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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 29**                      **Approved**

**SOURCE:**                                      **COMMITTEE ON CATTLE AND BISON**

**SUBJECT MATTER:**                      **Development of Voluntary Proficiency Testing for Laboratories Performing Trichomoniasis Polymerase Chain Reaction Testing in Cattle**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Trichomoniasis is a venereal disease of cattle caused by the protozoan parasite *Tritrichomonas foetus*, which is transmitted from infected bulls to cows. Trichomoniasis reduces calf production by decreasing fertility and inducing abortions. Infected bulls show no clinical signs. Detection and control of infected bulls is key to containing the disease. Bovine trichomoniasis can be detected by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) amplification, both conventional and quantitative real-time PCR. The majority of the states in the United States (US) require a negative trichomoniasis test for interstate movement/importation of bulls and require that the test be conducted at an American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) accredited laboratory. AAVLD accreditation is based on International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17025 accreditation standards. A recent survey of state animal health authorities showed overwhelming approval of a voluntary proficiency testing procedure for trichomoniasis PCR for public and/or private diagnostic laboratories in the US.

The Title 9 Code of Federal Regulations 71.22 addresses the approval of laboratories to conduct official testing and to pass regularly scheduled proficiency testing administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) or its official designee. Historically, USDA-APHIS-VS has been willing to support developing proficiency testing for non-program diseases utilizing the USDA-APHIS-VS National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) and supported by user-fees. USDA-APHIS-VS currently lacks a trichomoniasis program and/or an established team of trichomoniasis diagnostic experts at the USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL. Therefore, a working group of trichomoniasis diagnostic experts would need to be formed through the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) working with the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials (NASAHO) to advise USDA-APHIS-VS and co-develop a volunteer proficiency testing program for laboratories performing trichomoniasis PCR testing.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials (NASAHO) work with the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to develop a voluntary proficiency testing program for laboratories performing trichomoniasis polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing in cattle utilizing the advice of a designated working group of trichomoniasis diagnostic experts as determined by USAHA and NASAHO. USAHA further requests that USAHA and NASAHO members encourage state diagnostic laboratories to participate in voluntary trichomoniasis PCR proficiency testing on a r

**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.

VS understands that USAHA, the Trichomoniasis subcommittee, and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians are working together and will reach out to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories once there is consensus on the proficiency test composition and source materials have been identified by the group.