

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 11 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

SUBJECT MATTER: Avian Metapneumovirus Live Vaccine for Poultry

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Avian metapneumovirus (aMPV) – also known as turkey rhinotracheitis, avian pneumovirus, avian rhinotracheitis, or swollen head syndrome – is an acute respiratory virus of turkeys, meat chickens, egg-laying chickens, and poultry breeding stock. It causes a respiratory infection which may result in high mortality, as well as reproductive disorders potentially causing a permanent flock reduction in egg production. Since its identification in Fall 2023, the disease has spread to 29 states, having a major impact on poultry production in the United States (US).

The US poultry industry has an urgent need for modified-live aMPV subtype A and B vaccines for turkeys and chickens. Published peer-reviewed scientific studies demonstrate the cross-protection between serotypes. Importation of internationally approved commercial modified-live vaccines would help fill this urgent need of the poultry industry. Inactivated vaccines alone are impractical, less effective, and not suitable for all types of poultry production. The United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services, Veterinary Services, Center for Veterinary Biologics is allowing importation of Master Seed and Master Cell Stock for domestic production of live products, but the necessary regulatory pathway to domestically produce a modified-live vaccine will still require 4 to 6 years. Due to the impact of this disease on the poultry industry, a quicker interim resolution is needed to ensure the sustainability of turkey and chicken production in the US.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association strongly urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) to expedite the approval of the importation of modified-live, commercially available vaccines for avian metapneumovirus subtypes A and B for chickens and turkeys which meet USDA-APHIS-VS-CVB's requirements for purity.
