

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 17 **Approved**

SOURCE: **COMMITTEE ON EQUINE**

SUBJECT MATTER: **Equine Issues Workshop**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Early in 2010, Dr. John Clifford, the Deputy Administrator of Veterinary Services (VS) in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Jay Hickey, President of the American Horse Council, agreed to co-host a workshop on equine infectious disease control and prevention. The invitation for this meeting in 2010 stated “The emergence of a major equine infectious disease can have dramatic consequences for the horse industry. Such outbreaks have occurred with some frequency over the last several years. These outbreaks have impacted many individuals and groups involved with the equine industry and have also required USDA-APHIS-VS and state animal health officials to spend a great deal of money and staff time to identify the diseases, trace the horses potentially affected, and contain the disease.”

Looking back over the last 12 years, while much has been accomplished, there continues to be an increase of equine disease outbreaks that have required a regulatory response including the 2011 multi-state equine herpesvirus myeloencephalopathy outbreak and marked increase in the detection of horses dually infected with equine piroplasmiasis and equine infectious anemia in the United States due to iatrogenic transmission of the causative agents. State and federal animal health officials, academia and various equine stakeholders have undertaken many initiatives regarding equine infectious diseases and biosecurity over the last ten years. Despite these excellent actions, there has been limited collaboration and communications regarding these efforts amongst these groups. Bringing all entities together for a workshop for strategic planning on efforts to protect the United States equine herd from infectious diseases would be extremely beneficial to advancing equine health.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) and American Horse Council (AHC) to co-host an in-person equine issues workshop in 2023/2024 for state animal health officials, federal animal health officials, equine-focused academic subject matter experts and equine industry organization representatives. USAHA further requests that USDA-APHIS-VS provide financial and personnel resources for the workshop and AHC provide administrative assistance.

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 acknowledges the contribution of the 2010 workshop towards fostering cooperation among regulatory personnel, academic subject matter experts, and industry representatives in preparing for and responding to equine infectious disease challenges. Though there has been much progress in the last 12 years in harmonizing infectious disease response in equines, APHIS concurs with USAHA that additional coordinated action could greatly benefit equine health. APHIS would appreciate the opportunity to participate in an equine issues workshop and would commit to sending at least one equine staff officer if such a meeting was arranged; however, APHIS is unable to provide financial support to host this meeting in FY2023. Long-term budget uncertainties prevent us from committing to fund it in the future. APHIS will continue working closely with the USAHA Committee on Equine, the American Horse Council, and other external stakeholder groups to continue to harmonize equine infectious disease response.