
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 5

Approved

SOURCE:

COMMITTEE ON POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

SUBJECT MATTER:

Telehealth and Virtual Reality Acceptance for Poultry Inspections

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

With increasing innovative technologies that allow for excellent visualization of birds/flocks, adopting acceptance of virtual reality and video technologies to perform official poultry flock inspections would improve biosecurity (making it possible to inspect multiple premises without breaching biosecurity policies in place) and sustainability (by reducing transit times and their implications) and would extend the reach of the veterinary community already experiencing a shortage of resources. This technology is effective and reliable in daily life applications and in specific and specialty fields such as human and veterinary telemedicine; however, the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services, Veterinary Services seems hesitant to officially adopt and accept its use in routine veterinary activities.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to officially permit the use of telehealth through virtual reality and video technology as part of accredited veterinarians' flock inspections for health inspections and export compliance, veterinary medical officers' inspections at import and export ports, and USDA compartmentalization audits.

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 continues to explore opportunities to leverage technology across the agency, evaluating available platforms, potential trade implications of their use, and suitable mission applications.