

RESOLUTION NUMBER: **24** **APPROVED**

SOURCE: **COMMITTEE ON CAPTIVE WILDLIFE AND
ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK**

SUBJECT MATTER: **CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE PROGRAM
STANDARDS**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

It has been stated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) that the goal of the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) program in the United States has now changed from eradication to controlling its spread.

The document entitled, "Chronic Wasting Disease Program Standards" was published by USDA-APHIS-VS in July 2012. It was developed before the shift of the CWD program from eradication to control and without adequate input from state wildlife and animal health officials or farmed cervidae producers. Sections of the document suggest placing restrictions on farmed cervidae producers that do nothing to further the effort to control the spread of CWD. The restrictions are not based on current scientific knowledge and could undermine the success of CWD control programs that have been in place in many states for more than a decade.

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) to revise the document entitled, "Chronic Wasting Disease Program Standards", and establish a Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Program Standards Committee to review and rewrite the document within 90 days so that it more appropriately reflects the needs of producers and regulatory officials charged with implementation of a program to control, not eradicate, CWD in the United States.

The United States Animal Health Association suggests that the CWD Program Standards Committee should be made up of representatives from and appointed by each of the following organizations: (1) the Exotic Wildlife Association, (2) the North American Elk Breeders Association, (3) the North American Deer Farmers Association, (4) the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, (5) the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, and (6) the USDA-APHIS-VS.

INTERIM RESPONSE:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. To address a number of concerns voiced at the 2012 USAHA meeting, VS established a CWD Program Standards Working Group. The goal of the working group is to discuss stakeholder concerns with the CWD program standards and to recommend revisions as necessary. The group is composed of three representatives each from the National Assembly, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and the cervid industry; two representatives from the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians; and experts from VS.

The working group first met on November 28, 2012, and continues to have weekly teleconferences. We expect revisions to the program standards to be completed by the first week of March. The revised program standards will then be made available for public comment through a notice in the Federal Register.