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Dr. Nancy Cox
Director of the Influenza Division
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Rd. Atlanta
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Dr. Cox:

Recognizing the potential of influenza viruses to infect multiple species including humans, swine veterinarians have long supported the vaccination of swine workers and veterinarians against seasonal influenza. This is an effort to reduce the risk of exposure of pigs and people to influenza viruses that might then result in animal or human disease or the possible recombination of different viruses. The current pandemic H1N1 2009 virus circulating in the human population poses significant risks to the U.S. swine population. Our current focus is to prevent the introduction of this viral strain into the U.S. swine herd. To date, the few swine herds that have become infected in other countries have been the result of direct contact with infected farm workers or people having contact with naïve pigs. Pigs have played no role in the transmission of the pandemic H1N1 virus to humans serving only as an additional susceptible population. Research and practical experience has shown that the virus transmits readily from infected humans to naïve swine thus placing the U.S. swine herd at increased risk. The degree to which infected swine can transmit the virus to in-contact humans is unclear but there is no reason to believe that it would not occur. Therefore, it is important that both susceptible populations have access to vaccination to minimize the likelihood of viral transmission between and within the swine and human populations.

The administration of an effective vaccine to people and pigs that reduces the potential for viral shedding and increases the infective threshold would significantly decrease the likelihood of viral transmission between pigs and humans and reduce the potential for significant illness in both populations. As such, people working in the swine industry **should have priority access to available vaccine to minimize the risk of contact between infected and naïve populations.** This action would greatly reduce the potential for viral exposure within both the human and swine populations.

We recognize that limited doses of vaccine will be available initially thus necessitating a prioritization scheme targeting first those individuals most likely to come in contact with infectious virus. Due to the susceptibility of the swine population and the recognized ability of the pandemic virus to spread from

humans to pigs and within pig populations, we feel that swine workers and veterinarians are at increased risk for spreading infectious virus to pig populations, becoming infected following contact with infected swine and further disseminating infectious virus within the human and swine populations. As such, **they should be included in any vaccine prioritization scheme and targeted for early access to available vaccination.**

We respectfully request that veterinarians, swine workers and processing plant employees **receive priority access** to vaccination against the pandemic H1N1 influenza.

Sincerely,



W. Ron DeHaven DVM, MBA
Executive Vice President, CEO
American Veterinary Medical Association



Tom Burkgren, DVM
Executive Director
American Association of Swine Veterinarians

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) is the recognized national voice for the veterinary profession. The association's more than 78,000 members comprise approximately 85% of U.S. veterinarians who are involved in diverse areas of veterinary medical practice including private, corporate, academic, industrial, governmental, military, and public health services.

The American Association of Swine Veterinarians (AASV) represents approximately 1300 members involved in practice, industry, and academia in more than 40 countries.