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

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 24 APPROVED AS AMENDED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON CATTLE AND BISON

SUBJECT MATTER: Prioritization of Brucellosis Eradication

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that the eradication of brucellosis from the United States remains a priority and to commit resources to brucellosis research. Specifically, USAHA urges USDA to:

1. Prioritize the retention and recruitment of scientists with expertise in brucellosis management and research;
2. Ensure that brucellosis research is included in five-year research plans developed by the USDA, Agricultural Research Service (ARS), National Animal Disease Center in Ames, Iowa. Such investment is critical to supporting ongoing and future national brucellosis eradication efforts;
3. Leverage the National Institute of Food and Agriculture and other departmental competitive funding sources to support brucellosis research and workforce development;
4. Preserve high-containment facilities for use in brucellosis research;
5. Explore opportunities for collaborative research projects involving USDA-ARS; USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS); states; universities; tribes; nonprofit organizations; and private organizations; and
6. Consider the use of existing quarantine facilities within the Greater Yellowstone Area for research purposes.

USAHA urges prioritizing adequate funding for scientific personnel, high-containment facilities, and equipment necessary to advance disease prevention and control. USAHA encourages USDA to work with USAHA to prioritize research that addresses these recommendations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

To protect public health and support our nation's livestock industry, billions of dollars have been invested in national brucellosis eradication programs over the past 90 years. This monumental effort has resulted in the eradication of the disease from domestic livestock herds and dramatic reductions in human infections. However, the presence of a wildlife reservoir of brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) requires ongoing

surveillance of livestock and wildlife, as well as regulatory responses to spillover events within the Designated Surveillance Areas (DSAs) of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. Surveillance is a cornerstone of the DSA states' brucellosis programs, helping to prevent the reestablishment of the disease in livestock and providing confidence to trading partners that the United States (US) domestic cattle and bison herds remain brucellosis-free. Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming continue to demonstrate that the level of surveillance is more than adequate to ensure that livestock originating from DSAs pose a negligible risk to trading partners. However, surveillance is labor-intensive and expensive to conduct.

State brucellosis programs have been used to mitigate the risk of disease reintroduction and spread for more than 20 years. During this time, a substantial body of data and knowledge regarding the management of brucellosis spillover events has accumulated, allowing brucellosis management practices to evolve and improve. However, field data and programmatic experience need to be supplemented by brucellosis research. In turn, such research requires sustained commitment and continued investment to:

- Develop new vaccine technologies and diagnostic tools;
- Evaluate current surveillance strategies and develop new approaches for livestock and wildlife to ensure that surveillance is sufficient to detect brucellosis when present;
- Better understand how responses to point-source introductions of brucellosis differ from historical brucellosis management, when US cattle and domestic bison herds were not yet brucellosis-free and within-herd and other cattle-to-cattle transmission was common; and
- Ensure that the most effective, yet minimally disruptive, methods are used in regulatory responses to brucellosis detections in livestock.

Producer fatigue is substantial after 20 years of program requirements. Tools that enable regulators to reduce the burden associated with both disease surveillance and responses to detections would benefit livestock producers, reduce future program costs, and improve program effectiveness.

Over the past 20 years, funding for brucellosis research in support of national eradication programs has decreased in both total and inflation-adjusted dollars, resulting in slower scientific advancement. Additionally, reductions in the size of the federal workforce have resulted in the loss of substantial institutional knowledge. Programmatic success in containing disease in the GYA, budgetary constraints, and competition for funding and resources associated with other disease threats have further diminished brucellosis as a national priority. With the removal of *Brucella* spp. from the Federal Select Agents and Toxins List, a renewed and enhanced commitment is needed to maintain the progress already achieved and allow a greater focus on eliminating brucellosis from wildlife in the GYA. Without such a commitment, the progress achieved at substantial personal and financial cost over nearly a century could be jeopardized.