and is working to form and begin establishing their US SHIP OSA in Quarter 4 of 2021. Participant enrollment and the associated certification process are anticipated to move ahead in Quarter 1 of 2022.

Funding:

The USDA funding received to support this pilot project (\$495,000, over 2-years, involving investigators from across four land-grant universities) aims to provide support for the human resources, management systems, and outreach necessary to facilitate the initiation and central coordination of this pilot project.

Each state electing to participate is responsible for funding the operations of the US SHIP OSA within their respective state.

Producer and packer participants will be responsible for the costs incurred associated with meeting or exceeding the requirements of certification.

Interest, Needs, and Opportunities:

Based on the participation and feedback received leading up to and following the inaugural US SHIP HOD, there is a broad recognition of the need for and value of this US SHIP endeavor amongst industry, state, and federal partners.

While US NPPI's poultry operations have evolved over the past 85 years, this US SHIP pilot has been charged with greatly expediting such program development efforts to meet the needs of the 21st century US swine industry.

There is a need to identify fiscal resources to aid the states in establishing (starting-up) the operations of the US SHIP OSA within their respective state. Similarly, resources are needed to push forward a series of ASF prevention and preparedness related initiatives determined to be pursued further via the resolutions passed at the inaugural US SHIP HOD.

In recognition of the increased risks of ASF within the western hemisphere and globally, the USDA recently announced a commitment of USDA Commodity Credit Corporation funding (\$500M) to support ASF prevention, preparedness, and eradication efforts.

This US SHIP endeavor presents a tangible pathway for improving and operationalizing preparedness across the US swine industry. US SHIP will establish a national guidance document of technical standards centering on prevention and demonstrating evidence of freedom of ASF and CSF outside of control areas.

Further investments in US SHIP would build upon the momentum and direction coming out of the inaugural US SHIP HOD and serve to "jump start" this precedent setting initiative in a highly scalable fashion across the US.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

to expand the support for the United States Swine Health Improvement Plan (US SHIP) pilot project underway. This US SHIP pilot aims to develop and implement a US SHIP African swine fever (ASF)-classical swine fever (CSF) monitored certification of US swine production sites and slaughter facilities.

The USAHA urges USDA-APHIS to utilize USDA funding including but not limited to a portion of the recently announced USDA Commodity Credit Corporation funding (\$500M) for ASF prevention and preparatory efforts for:

- Supporting the states' efforts in establishing (starting-up) the operations of a US SHIP Official State Agency within their respective state.
- Supporting ASF prevention and preparedness related initiatives (i.e., working groups and project based work) determined to be pursued further via a series of resolutions passed at the inaugural US SHIP House of Delegates. These resolutions and associated efforts center on a number of higher-order items related to biosecurity, traceability, and sampling and testing (surveillance).
- Supporting the producer costs of diagnostic sample collections and submissions.

Use of USDA cooperative agreements would provide for a well-understood and user-friendly means for providing financial support to these efforts at the respective participating states or institutions.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS has worked closely with industry, cooperators, and State Animal Health Officials in its efforts to develop the Swine Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) through a pilot program. APHIS' support includes, but is not limited to, funding the administration of the pilot program, providing working group participation and support, and serving as a communication liaison between industry groups, pilot representatives, and government officials.

Industry, state, and federal participants must identify a sustainable funding source to support SHIP needs in the future. Though federal funding sources may be possible, Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds are not part of the appropriated federal budget; they are best applied towards program needs more limited in duration and must address the specific need for which the funds were requested and approved. However, APHIS recognizes the SHIP pilot and any resulting program could yield benefits and address known gaps in biosecurity and traceability. To that end, APHIS identified funding to support operational needs for the central program and participating pilot Official State Agencies (OSAs) in fiscal years 2022 and 2023. APHIS communicated this 2-year funding commitment on monthly calls with pilot participants and at the SHIP House of Delegates meeting in September 2022.

occurs because routine TB slaughter surveillance has limited detection capabilities. The estimated sensitivity of slaughter surveillance for beef herds in the US ranges from 3-7%, and the probability of detecting an affected beef herd within five years ranges from 15-35%, depending on herd size (USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health 2009). Mexican origin feeder and rodeo cattle are listed as one of the three most likely sources of TB introduction in the US (Camacho, 2021).

