UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

2026 Resolution

130th Annual Meeting
October 15-21, 2026
Madison, WI

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 14 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON POULTRY AND OTHER AVIAN SPECIES

SUBJECT MATTER: Development of Bilateral Trade Agreements Supporting the Strategic Use of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Vaccination in Poultry

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), in coordination with the Office of the United States Trade Representative and other appropriate federal agencies, proactively engage major United States (US) poultry and poultry-product trading partners in bilateral technical discussions to establish mutually acceptable conditions under which vaccination against H5 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) could be implemented in the US without unnecessary disruption to international trade.

USAHA further requests that these discussions address, as appropriate:

1. Recognition of HPAI vaccination programs consistent with World Organisation for Animal Health standards and contemporary scientific evidence;

2. Surveillance and diagnostic requirements capable of demonstrating infection status in vaccinated populations;

3. Certification requirements for poultry and poultry products originating from vaccinated populations;

4. Recognition of regionalization, zoning, and compartmentalization approaches that permit continued trade from unaffected populations and regions;

5. Identification of poultry commodities and products that can continue to be safely traded from vaccinated populations based on scientifically supported animal-health risk assessments; and

6. Development, wherever practicable, of bilateral protocols before vaccination is implemented so that trade conditions are established in advance of vaccination

becoming necessary as part of an HPAI response or long-term disease-control strategy.

USAHA further requests that USDA report to the USAHA Committee on Poultry and Other Avian Species at its 2027 Annual Meeting on progress in these bilateral discussions and in the development of trade protocols.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The continuing global H5 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) panzootic has challenged the sustainability of disease-control strategies based primarily on detection, quarantine, depopulation, disposal, cleaning and disinfection, and indemnification.

Since the emergence and widespread establishment of HPAI in wild bird populations, United States (US) poultry have experienced repeated introductions despite extensive investments by government and industry in surveillance and biosecurity. These circumstances warrant continued evaluation of additional disease-control tools, including vaccination.

One of the principal concerns surrounding vaccination of US commercial poultry has been its potential effect on international trade. Trading partners may impose restrictions on poultry or poultry products from countries employing vaccination because of concerns regarding surveillance, detection of infection in vaccinated populations, or disease status. These concerns should be addressed proactively rather than waiting until an animal health emergency requires the rapid implementation of vaccination. International animal health standards recognize tools, including surveillance, zoning, regionalization, compartmentalization, certification, and risk-based commodity approaches, that can help maintain safe trade while animal diseases are controlled.

The US is a major producer and exporter of poultry and poultry products. Consequently, development of a vaccination strategy should proceed in parallel with the development of an international trade strategy. Proactive bilateral negotiations between the United States Department of Agriculture and major trading partners could establish agreed-upon surveillance, certification, vaccination, and trade conditions before vaccination is implemented. Doing so would provide greater certainty to producers, trading partners, animal health officials, and markets while preserving vaccination as an available disease-control tool.

The objective of this resolution is not to mandate HPAI vaccination but rather to ensure that international trade concerns do not prevent the US from having vaccination available as a practical component of an evolving HPAI control strategy. Targeted and effective HPAI vaccination, coupled with appropriate surveillance, offers wide-reaching benefits for producers, animal disease responders, veterinarians, public health, worker safety, food security, the environment, biodiversity, and animal welfare.