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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 22**                      **Approved**

**SOURCE:**                                      **COMMITTEE ON EQUINE**

**SUBJECT MATTER:**                      **Vesicular Stomatitis**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

With the recent outbreak of vesicular stomatitis in California, there has been significant impact to the equine industry related to the international and interstate movement of equids. In order to protect the equine industry from the introduction of disease, it is essential for state and federal animal health officials to establish and adhere to adequate and proven import regulations for interstate or international movement. These requirements should be based on science that considers the risk of disease incursion and the associated economic repercussions. In 2015, when the World Organization for Animal Health delisted vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV), the United States Department of Agriculture utilized scientifically documented information to update the VSV response policies. The revised 14 day quarantine reflects the scientific evidence that the virus is contained within the vesicle and does not persist beyond a few days post vesicle rupture. Import requirements including restrictions of equines within prescribed areas, such as a 10 mile radius, and VSV testing requirements, have questionable foundations in the science of VSV epidemiology. It is important to recognize that equine owners and venue managers can experience undue economic hardship from overly restrictive interstate import requirements that are not based on scientific risk. Furthermore, regulatory uniformity would benefit all concerned parties, including equine owners, accredited veterinarians, equine venue managers and the United States as a whole.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to negotiate with foreign trading partners, including Canada, to limit all vesicular stomatitis (VS) restrictions to counties with confirmed cases of VS. Ideally, each country would request a negative complement fixation test to facilitate the temporary movement of clinically healthy competition horses to and from a VS affected county.

The USAHA urges each state animal health official to remove state regulations pertaining to VS interstate movement mileage or geographic radius restrictions.



**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.

The United States became officially free of Vesicular Stomatitis in February 2024. During the 2023 outbreak, VS successfully negotiated with Canada a process to allow permitted horses to travel from affected U.S. states to specific events. While many countries already restrict to the premises and county level, VS will continue to proactively negotiate with our trading partners, including Canada, to reduce Vesicular Stomatitis disease restrictions for all commodities in case of future outbreaks.