



Animal Identification

Voluntary System Works Best

What is Animal ID?

- ▶ The National Animal Identification System (NAIS) is designed to track animal movement and location in the event of an animal disease outbreak.
- ▶ It is NOT able to prevent a disease outbreak

—NAIS is not a food safety tool—

- ▶ The Federal government and states already have coordinated policies and procedures in place to respond to a food emergency.



Privacy Concerns About Mandatory Animal ID

- ▶ USDA cannot guarantee that the animal ID database information would be protected from release to the public under a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.
- ▶ The release of producers' information would expose them to additional liability and risk, not to mention the risk of public dissemination of business-confidential information.
- ▶ The Federal government does not have a strong track record of maintaining information confidentiality.

Voluntary vs. Mandatory

USDA has explained that while a mandatory system would be subject to FOIA requests, information in a voluntary system is protected from release.

USDA also has concerns about the release of business data, and has stated that Congress would need to pass legislation to protect sensitive information from release.

Economic Concerns About Mandatory Animal ID

- ▶ Any animal ID system must move at the speed of commerce; the working, processing, and marketing of cattle can't slow down to be scanned and entered into the system. It is unlikely the Federal government can manage the system at this pace.
- ▶ Mandatory ID is expected to cost roughly \$228 million per year.
- ▶ Mandatory Radio Frequency Identification Devices (RFIDs) used to track cattle would cost producers roughly \$3-5 per head. For small and mid-sized family ranches, the additional cost of these tags would be prohibitive.



Why Voluntary ID?

- ▶ Many of our members already participate voluntarily in numerous animal identification programs as one of many tools to improve their herds, monitor disease, and better market their cattle.
- ▶ NCBA has encouraged our members to participate in animal identification systems.
- ▶ Voluntary animal identification are currently being utilized to provide valuable benefits for cattle producers, including genetics, breeding, and source verification.
- ▶ What's more, these validated, private-sector systems allow have the capability to enable disease surveillance when necessary.
- ▶ The private sector plays a tremendous role in the administration of these voluntary programs, and private sector involvement and the resulting competitive market forces benefit producers while maintaining the objectives of the NAIS.