

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2009 RESOLUTION

OCTOBER 14, 2009, SAN DIEGO, CA

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 21 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON PARASITIC DISEASES

SUBJECT MATTER: CONTINUED UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE SUPPORT FOR SCREWORM ERADICATION
ACTIVITIES

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The screwworm eradication program is a monument to the success of science, the government and the private sector cooperating for the benefit of mankind. Such cooperation has resulted in the eradication of screwworm in the United States (US) (1966), Mexico (1984) and Central America (2006). The Commissions for the Eradication and Prevention of Screwworm (COPEG in Panama and COMEXA in Mexico) was created between the US, Panama and Mexico as part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Regional Plan for screwworm eradication in Central America. The COPEG and COMEXA eradication efforts should be supported in a capacity sufficient enough to permit the screwworm program to completely eradicate the screwworm in Jamaica, Cuba and any other infested location in the region to further protect the US borders. The continued existence of the screwworm in remote areas presents a constant threat to the US.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States House of Representatives and Senate Agriculture Appropriation Committees to provide appropriate funding to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to better protect the homeland by fully supporting screwworm eradication activities in Central America, Cuba, and the Caribbean Islands to assure the total eradication efforts are ultimately successful in the region.

INTERIM RESPONSE:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

The USDA screwworm program currently produces sterile flies in a new state-of-the-art facility in Panama and disperses those flies over the Darien Gap to uphold the biological barrier between

Central and South America. The Program also maintains a back-up production facility in Mexico to preserve the pest-free status of North and Central America. These eradication and prevention activities save the United States billions of dollars each year.

APHIS is committed to the continuation of this successful program and will continue to evaluate the possibility of future expansion to include eradication of screwworm flies in the Caribbean countries that remain infested.