



USDA VHSV Order, Fish Health Testing, Necropsy Training

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (January 15, 2007 Update)

RICHMOND, Maine, November 15, 2006 — Micro Technologies is testing for VHSV and other aquatic animal pathogens and actively working with fisheries and aquaculturists throughout states impacted by the emergency USDA APHIS Federal Order. That Order, as amended November 14, 2006, prohibits interstate movement from “affected” and “at risk” states of certain finfish species unless the fish are tested and certified to be free of VHSV.

The **viral hemorrhagic septicemia** virus is a serious pathogen affecting many freshwater finfish species with no known cure. It does not present a human health risk. The USDA Order pertains to Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. In addition to actions stemming from the Order, these and surrounding states are reviewing their overall testing programs as to fish disease detection and prevention.

Micro Technologies continues to provide assistance and **testing** to growers and maintain up-to-date information as to each state’s sampling and testing requirements. The firm is also offering support to state officials, veterinarians, and state-approved collection agents in the form of **necropsy training** as well as best practices related to determining the sample needed, collection and submission, chain of custody, and testing standards.

Individuals desiring testing or other information should feel free to contact Micro Technologies about the Order, affected species, fish movement, samples collection, protocols and standards, fish health testing, and certification.

Coordinated work in November with the State of Pennsylvania addressed growers’ concerns and ensured a uniform and expedient approach to necropsy, submission of fish samples, and testing by a USDA-approved laboratory experienced with VHSV and OIE Manual (2006) and AFS-FHS Blue Book (2005) standards. Working with a third-party collection agent approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, the process is as follows:

1. The collection agent handles farm/lot analysis and sampling work.
2. Micro Technologies supplies testing/collection materials needed.
3. Necropsy and sample collection is handled by the agent.
4. Samples are sent to Micro Technologies’ laboratory for VHSV testing.
5. Testing is completed in 28 days and reported to the grower.

Micro Technologies was well-equipped to tackle a fish health emergency such as this. The firm has provided fish health certification, screening, baselining, surveillance, and diagnostic testing for a wide variety of aquatic pathogens, including VHSV for more than a decade. With a USDA-accredited veterinarian, AFS-FHS Fish Health Inspector, and Canadian Fish Health Official on staff, the laboratory handles high volumes of samples daily and is capable of providing preliminary results in 7-14 days and final results in 28 days.

Micro Technologies' capabilities for VHSV testing include

- 1) Detection by cell culture using EPC, FHM, RTG-2, and BF-2 cell lines;
- 2) RT-PCR using primer sets recommended by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE, 2006) and American Fisheries Society – Fish Health Section (AFS-FHS) Bluebook (2005);
- 3) Virus strain analysis by DNA sequencing.

Other related testing includes

- 1) Inspection and certification testing for private growers and state hatcheries.
- 2) Wildfish screening for state and Federal resource agencies

Link to the USDA web site to view the latest information as to the USDA-APHIS Order, list of VHSV susceptible fish, the emerging disease notification, and other information: <http://aphisweb.aphis.usda.gov/vs/aqua/> .

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Micro Technologies, Inc. is a USDA-approved private laboratory and recognized leader in aquatic animal health research and solutions. Its work throughout North America and globally strengthens the health, cultivation, and biosecurity of cold and warm water finfish, bivalves, crustaceans, and other species.

Aquaculture farmers, agencies, researchers, and extension experts routinely turn to the laboratory for help to solve tough problems and protect aquaculture health. Laboratory and on-site support at hatcheries and marine sites includes preventive & investigative diagnostics, certification, custom vaccines, veterinary services, biologics, research, process and protocol improvement, training, and assistance with domestic and foreign import/export regulations and management.

Visit the web site at <http://www.microtechnologies.biz> or contact
Kris Coombs - (207)737-2637, kacoombs@microtechnologies.biz
Cem Giray, Ph.D. - (207)737-2637, cxgiray@microtechnologies.biz

"Working together to keep aquaculture healthy."