



United States Animal Health Association

USAHA 2003 Resolution No. 19

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION 2003

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 19 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION

SUBJECT MATTER: UNITED STATES ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION PLAN

DATES: OCTOBER 14, 2003

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The number of animals officially identified in the United States has been decreasing rapidly over the last few years due to the successes of disease eradication programs that have historically provided the foundation for animal identification. This directly impacts the ability to track animals that may have been exposed to a disease of concern.

Current world conditions which include the possibility of intentional or accidental introduction of foreign animal disease make it essential that potentially exposed animals can be quickly traced.

The recent disclosure of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in Canada illustrates the tremendous economic impact that even one animal with a significant foreign animal disease, especially a zoonotic disease can cause. This tremendous impact on the cattle industry in Canada occurred even though Canada has an identification system that has recently been implemented, and therefore only allowed for the efficient tracking of animals that had been identified in the last few years. The impact would be significantly greater in the United States should BSE or a some other foreign animal disease be disclosed here since the number of animals identified has been on the decline, and significantly fewer animals are identified and able to be traced.

Being able to rapidly track animals exposed to a disease of concern, either foreign or domestic, is not only a critical component of being able to arrest the spread of disease, but is also a key factor in negotiations intended to reestablish international trade that may be halted as a result of a disease incursion. Therefore, it is critical that a comprehensive animal identification system be implemented as soon as possible,

In response, the work of a National Identification Development Team representing a significant state-federal-industry cooperative effort has resulted in a draft United States Animal Identification Plan (USAIP). This plan, although still a work in progress, lays the foundation for the initiation of a comprehensive system for animal identification in the United States, a first step towards enhancing the ability to safeguard the health of the Nation's livestock, and to protect and enhance international trade.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) accepts the draft United States Animal Identification Plan (USAIP) proposed by the National Animal Identification Development Team as a work in progress, and encourages its further refinement and implementation through the following guiding principles:

- **the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), state animal health authorities, and species specific groups should work to finalize and implement standards associated with the development and administration of the premises identification system and U.S. animal identification numbering system in a timely manner, and develop the information systems necessary to support them.**
- **the USDA-APHIS-VS should coordinate the organization of species specific groups to determine the final design, implementation process and oversight methods necessary for the national animal identification system for their respective species. These groups, working within the USAIP framework, will make their recommendations to the National Identification Steering Committee.**
- **the USDA-APHIS-VS should work with state animal health officials and the species groups to develop minimum standards necessary to implement the USAIP.**

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