

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2007

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 7 APPROVED AS AMENDED

SOURCE: USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT MATTER: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FUNDING TO STATES TO
ENSURE EFFECTIVE RESPONSE

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

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The effective management of animal health and all hazards emergencies is dependent upon a comprehensive system coordinating and integrating federal, state and local emergency management. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has worked with other federal agencies to further develop and integrate animal emergency management activities within the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) and the National Response Plan (NRP). There have been continued efforts among federal agencies defined through the Emergency Support Functions (ESF) and emergency management training and exercises to create a more coordinated and integrated federal level emergency management effort. USDA is working to integrate federal animal emergency efforts with states through the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) Area Emergency Coordinators, other APHIS personnel, and other USDA entities such as the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service.

Within each state the authority to regulate and respond to livestock disease lies primarily with state animal health officials. It is the responsibility of state animal health officials within each state to coordinate animal emergency management to integrate with their livestock industries, to coordinate with other state government agencies through their state emergency management agency and to coordinate with other states' animal emergency planning and response activities within their respective Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions. In order to respond effectively to animal emergency events, planning and response activities must be integrated into each specific livestock species production industry. State animal emergency management planning and response must be further developed within regional, state, and local levels to successfully integrate into animal production systems in order to ensure an acceptable level of business continuity. Failure to adequately support such capabilities may threaten the economic viability of our livestock industries and endanger our nation's critical food supply.

The present level of state emergency management planning and response capabilities varies between individual states and is not adequate to ensure an effective animal emergency management system in many states at this time. Appropriate staffing of state animal health emergency management personnel must be accomplished in order to ensure effective emergency management capabilities to protect the livestock industry from foreign animal disease events, all hazards emergencies and ensure an acceptable level of continuity of business within production agriculture. Adequate state level staffing to address animal health emergency planning and response efforts has broad effects that act to ensure the safety and health of United States citizens, food systems, agriculture infrastructure and the economy.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) supports the development of a system to provide adequate funding for state animal health agencies to enhance the state level emergency management capabilities needed to protect the livestock industries and other appropriate animal-related criteria within each state.

The USAHA urges the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, the Animal Agriculture Coalition, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and the American Veterinary Medical Association to work collaboratively in a legislative effort involving the Congress and the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to create a system of funding that ensures employment of adequate state personnel to develop animal health emergency management capabilities that will prevent, protect, respond to and recover from livestock disease and all hazards animal emergencies.

In addition, USAHA requests DHS and other federal partners, including the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) implement the policies and directives included in Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) #9 to secure a successful animal health emergency management system.

RESPONSE

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

The AVMA applauds the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) leadership in identifying and addressing the need for adequate funding across the country to ensure an appropriate response to all hazards animal emergencies. While much has been accomplished through our collaborative efforts, gaps still exist in emergency preparedness and response.

Current AVMA policy urges the US Department of Agriculture, Department of Homeland Security and the Congress of the United States to establish and continue to develop contingency plans and resources to be immediately available to the Secretary of

Agriculture, or instant, effective reaction to animal emergencies. However, the AVMA does not have specific policy regarding funding for employment of state personnel. We will need to ask applicable AVMA committees to evaluate this request from USAHA. In the meantime, if USAHA could be more informative in specifying how much money is requested, or what specific purposes in the states, and for which fiscal year, that would be helpful.