

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 17 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT MATTER: Secure Food Supply Plans: Management and Updates

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Secure Food Supply (SFS) Plans are a collaborative effort between public, private, and academic partners that have been highly successful in raising producer awareness and acceptance of guidance regarding biosecurity, surveillance, traceability, and other measures related to maintaining business continuity during foreign animal disease (FAD) outbreaks. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) provided funding for the development of the Secure Poultry, Milk, Pork, and Beef Plans between 2009 and 2020.

The National Pork Board (NPB) provided some funding for the development of the Secure Pork Supply Plan, and the American Sheep Industry Association funded the development of the Secure Sheep and Wool Plan. Livestock industry SFS plans are housed on the Iowa State University Center for Food Security and Public Health (CFSPH) website: <https://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/secure-food-supply/>. The poultry industry plans, which include the Secure Broiler Supply, Secure Egg Supply, Secure Turkey Supply, and the Secure Upland Game Bird plans, are housed on the University of Minnesota Secure Poultry Supply website: <https://securepoultrysupply.umn.edu/>.

USDA-APHIS, Veterinary Services has utilized the scientific risk assessments from the Secure Poultry Supply plans to create permitted movement guidance for highly pathogenic avian influenza, which is being used during the current H5N1 outbreak and is housed at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/hpai_mvmtcontrol.pdf.

These plans are currently used by producers across the poultry, milk, pork, beef, and sheep and wool industries. They are frequently utilized by state animal health officials, and many states have designated Secure Food Supply coordinators to work with producers. The plans have been incorporated into quality assurance programs within the industries, are mentioned in many National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program (NADPRP) proposals, and are referred to on USDA-APHIS websites. The H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza virus in poultry and dairy cattle and the threat of African swine fever have raised the visibility of these plans.

Now that the plans are widely accepted, there is a need to manage oversight of the plans, update them as needed to reflect new science, address new outbreaks, and ensure consistency across the plans. In December 2022, the NPB organized a meeting with representatives from these industries, state animal health officials, USDA, and academia to discuss defining a process to maintain and update the standards and guidance associated with the SFS plans. The participants agreed that a process was needed because regulatory authorities and livestock producers are increasingly relying on these plans to support animal movement permitting during FAD outbreaks, and some of the SFS plans' biosecurity best practices and response policies have changed since the plans were first developed. The American Veterinary Medical Association supports this approach: <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/avma-policies/secure-food-supply-plans>.

The development and implementation of such a system will support the continued acceptance and use of the SFS plans to support animal movement permitting during FAD responses, for both the regulatory community and producers.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to explore funding mechanisms, including the designation as a priority National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program topic/target issue, other cooperative agreements, or as a recurring line item in their annual budget, to support an ongoing program to ensure there is a coordinated effort among the various commodity groups, USDA, state animal health officials, and academia to maintain, periodically review and update each Secure Food Supply Plan. This approach will ensure the plans are consistent among commodity groups and facilitate a clear, up-to-date, and more widely accepted approach to business continuity through foreign animal disease response planning.

FINAL 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.

APHIS recommends that suggestions regarding NADPRP funding priorities, such as recommendations of designations of priority funding opportunities, be directed to the NADPRP Consultation Board members nominated by USAHA and working collaboratively with APHIS NADPRP staff. Since the inception of NADPRP, APHIS has directed competitively awarded funding to support dozens of projects that support and enhance Secure Food Supply Plans (SFS plans), including but not limited to projects to develop new SFS plans, conduct risk assessments to inform SFS plans, update SFS plan websites, and educate producers about all aspects of SFS plans, particularly biosecurity and animal movement. APHIS intends to continue to direct NADPRP funding towards high-impact and high-value projects selected through the annual NADPRP competitive funding opportunity.

APHIS further suggests that the committee consider sources of oversight and funding other than the NADPRP for SFS plan support. For example, the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) and the U.S. Swine Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) provide biosecurity standards for their respective commodities, and the USAHA Swine Committee in collaboration with APHIS developed movement criteria and permit requirements for swine premises in an ASF Control Area. APHIS recommends that the SFS plans be better defined in the context of the NPIP and SHIP programs.