Animal Identification: What Does It Mean To The Cattle Industry?

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The Need

- Enhanced disease control and eradication capabilities
  - Biosecurity threats
  - Foreign animal disease outbreaks
- Meet demands of domestic and international consumers for source-verified products
  - Food safety
  - Market access
Mad cow scare hits stocks, cattle futures

Officials promote safety practices as industry prepares for millions of dollars in losses

Meatpackers say rules to limit mad-cow threat more costly but worth it

Ban on ‘downed cattle’ to be revisited

Lawmaker plans to revive proposal

WEDNESDAY

December 24, 2003

The Forum

December 24, 2003

World markets ban import of U.S. beef

Infected tissue headed to Britain for testing

The Denver Post / Section A

Mad cow disease hits U.S.

Reports tracing mad-cow case to Canada likely to restore confidence in U.S. herds

The Denver Post / Section A

Beef industry waits and watches
Health and Safety Traceback Without National Identification

Packing Plant

Feedlot

Backgrounders, Auction Markets, etc.

Herds of Origin

All herds involved may be quarantined and tested
Health and Safety Traceback **With** National Identification

Packing Plant

Feedlot

Backgrounders, Auction Markets, etc.

Herd of Origin

Less quarantining, testing and market disruption
Michigan Experience

• 4 years ago - TB-positive cows took several weeks of visiting sale barns and farms to trace the cow to original herd

• Spring 2003 – Took Michigan Department of Agriculture less than 15 minutes to complete a trace back
US BEEF AND VEAL EXPORTS
As a Percentage of Production, Carcass Weight, Annual

Percent

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

MAJOR U S BEEF EXPORT MARKETS
Carcass Weight, Annual

![Graph showing major U.S. beef export markets, including Japan, Canada, Mexico, and Korea. The graph displays annual carcass weight in million pounds, with data points for average 1997/01, 2002, and 2003.]
Guiding Principles

• The goal is to create an effective, uniform, consistent and efficient national animal identification system by

1- Allowing producers, to the extent possible, the flexibility to use current systems or adopt new ones, but not burden them with multiple identification numbers, systems or requirements
Guiding Principles

• The goal is to create an effective, uniform, consistent and efficient national animal identification system by

2 - Building on the data standards developed in the U.S. Animal Identification Plan set forth by joint Federal-State-private partnership of more then 70 organizations
Guiding Principles

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3 - Remaining technology neutral in order to utilize all existing forms of technologies and new forms of technology that may be developed
Guiding Principles

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4 - Designing architecture for the system without unduly increasing the role and size of the government
Guiding Principles

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5 - Ensuring that the system does not preclude producers from being able to use it to add value by aligning production management with market incentives
The Plan

- The U.S. Animal Identification Plan defines the standards and framework for implementing and maintaining a phased-in national animal identification system for the United States.
The Plan

- **Objective**
  - To achieve a traceback system that can identify all animals and premises potentially exposed to an animal with a foreign animal disease within 48 hours after discovery.
The Plan – Phase 1

• Premises identification
  – A premises is **an identifiable physical location that**, in the judgment of the State Animal Health Official or Area Veterinarian in Charge, and when appropriate in consultation with the affected producer, represents **a unique and describable geographic entity (where activity affecting the health and/or traceability of food producing animals may occur)** or represents the producer contact location when extensive grazing operations exist.
The Plan – Phase 1

- Premises identification
  - Target: July 2004
  - Unique identifier for each defined premises involved in animal agriculture
  - Links that location to the entity that participates in animal production and/or commerce
The Plan – Phase 1

• Premises identification
  – Owners with multiple production units and/or holding units will consult with appropriate officials to determine the need for multiple premises identification numbers
The Plan – Phase 2

- Individual animal ID for cattle moved for commerce
  - Target: July 2005
  - All cattle that enter interstate commerce are to be officially identified and their movement is to be reported to the National Animal Identification Database
The Plan – Phase 2

• Individual animal ID for cattle moved for commerce
  – Target: July 2006
  • All cattle that enter commerce (intrastate and interstate) must be identified with an official RFID tag prior to leaving their current premises and such movements are reported to the National Animal Identification Database
The Plan – Phase 3

• RFID technology in markets and slaughter plants
  – Radio frequency identification
  – Target: July 2005
  – Integration of readers will be initiated as cattle volumes with RFID tags warrant
The Plan – Phase 3

• RFID technology in markets and slaughter plants
  – System capabilities are to be available July 2004 with significant integration by July 2005
  – USDA inspected cattle slaughter plants and state licensed markets are to have RFID readers in place by July 2005
Other Benefits of Individual Animal Identification

- Management tool
  - Improved ability to track performance and carcass data
  - Improved decision-making ability based on performance and carcass data received
  - Will require intentional effort of several parties and additional costs to gather performance and carcass data
Other Benefits of Individual Animal Identification

• Marketing tool
  – Can provide producers with ability to market cattle with information which will add value to their cattle – process verification
Frequently Asked Questions

• Is the USAIP plan a mandated government program?
  – Yes, by the Secretary of Agriculture but at the present there are no mandatory requirements
  – Legislation has been proposed
  – Once system is in place, all livestock and food animals will be required to be tracked through the system
Frequently Asked Questions

• How much will the program cost?
  – Program is still being developed
  – Many estimates of program costs

• Who will pay for the plan?
  – It is anticipated that costs will be shared between state, federal, and private entities (producers, markets, etc.)
Frequently Asked Questions

• What data will I have to provide for the central database?
  – Basic information for contact person for premises
    • Name, address, date premises ID issued, date premises ID retired, historical contact data
    • Additional information that can be important in a disease traceback such as species, breed, sex, age, or date of birth can also be reported if available
Frequently Asked Questions

• Who will control and have access to the central database?
  – USDA-APHIS is expected to administer the program
  – State and federal health officials will have access to premises and animal ID data when performing their duties to maintain the health of the national herd
Frequently Asked Questions

• What is RFID?
  – Radio frequency identification
  – Comprised of a reader/scanner and a transponder that can read or write data content using a specified radio frequency
Frequently Asked Questions

• Will I have to own RFID reading equipment?
  – Not necessarily
  – Tagging will be available at auction markets, veterinary clinics, etc.
  – Systems available from current RFID companies which do not require equipment
Frequently Asked Questions

• Will this system increase my liability?
  – If cattle are managed according to Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) practices and all health/management products are given according to label instructions and documented, liability should be zero.
“The future is always here before we are ready to give up the past.”
Change is inevitable; adaptation and survival are optional.”

Dee Likes
Kansas Livestock Association
The End

Questions?