RESOLUTION NUMBER: 16 **Approved**

SOURCE: **COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

SUBJECT MATTER: **Foot-and-Mouth Disease Vaccine Distribution – National Veterinary Stockpile Partnership with an Independent Vaccine Distribution Company**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) exercises in the United States and outbreaks in previously free countries such as Japan and South Korea demonstrate FMD vaccine as an effective tool to control, contain, and eradicate the virus. According to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foot-and-Mouth Disease Response Plan-The Red Book, October 7, 2020, “a well-defined state vaccination plan will assist decision makers in prioritizing and distributing vaccine to states that are ready and able to handle the vaccine appropriately and rapidly administer doses based on well-grounded epidemiological principles”.

The expectation from the USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - National Veterinary Stockpile is that the state agriculture/livestock agencies securely store vaccine and distribute the correct number of FMD vaccine doses to authorized and accredited veterinarians within the state. Authorized and accredited veterinarians are responsible for obtaining vaccine from the state distribution point, properly storing and accounting for all vaccine assigned to them, maintaining adequate cold chain storage and chain of custody, overseeing administration of vaccine to animals on designated premises and ensuring that vaccinated animals are properly identified and tracked. However, many states are under-resourced to operationalize these efforts during an FMD outbreak.

To improve FMD outbreak preparedness, USDA and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) conducted a proof of concept exercise, in which IDALS partnered with an independent vaccine distributor to manage the placebo FMD vaccine cold storage, repacking, and distribution process. Independent distributors are already equipped to package, ship, and track the mass distribution of animal health supplies while maintaining the cold chain and chain of custody. In an FMD outbreak, this approach would increase efficiency of the response and reduce time lost by securing cold storage, breaking down pallets, re-packaging vaccine vials, and tracking shipments by federal or state officials who have insufficient personnel and limited or no relevant experience. This would also allow federal and state officials to concentrate their efforts on other vital response activities. Based

on the outcomes of this exercise, it is recommended that the USDA consider an alternative approach to distribution of FMD vaccine during an outbreak.

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 (VS) adopt policy to utilize an animal health distributor during a foot-and-mouth disease outbreak. A distributor would be utilized for all aspects of distribution, including receipt of vaccine directly from manufacturer or USDA, vaccine cold storage, vaccine repacking and vaccine inserts included, vaccine distribution, vaccine tracking and potential distribution of any other supplies needed to facilitate vaccination (syringes, official tags, etc). Distribution of vaccine would be to licensed accredited veterinarians for distribution to producers or directly to producers who are under the direction of an accredited veterinarian. State animal health officials would provide the names and addresses of the accredited veterinarians or producers for distribution to USDA-APHIS-VS and the distributor(s).

INTERIM RESPONSE:

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.

In the case of an FMD outbreak, APHIS VS will limit distribution to delivering vaccines to each state's storeroom or warehouse facility. VS recognizes the operational difficulties (outlined in the background) and that third-party logistics providers may be needed to meet the differing needs of all 50 states. In lieu of exploring a third-party logistics provider, VS will rely on each state to explore options for further vaccine distribution, including third-party logistics providers or regional partnerships (as well as accountability and compensation mechanisms).