Despite tremendous efforts to eradicate *Mycobacterium bovis* from the US cattle herd for nearly a century, novel strains of TB continue to emerge in western states in beef and dairy herds with inconclusive epidemiological investigations. With the availability of EIDs, the US has an opportunity to make important changes to identification requirements for Mexican rodeo cattle, align import rules with those of Canada, and improve traceability to safeguard the domestic cattle herd.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to require electronic 484 prefix official identification ear tags in addition to "M" branding for all rodeo type cattle born in Mexico (regardless of end use) that enter the United States. To further improve animal disease traceability, USAHA urges USDA to provide guidance on how to officially identify Mexican origin cattle that lose ear tags.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. While APHIS does not require radio-frequency identification (RFID) use for all cattle imported from Mexico, we are supporting a project that leverages technical capabilities to facilitate cattle exports from Mexico. This project allows importers to use Veterinary Services Process Streamlining (VSPS) system for RFID-tagged rodeo cattle, spayed heifers, and steers from Chihuahua and Sonora. This project could expand to other states, depending upon interest and availability of required technological infrastructure/equipment.

APHIS remains committed to leveraging technology, including RFID tags, to facilitate cattle imports and animal traceability. Until RFID becomes the standard for domestic cattle identification, APHIS helps ensure the traceability of Mexican-origin cattle by requiring them to have an "M" brand and two forms of additional identification upon entry to the United States. APHIS requires the blue metal ear tag, issued by the Mexican State of origin, and the yellow SINIIGA tag, "official ID" recognized by Mexico's Servicio Nacional de Sanidad, Inocuidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria, for all cattle imported to the United States from Mexico. APHIS is considering options to officially identify Mexican cattle that lose their official Mexican tags once imported, including the purchase of alternative official tags for use in foreign born/imported cattle. We hope to be able to implement this option in calendar year 2023.

capabilities. The estimated sensitivity of slaughter surveillance for beef herds in the US ranges from 3-7%, and the probability of detecting an affected beef herd within five years ranges from 15-35%, depending on herd size (USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services, Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health 2009). Mexican origin cattle are listed as one of the three most likely sources of TB introduction in the US (USAHA 2021). Although bovine tuberculosis detections in US cattle have stabilized to about 10-15 cases per year, many of those cases are traced to Mexican origin animals; at least half in 2021 alone (USAHA). Inconsistencies persist between individual states' TB testing import requirements for Mexican roping/rodeo type steers. Some states require no additional testing, while others require one or even two CFT tests to be completed on US soil. As of 2021, Canada requires CFT testing paired with interferon gamma release assay (IGRA) tests within 72 hours of import for US rodeo cattle of the breed Corriente, Brahman Texas Longhorns, and American Bucking Bulls regardless of end-use to better screen for TB prior to entry. When the CFT test is paired with the IGRA, the sensitivity improves from 85% to 99% (USAHA 2021). The two tests used in parallel improves test sensitivity and increases the chance of detection of infected cattle that may be missed by a singular, subjective CFT test.

