

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION – 2007

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 38 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON JOHNE'S DISEASE

SUBJECT MATTER: MILK ELISA TESTING FOR JOHNE'S DISEASE IN
THE NATIONAL PROGRAM

DATES: RENO, NEVADA – OCTOBER 18 – 24, 2007

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Evaluation of a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-approved milk enzyme linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) has shown that it is comparable in accuracy to currently available serum ELISA kits. Incorporation of USDA-approved milk ELISAs into the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program (VBJDCP) would allow dairy producers access to additional testing options. Dairy operations enrolled in the Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) typically have individual milk samples tested on a monthly basis for milk components such as somatic cells, protein and fat. These milk samples could also be used for milk ELISA testing for Johne's disease. DHIA field personnel, who collect and submit milk samples for testing, receive training and must be certified by the Quality Certification Services (QCS) division of National DHIA. DHIA laboratories, which are incorporating the milk ELISA for Johne's disease into their current milk testing, are proposing to require labs to complete and pass a monthly proficiency test administered by QCS, in addition to passing an annual proficiency test under the direction of the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL), to ensure consistent and proper diagnostic procedures.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association, recognizing the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program (VBJDCP) is a voluntary program, requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to allow the Quality Certification Services (QCS)-certified and Designated Johne's Coordinator (DJC)-approved Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) field personnel to collect and submit milk samples to approved laboratories for milk enzyme linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) testing for Johne's disease under the direction of the herd's Johne's certified veterinarian.

RESPONSE:

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the United States Animal Health Association's concerns and appreciates the opportunity to respond. Given the voluntary nature of the Voluntary Johne's Disease Control Program, VS will consider whether to allow the Quality Certification Services-certified Dairy Herd Improvement Association field personnel to collect and submit milk samples to approved laboratories for milk ELISA testing as part of the official program for herd classification. This would be a significant change to VS policy by allowing official sample collection by nonaccredited veterinarians and personnel who are not veterinarians.