RESOLUTION NUMBER: 37   APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON TUBERCULOSIS

SUBJECT MATTER: AMENDMENT TO TUBERCULOSIS UNIFORM METHODS
                                       AND RULES IN RELATION TO QUARANTINE RELEASE
                                       PROCEDURES FOR TB-INFECTED HERDS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Tuberculosis Uniform Methods and Rules (TB UMR) contains sections that provide specific requirements that must be met prior to releasing TB-infected herds from quarantine. These requirements are fairly prescriptive, and do not allow sufficient flexibility in those cases where the initial herd prevalence is low and infection may be removed from the herd using a battery of tests over a shorter period of time than that now provided for in the current TB UMR. Use of a model recently developed by the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service provides an additional tool that can be incorporated into the quarantine-release herd plan for TB-infected herds that will predict the number of negative herd tests that must be completed to reach 95% confidence that no further infection remains in the herd.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services amend the Tuberculosis Uniform Methods and Rules or include language within the Program Standards that will allow state animal health officials the option to use the USDA-APHIS model as part of the herd plan to determine the number of negative herd tests that must be completed prior to releasing the herd quarantine.

INTERIM RESPONSE:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) appreciates the United States Animal Health Association's Committee on Tuberculosis acceptance of the predictive epidemiologic model as a tool to develop risk-based criteria to release quarantines in tuberculosis affected herds managed under test-and-remove plans. VS recognizes the importance of written policies concerning the use of this tool in the Bovine Tuberculosis Eradication Program.

VS issued Memorandum 552.47, "Procedures for Managing Bovine Tuberculosis-Affected Cattle Herds," on December 19, 2011. During fiscal year 2011, VS conducted extensive

outreach with the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials to develop this memorandum that provides updated guidance for classifying and managing cattle herds affected with bovine tuberculosis. It specifically addresses the use of the predictive epidemiologic model to determine when there is sufficient confidence that the herd is free of infection and quarantine may be released.

Rather than revise the current Uniform Methods and Rules, VS will incorporate risk-based, performance criteria to release quarantines in affected herds in the proposed rule and program standards that are being developed for the brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis programs. VS will continue to engage the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials as these regulations and supporting documents are developed.