

# National Animal Identification Plan for Minnesota Horse Premises and Owners

October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005

## History

Animal identification is not a new concept in the United States. Several livestock species have had identification processes in place since the early 1940's to indicate ownership and deter theft. It is common for horses to be branded, tattooed, registered with different breed organizations, and/or have a DNA record on file. However, there is no uniform, nationwide animal identification system in place for all livestock, which includes horses.

## Goal of National Animal Identification System (NAIS)

Identify all animals and premises that have had direct contact with a foreign animal disease or a domestic disease of concern within 48 hours after discovery. Ensuring animal health in the US, and thereby our ability to market animals, is the primary reason the animal agriculture industry is looking at a national, standardized, identification system.

Most individuals recognize that finding potentially sick or exposed animals early in a disease outbreak is essential to containing the disease. NAIS would allow for rapid tracing of animals during an outbreak situation, helping to limit the scope and expense of the outbreak and minimizing the impact on domestic and foreign livestock markets.

## Who Governs NAIS

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is the government agency in charge of NAIS. In Minnesota, the Board of Animal Health (BAH) and State Veterinarian are working with APHIS to carry out the program.

## What Species are Included in NAIS

NAIS is being developed for animal industries that will benefit from having a system that will facilitate rapid tracing in the event of a disease concern, regardless of intended use (i.e. meat, recreational, 4-H or commercial animals). Currently, the animal groups include: llamas and alpacas, cattle and bison, deer and elk, horses, goats, sheep, poultry and swine.

## What Equine Diseases Will be Tracked and Reported Through NAIS

Serious animal diseases that affect the health of livestock and the export markets will be tracked. These include diseases that are passed within livestock species and between livestock and humans. We are fortunate in our country to have high quality horse health care which limits the potential for diseases.

## What Should MN Horse Owners Do?

### **Obtain a Premises ID Number**

Premises registration is the first priority and the backbone of the NAIS program. Any premises involved with housing or commingling of horses (or any livestock) or horse commerce and movement should register for a unique 7-digit premises id number. These include, but are not limited to: farms and ranches; hobby farms and residential properties with small horse herds; sale barns; indoor and outdoor show arenas; breeding and training facilities; vet clinics; state, county and local trails; and fair grounds. Premises id numbers are important because in a disease emergency, animal health authorities need immediate premises location data to ensure disease investigation progresses rapidly and efficiently.

## How to Register your Premises

Registering your premises id number is free and easy. You can register for your premise id number on-line (MN residents only) at [www.bah.state.mn.us/index/nais/registration.htm](http://www.bah.state.mn.us/index/nais/registration.htm). You can also contact the BAH office to register over the phone (651-296-2942, ext: 17) or be mailed a registration card. Currently, livestock owners are not required to register their premises, but as of January of 2008, premises registration will become mandatory.

## Confidentiality of Premises Information

The premises information obtained (only basic information that is needed for effective disease detection and control) will be kept confidential and will only be used by federal and state animal health officials to administer animal health programs at the state level and national level and during emergency situations. Minnesota has passed state legislation mandating that this information be kept confidential, unless a foreign or a domestic disease outbreak of concern occurs in the state. If a disease outbreak occurs, limited information will be given to the general public to ensure safety, limit the spread of infections, and limit the impact on livestock markets.

### Additional Benefits to the Horse Industry

Members of the US Horse Industry have researched NAIS and have identified additional potential benefits, other than reducing potential effects and enhancing control of disease outbreaks, they include:

1. Maintain equine commerce and movement of horses in the case of a disease outbreak.
2. Assist equestrian events in ensuring a healthy environment for participating horses. Most major events involving livestock in the United States require some sort of health certification, including negative Coggins Test. NAIS could enhance these requirements.
3. Expedite recovery and identification of horses in case of loss due to natural disaster, theft or accident.
4. Facilitate import and export of equine. Many horses are exported and imported into the United States each year. The NAIS could expedite these processes and allow for more effective means of identifying the animals moving internationally.
5. Uphold the horse industry as a responsible member of the livestock community. The importance of the horse industry in cooperating with the entire livestock industry in the case of a disease outbreak cannot be overstated.

### Future Direction and Options with NAIS

The next phase of NAIS is individual animal identification (through NAIS, NOT breed registries) for the sole purpose of disease tracking. Currently, horses are not required to be individually identified through NAIS and at this time, it is not recommended until an infrastructure is in place to handle collection of data and record keeping. The infrastructure is expected to be in place by January 2008, and at that time, individual identification of horses (and all livestock) will be mandatory. There is one exception: if your horse is being shipped internationally, the horse MUST BE microchipped, these are international rules and regulations.

The Equine Species Working Group working under NAIS has submitted the following recommendations (additional recommendation can be seen on the American Horse Council Website) to the NAIS board, these recommendations are awaiting approval:

1. If you choose to microchip your horse, use the ISO/ANSI compatible Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chip (11784/85, 134.2 kHz). This technology is being recommended for the standard in electronic equine identification for the purpose of disease control in the NAIS program.
2. If you choose to microchip your horse, the recommended implantation site for the microchip is the nuchal ligament on the left side, in the middle third of the neck, halfway between the ears and the withers. This site was recommended because the microchip will not migrate from this site.

### Who to Contact with Questions and Useful Websites

<b>Name</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>E-Mail</b>
Melissa Petersen MN Board of Animal Health	Premises ID Numbers	651-296-2942 ext: 17	Melissa.petersen@bah.state.mn.us
Krishona Martinson U of M Extension Service	General Equine Questions	763-767-3842	bjork026@umn.edu

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Information Provided</b>
MN Board of Animal Health	<a href="http://www.bah.state.mn.us/">www.bah.state.mn.us/</a>	Premises ID and General Information
U of M Horse Team	<a href="http://www.extension.umn.edu/horse">www.extension.umn.edu/horse</a>	General Information and Educational Opportunities
American Horse Council	<a href="http://www.horsecouncil.org">www.horsecouncil.org</a>	Future Direction, General Information and Frequently Asked Questions
NAIS	<a href="http://www.usda.gov/nais">www.usda.gov/nais</a>	General Information and Frequently Asked Questions

<b>Name</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>E-Mail</b>
Dave Wiklund MN Board of Animal Health	Premises ID Numbers and General Livestock	651-296-2942 ext: 24	dave.wiklund@bah.state.mn.us
Mark Whitney	Swine	507-389-6714	whitn007@umn.edu
Jacqueline Jacob	Poultry	612-624-2766	jacob150@umn.edu
Eric Sonnek	Dairy Cattle	320-255-6169	sonne006@umn.edu
Ryon Walker	Beef Cattle	218-327-5958	walke375@umn.edu
Cindy Wolf	Sheep	612-625-1780	wolfx006@tc.umn.edu
Krishona Martinson	Horse/Pony	763-767-3842	bjork026@umn.edu
Brad Rugg	4-H Livestock	612-624-8443	ruggx002@umn.edu
Eileen Kuhlmann	Goat	612-625-1780	kuhlm004@umn.edu