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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 11**

**Approved**

**SOURCE:**

**COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

**SUBJECT MATTER:**

**Strengthening the United States Animal Disease and Traceability and Disease Prevention Radio-Frequency Identification Infrastructure**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The threat of a foreign animal disease impacting the United States (US) protein market is real and tangible, recently evidenced by the outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza and ongoing concern for African swine fever. A robust disease traceability system and corresponding action from states and their partners is critical to the US response in protecting our food supply, as well as domestic and export markets. While states have taken steps to improve their ability to detect and trace animal diseases, there are still significant gaps in the overall infrastructure. With a production value well over \$100 billion, providing tools and resources to the states to protect the livestock industry is a top priority.

The United States Animal Health Association has advocated for funding and resources needed to maintain a robust state and federal animal health infrastructure necessary to facilitate early detection, surveillance, response, and control activities to prevent and mitigate domestic and foreign animal diseases.

Increased funding would allow further development of radio-frequency identification infrastructure at the state level and enhance the overall US animal disease traceability system. States would be able to utilize existing Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) cooperative agreements, which are familiar platforms, to focus funding requests to meet their individual needs.

The ADT cooperative agreements establish strong standards to ensure interoperability across all participants and protection of the data collection and utilization process. While the ADT cooperative agreement program is already established, states will continue engagement with key partners within their state, including auction markets, livestock producers and processing facilities to facilitate their participation.

A strong disease traceability system is an insurance plan for our livestock industry but also assures American consumers and global trading partners that the US has a safe and sustainable food supply.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association requests Congress and the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to increase funding for states to facilitate the build-out of critical Animal Disease Traceability radio-frequency identification infrastructure.

**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 agrees that a strong animal disease traceability (ADT) system, supported by electronic ID, is critical to protecting our food supply and trade markets. APHIS has worked extensively with State partners and stakeholders to discuss how we can improve ADT and has provided funding – through Farm Bill funding opportunities and cooperative agreements with our State partners – to support ADT activities, including the purchase of radio frequency identification readers, tag applicators, and software to improve infrastructure for electronic official identification. We look forward to continued discussions about how we can maintain and support a strong ADT program.