
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 22 **Approved**

SOURCE: **COMMITTEE ON SWINE**

SUBJECT MATTER: **Request for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to Define When Authorization of Indemnity for Depopulation will be Approved by USDA-APHIS-VS During a Foreign Animal Disease Outbreak that Involves African Swine Fever**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Policy development during a foreign animal disease outbreak is difficult. It will require time and input from many stakeholders. During an African swine fever (ASF) outbreak, it is critical to detect and respond quickly to cases of ASF.

Confirmation of cases by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) is critical to safeguard against a false positive and responding inappropriately. It is important for USDA-APHIS-VS to confirm the presence of ASF in each state or territory.

Confirmation of cases by USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL does, however, slow down USDA-APHIS-VS authorization of indemnity for depopulation.

Diagnostic testing is conducted at one of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratories approved for ASF testing and confirmed at the USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory/USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL. Confidence in NAHLN comes from the oversight and testing proficiencies required by USDA-APHIS-VS. In addition to NAHLN diagnostic laboratory testing, field responders will provide objective assessments of ASF clinical signs for disease observed during investigations for each affected premises in outbreaks.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) adopt the following policy regarding indemnification prior to an outbreak:

[continued]

During an African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak, the USDA-APHIS-VS authorization for indemnity to depopulate the first detected case within a state or territory will require confirmation by the USDA-APHIS-VS National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL). The USDA-APHIS-VS authorization for indemnity to depopulate any subsequent cases in a state or territory will not need to be confirmed by USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL but will require: 1) ASF non-negative or presumptive positive result at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network laboratory, and 2) determination of clinical signs compatible for ASF on the affected premises. Detected cases would include feral and domestic swine.

USDA APHIS 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 fully appreciates that policies related to authorization for indemnity in an ASF outbreak are of critical interest to the USAHA Swine Committee and stakeholders. The ASF virus is transmitted to swine only through close contact (not aerosol transmission) and is not zoonotic. Therefore, APHIS and State Animal Health Officials will focus on initial quarantine, site biosecurity, and aggressive contact tracing as the primary measures to contain the outbreak. The authorization for indemnity and subsequent swine depopulation activities will occur after those initial steps.

The primary driver of indemnity policies will be the availability of sufficient funds through the duration of such an outbreak. Additional considerations include the regulatory requirement for confirmation, degree of confidence in any National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) non-negative ASF diagnostic test result, and application of the APHIS Case Definition for ASF, which provides guidance for evaluating diagnostic test results and swine clinical signs to assign a regulatory status of suspect case, presumptive positive case, or confirmed positive case. Finally, indemnity authorization depends upon the submission of an indemnity request – including all required recordkeeping documents (e.g. mortality sheets, herd inventory logs, etc.) for appraisal.

APHIS understands depopulation and disposal of swine on any farm location is going to be difficult to accomplish, and proper planning and resources will be needed to ensure health and safety of the owner, grower, and responders, and animal welfare. APHIS supports additional scenario discussions, exercises and “ASF Playbook” development to better prepare stakeholder in the event of an incursion.