

A NATIONAL PLAN FOR ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

ID Development Efforts on the National “Front”

Maintaining the health of the U.S. herd is the focus of industry and government groups addressing national animal identification. Over 30 industry organizations participated in the National Identification Task Force in 2002, helping prepare the **National Identification Work Plan (NIWP)**.

The Task Force established a goal to have the capability to locate all premises with direct contact to foreign animal disease within 48 hours after discovery. In early 2003, the USDA established the U.S. Animal Identification Steering Committee and Development Team to complete the NIWP. The results of the ID Development Team, the **U.S. Animal Identification Plan (USAIP)** will be presented at the United States Animal Health Association Meeting, October, 2003.

Our State’s Initiative: Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC)

There is a vast diversification of animal agriculture and differences in management practices across the United States. While a nation-wide structure is needed, key Wisconsin leaders recognized that a regional focus around common issues should be pursued. Their goal is to proactively support a national animal ID program, while providing producers with added value-based marketing opportunities. As this collaborative movement gains momentum it becomes obvious this multi-species initiative is essential for the future of our agriculture industries.

Animal Identification Crisis Looms

At issue is *time*. USDA/Veterinary Services anticipates a crisis in livestock identification within three to four years if nothing is done. The U.S. Animal Identification Steering Committee and Development Team supported in its efforts by the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium and other groups are working to develop a national animal identification system that will prevent or reduce the impact of such a crisis.

What Is “National” Animal Identification?

National Identification is an identification system with an established set of standards and defined data elements. It allows for the compatibility of other ID systems while providing efficient availability of agreed-to information across each segment of the animal agriculture industry. The establishment of standards allows the overall system to support both marketing and regulatory functions. However, production data is maintained and controlled separate from information required for regulatory animal health programs.

**WISCONSIN LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION CONSORTIUM
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What Will "National" Animal Identification Accomplish?

National animal identification is needed to maintain the health of our national herd through the monitoring, control and eradication of domestic and emerging diseases. It will reduce the risk of intentional or accidental threats to our nation's food supply and our food and livestock export markets.

- Disease Eradication

USDA/Veterinary Services is in the final stages of animal disease eradication programs which have taken many years and millions of dollars to complete. We must be able to quickly and effectively trace diseased or exposed animals in order to finish these programs. Identification is central to the final eradication of diseases and documentation of our animal health status to the international community.

- Disease Control

In addition to disease eradication programs, the animal agriculture industry is interested in controlling or limiting the impact of certain other diseases. An animal identification system plays an important role in those efforts as well.

- Foreign Animal Disease Outbreaks

Animals exposed to foreign or emerging diseases need to be quickly traced to protect against further spread and lessen negative impacts on animal production and marketing in the United States and internationally.

- Threats to Biosecurity

Since September 11, 2001, the possible intentional introduction of pathogens to harm our food supply has become a reality. Most likely, an intentional introduction will be multi-centric and many believe there could be a human health component. A national identification system can help with swift tracing against animal diseases that threaten to reduce confidence in our food supply.

- Food Safety

U.S. Food Safety programs help ensure the public is protected from health risks of unsafe foods. Many federal regulatory organizations are responsible for carrying out these programs. An effective animal identification system reinforces existing food safety efforts and reduces risk to the nation's food supply.