

# UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2004

**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 35            **APPROVED**

**SOURCE:** COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL WELFARE

**SUBJECT MATTER:** DEVELOPMENT OF CONSENSUS ON ANIMAL CARE GUIDELINES

**DATE:** October 27, 2004

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In recent years the issues of animal welfare, animal well-being and animal rights have generated significant discussion, actions on the part of livestock producers, legislative and regulatory debates and, in some cases, prohibitions of certain livestock production practices in specific states. These issues have also generated concern and requests for action within the food processing, marketing, and service sectors. While not part of the existing World Trade Organization framework for trade, the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) had convened working groups to develop general animal care guidelines relating to land and sea transport and humane slaughter. Recent surveys indicate that consumers in the United States continue to strongly support the notion that raising livestock for food production is appropriate so long as the animals are treated humanely. The vast majority of consumers currently hold the opinion that livestock producers are treating animals humanely. However, it is clear that livestock producers need to continue to take responsibility to ensure the animals they manage are treated humanely or consumers may see the need to support legislative or other action to assure that such practices are in place. In response to this reality and consistent with requests from the food processing, marketing and service sectors, virtually all livestock production systems have or will soon have developed and implemented science-based animal care guidelines.

## **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) supports and encourages the animal agriculture sector in the United States to continue their efforts to develop and implement science-based animal care guidelines that will help ensure the humane treatment of animals. The USAHA Committee on Animal Welfare will continue to provide a forum to enhance the dialogue regarding guidelines development and implementation and will encourage and facilitate efforts to reach consensus regarding controversial animal welfare issues. In addition to encouraging the consensus building process, USAHA discourages attempts to resolve these controversial issues through legislative and regulatory mandates. This position is consistent with policy resolutions developed by the National Council of State Governments and other organizations.

## **RESPONSE:**

NO RESPONSE – 5-27-05