

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.

INTERIM 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 tests 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, while using less laboratory resources and reducing 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, through submission of 500-600 presumed negative animals for specificity evaluation. The NVSL already has over 300 presumptive positive samples available to evaluate sensitivity. A report on this effort will be provided at the annual meeting.