

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 14 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

SUBJECT MATTER: Audit of the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services Import and Export Staffing

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Imports and exports of animals and animal products have increased significantly over the years. In addition, zoning, regionalization and compartmentalization have become extremely important to ensure continuity of business during outbreaks of transboundary and other significant diseases.

In 2015, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) crossed the Bering Strait and caused the largest animal health outbreak in United States (US) history. At that time the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) had a few zoning agreements with countries that would allow continued shipments of US poultry. By the end of 2016, the US had 20+ zoning agreements. Today the US has 80 agreements with countries. The US pork industry is developing an African swine fever (ASF) surveillance program to support zoning agreements with other countries in case of an ASF outbreak in the US.

It is critical that USDA-APHIS-VS have personnel resources to handle the needs of all animal health industries to do this important work and to effectively handle all daily activities. There is currently inadequate staffing to handle these required activities to maintain trade across all agricultural commodities, including poultry and poultry products.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the Administrator of the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services to conduct an audit to determine the staffing needs for all import and export activities as well as needs for negotiating zoning, regionalization and compartments for all transboundary diseases. USAHA also requests that state animal health officials and industry representatives be included in the audit process and results are shared with USAHA in 2025.