Despite tremendous efforts to eradicate *Mycobacterium bovis* in the US cattle population for over a century, novel strains of tuberculosis continue to emerge in western states in both beef and dairy herds with inconclusive epidemiological investigations. Combining established testing protocols presents an opportunity to increase screening sensitivity and safeguard the US cattle herd.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to require caudal fold tuberculin tests paired with interferon gamma release assays prior to import for Mexican origin Corriente and rodeo type cattle, intended for exhibition, recreational or rodeo use while excluding from this requirement cattle for feeder or stocker use.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. The import requirements for tuberculosis (TB) testing of Mexican-origin cattle depend on the TB status of the region of origin and whether the animals are sexually intact. Current import testing protocols and methodologies align with our domestic TB surveillance program. While rodeo cattle comprise a small percentage of the total number of Mexican-origin cattle imported each year, APHIS recognizes the perceived increased TB risk that these animals pose based on their longevity and tendency to travel and move interstate.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 21 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON CATTLE AND BISON

SUBJECT MATTER: Ultrahigh Frequency Backtags

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In 2019, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced the availability of \$1 million in cooperative agreement funding to support animal disease traceability and electronic identification for cattle. Funded projects were to gather real-world data and document how to link ultrahigh frequency (UHF) backtags with other identification devices to collect animal movement and disease program data while still maintaining the speed of commerce in high-volume, fast-paced environments.

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), Texas Cattle Feeders Association (TCFA), and a team of vendors and cooperators were awarded funds supporting a project using UHF backtags in place of paper backtags. The project included livestock markets, order buying facilities, feedlots, and slaughter plants, with tag data integrated with the facilities' existing software systems when requested. Permanent identification devices (eartag) were applied at some order buyers and feedlots and linked to UHF backtags. These data were transmitted to the technology vendor, forwarded to TAHC and imported to the TAHC database. Key data points were then shared with USDA's Animal Health Event Repository through an automated interface, thereby enhancing nationwide traceability of both feeder cattle and breeding cattle.

Evaluation of tag performance demonstrated retention and read rates over 99% consistently in all markets and environments, showing that while temporary, UHF backtags are as reliable for short term usage as any other currently used form of official identification in cattle in the United States (US). It further demonstrated that correlation to other forms of identification not easily read at the speed of commerce, such as National Uniform Eartagging System tags, provided the ability to manage those livestock at high rates of speed while maintaining traceability.

The project demonstrated that UHF backtags and eartags can be reliably read using an unattended system at processing plants, providing a critical bookend to tracing individual animals.

The Florida Cattlemen's Association in cooperation with the Florida state veterinarian were also granted funds supporting a UHF backtag project. The Florida project has experienced the same performance and success as the Texas project, demonstrating greater efficiency in tracking cattle through the market. One Florida livestock manager publicly lauded the technology for increasing the speed of commerce from 125-130 animals per hour to 180- 200 animals, while also increasing the speed and accuracy of both paperwork and load out.

The Texas and Florida projects demonstrated that use of UHF backtags tremendously increases the scope of traceability in livestock markets while improving the accuracy, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of collecting key pieces of traceability information and supporting the cattle industry's management and marketing needs. Livestock market operators embrace the use of this technology as it has shown to improve efficiency rather than be a hindrance.

USDA's encouragement of broad use by supplying UHF backtags in livestock markets would directly enhance animal disease traceability and therefore benefit the US cattle industry as a whole.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to approve, fund and supply ultrahigh frequency backtags, without reducing animal disease traceability cooperative agreement funds, to states for use in USDA approved livestock markets committed to using this technology in their facilities and sharing associated information electronically with their state for submission into the Animal Health Event Repository.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

In 2019, APHIS provided one-time funding in support of three pilot projects to evaluate the use of ultra-high frequency (UHF) backtags in livestock markets. Due to challenges associated with COVID-19, all three projects were delayed by at least 1 year, and two of the three projects were delayed for a second year with anticipated completion by early 2023. Pilot cooperators initially report that the UHF back tags facilitate movement of cattle with less time and labor, and enhance recordkeeping and documentation required under USDA traceability regulations, saving money in operational costs for the livestock market and for the cattle buyers and sellers. Final reports on the projects are forthcoming, and we intend to use the lessons learned to help inform future decisions. At this time, APHIS has not budgeted for additional funding for the widespread purchase and distribution of the UHF back tags. However, we encourage livestock markets to use the UHF backtags if beneficial to their operation.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 22 APPROVED

