
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 10

Approved

SOURCE:

COMMITTEE ON SWINE

SUBJECT MATTER:

Policy Regarding Restocking Requirements and Eligibility for Indemnity of Premises in a Control Area During an African Swine Fever Outbreak

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In 2022, the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) passed Resolution 23. The request was that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services define African swine fever (ASF) response policy regarding restocking of premises in control zones, specifically the infected and buffer zones, and for any control areas established by the detection of ASF in feral pigs (which will have extended control area times) and determine prior to an ASF outbreak what policies will be applied.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) responded with:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

APHIS anticipates several areas of focus for continued discussion around ASF Control Areas. First, any Control Area established by a feral pig only ASF detection will likely be in existence for an extended length of time, due to the time it will take for wildlife biologists to perform swine surveillance, trapping, and depopulation in the Control Area (and Surveillance Zone around the Control Area). Domestic swine premises located in such a Control Area will have variable risk for ASF infection depending upon the density of feral pigs, and the domestic swine production type (backyard versus indoors swine premises).

Second, Control Areas established by a domestic pig ASF detection are at risk of transmission by direct contact with the virus. Without any direct experience with an ASF outbreak in the United States, the risk of disease transmission within the geographical Control Area is unknown. Primary measures to contain an outbreak will focus on initial quarantine, site biosecurity, and vigorous contact tracing, because the ASF virus is transmitted to swine only through close contact (not aerosol transmission).

APHIS, USAHA Swine Committee, and stakeholders will continue to further evaluate scenarios and biosecurity requirements for restocking and eligibility for indemnity of premises in a Control Area.

USAHA greatly appreciates this response. Continued discussions are vital to foreign animal disease preparedness and tremendous progress has been made in this area. The discussions and identification of draft policies ahead of an outbreak are critical as time is precious during an outbreak.

Feral swine create additional factors to resolve in an ASF response and will affect regions of the United States differently. Feral swine factors that affect risk analysis on restocking decisions in a control area include, and are not limited to, the type of facilities in an immediate geographical area, removal of dead stock, cross traffic, density of feral swine and domestic swine in the control area, feral swine mitigation efforts by facilities within a control area, etc. Preparing a biosecurity audit may also be beneficial ahead of an outbreak.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) reconsider the request and define the African swine fever (ASF) response policy regarding restocking of premises in control areas, specifically the infected and buffer zones and for any control areas established by the detection of ASF in feral pigs (which will have extended control area times) so policies to be applied are known prior to an ASF outbreak.

To help define policy regarding restocking of premises in control areas, including feral swine areas, USAHA recommends the USDA-APHIS-VS sponsor risk assessment projects on the potential spread of ASF from feral swine to domestic swine facilities in an immediate geographic area through cooperative agreements and National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program grant funding. This allows academia, producers, industry, and state and federal officials to work together defining risk factors that would affect the restocking decision-making process in a control area and to develop mitigation that would allow restocking to occur.

Data generated by these projects would be reviewed by the USAHA Committee on Swine for incorporation into response policies and can be used to create tabletop exercises with all stakeholders.