UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

2025 Resolution
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RESOLUTION NUMBER: 9 **APPROVED**

SOURCE: **COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE**

SUBJECT MATTER: **Import Health Requirements for Declared Freedom from Aquatic Animal Pathogens**

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to take action to prevent the introduction of foreign aquatic animal pathogens that threaten the health of aquatic livestock and natural resources through untested live animals. Consequently, USAHA requests USDA-APHIS-VS immediately leverage the country's declaration of freedom and implement import controls to exclude host animals susceptible to the six pathogens from which the United States has declared freedom.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has declared national-level freedom from six aquatic animal pathogens that affect both cultured and wild populations of susceptible species. These pathogens are listed on the Aquatic Animal Health Status Reviews webpage and include: *Marteilia refringens*, *Marteilioides chungmuensis*, *Perkinsus olseni*, epizootic hematopoietic necrosis virus, salmonid alphavirus, and *Gyrodactylus salaris*.

However, none of these pathogens are currently subject to import controls at the federal or national level. As a result, they may be entering the United States (US) through imports of live susceptible species.

Recently, at least one of these pathogens was detected in imported animals that were confiscated at a port of entry and subsequently rehomed to a public aquarium. The introduction of such pathogens can lead to livestock losses, facility quarantines, export bans, and the need for enhanced surveillance.

Import controls would not aim to restrict trade but rather to ensure that aquatic animals entering the US are healthy and do not pose risks to domestic aquaculture production or natural ecosystems.