SOURCE: JOINT COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

SUBJECT MATTER: National Aquaculture Health Plan and Standards

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) applauds the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) for working with the National Aquaculture Association to develop the new National Aquaculture Health Plan and Standards (NAHP&S) which incorporates and operationalizes as a critical component the Comprehensive Aquaculture Health Program Standards. A strong national plan protects all aquatic animal health and provides a national framework for consistent inspection and testing of aquatic animals cultured in the United States, supports international trade and private and public aquaculture, and protects natural resources. The effectiveness and success of NAHP&S requires the cooperation of the aquaculture farming community and state, tribal and federal entities.

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 engage other federal agencies, states, and tribes at the highest levels to implement the National Aquaculture Health Plan and Standards and integrate the Comprehensive Aquaculture Health Program Standards into their regulations and production practices to meet or exceed foreign, national, state, and tribal regulatory requirements for aquatic animal health.

USAHA requests the 118th United States Congress to appropriate a minimum of \$11.4 million for the USDA-APHIS-VS Aquaculture Program, as presented in the VS 5-year Aquaculture Business Plan.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS released the National Aquaculture Health Plan and Standards (NAHP&S) 2021-2023 in July 2021 and continued collaborations with our partners throughout 2022 via presentations, webinars, discussions, and other in-person and virtual. NAHP&S is a voluntary, non-regulatory, and unfunded effort. APHIS awaits the FY2023 appropriation for the Aquatic Animal Health funding line.

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 24 APPROVED

SOURCE: JOINT COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

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 and four tilapia species considered susceptible to tilapia lake virus (United States Department of Agriculture). All other live aquatic animals are entering the US with no federal requirements with regard to animal health. 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 unregulated imports. The introduction of these pathogens causes livestock losses, 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 (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to act proactively to prevent the introduction of foreign aquatic animal pathogens that pose threats to the health of aquatic livestock and natural resources through untested live animal and product imports. As such, USAHA requests that USDA-APHIS-VS immediately initiate comprehensive pathways risk analyses to prevent the introduction of the following World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) listed pathogens or parasites via imported live fish, mollusks and crustaceans: abalone herpesvirus, *Bonamia exitiosa*, epizootic haematopoietic necrosis (EHN), *Gyrodactylus salaris*, infectious hypothermal and hematopoietic necrosis virus (IHHNV), infectious myonecrosis (IMN), infectious salmon anemia (ISA), HPR deleted and HPR0; *Marleilia refringens*, *Perkinsus olseni*, red sea bream iridovirus (RSIV), salmonid alphavirus (. taura syndrome virus (TSV), yellowhead -*Macrobrachium rosenbergii* nodavirus,-*Vibrio parahemolyticus* pVA-1 plasmid.

Regarding prioritized pathogens or parasites, and with support of the domestic industry, USDA- APHIS-VS should implement appropriate import health requirements necessary to mitigate the risk of introduction. Further, USAHA requests that USDA immediately declare the country or regions as free of OIE-listed aquatic animal pathogens that have

never been detected in the US.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS recognizes the risk of introducing emerging pathogens, listed by the World Organisation for Animal Health, from imported live fish, mollusks, and crustaceans and is working to address priority pathogens of concern. This work includes identifying pathogens that meet provisions established by the World Trade Organization to establish import controls. APHIS is finalizing risk evaluations for infectious hypothermal and hematopoietic necrosis virus and red sea bream iridovirus. The conclusions of these evaluations will be used to identify and evaluate possible mitigations, including potential import controls if appropriate. APHIS will share the results of these risk evaluations with the committee once they are finalized.

Limited surveillance data, reporting requirements, and resources to conduct disease evaluations complicate immediate regional or national declarations of freedom. APHIS continues to work with stakeholders to advance activities that support the data collection and disease evaluations necessary to move toward such declarations in the future.