

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.

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 has worked closely with industry, cooperators, and State Animal Health Officials on its efforts to develop the Swine Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) through a pilot program. APHIS' support included, but has not been 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 a possibility, 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 the areas of biosecurity and traceability. Therefore, APHIS is investigating sources of temporary funding for States to support limited activities associated with the local administration of the SHIP pilot.