

**Report on
Cattle Identification Roundtable Discussion
Kansas City, Missouri
November 4-5, 2009**

Cattle Industry Organization Signatories to the Report:

American Angus Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
Dairy Farmers of America
Livestock Marketing Association
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
R-CALF USA
Texas Cattle Feeders Association
U.S. Cattlemen's Association

A meeting of cattle organizations representing the beef, dairy and marketing sectors was held in Kansas City, Missouri, November 4-5, 2009. The participating organizations agreed that a livestock identification plan for the cattle industry should be singularly specie specific because of the diversity in the way cattle are raised, marketed and processed. This system must be based on the following principles:

1. Additional costs to the beef and dairy industry must be minimized.
2. Any information relative to cattle identification information should be under the control of state animal health officials and be kept confidential.
3. The system must operate at the speed of commerce
4. Brucellosis/Tuberculosis surveillance and control should be the model upon which to build an interstate movement identification program.
 - a) Additionally, existing programs within our industry have proven to be historically successful in livestock identification. These programs should be recognized and utilized. [The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) February 2009 study of "Cattle Identification Practices on U. S. Beef Cow-calf Operations" reported that there is currently a high level of some form of cattle identification in cow-calf operations in the United States. The survey of 24 major beef producing states represented 79.6 percent of U.S. operations with beef cows and 87.8 percent of U.S. beef cows. The study found that two-thirds of the operations (66.1 percent) used some form of individual identification on at least some cows. Overall 79.1 percent of all beef cows surveyed were individually identified by one or more methods, with 58.6 percent of the beef cows using an official identification, such as a Brucellosis vaccination ear tag.]. Nearly half of the operations (46.7 percent) used at least one form of individual animal

identification on calves, which accounted for 64.8 percent of calves being individually identified. 61.3 percent of all cattle and calves had some form of herd identification.]

- b) The cattle industry recognizes that improvements can be made to these programs and is committed to systematically improving the coverage, speed and accuracy of these processes.
5. Any enhancements of historical identification systems must be phased-in over a proper time-frame.
 6. The first step in improving cattle identification is the individual identification of adult cattle (breeding age cattle 18 months or older, excluding those going into terminal feeding channels) by using the historically established federal and state cattle disease programs as models, such as the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis programs as they existed prior to any NAIS modifications. The goal is to accomplish this voluntarily for all adult cattle changing ownership by 2015. (As we accomplish the adult cattle goal as an industry, we commit to evaluating the phased-in addition of other ages of cattle based on an industry evaluation of the cost/ benefits, feasibility and value to continually improving U.S. cattle herd disease surveillance, control and eradication.)
 7. Producers must be protected from liability for acts of others after cattle have left their control.
 8. The purpose should be solely cattle disease surveillance, control and eradication. The only data required to be collected should be that necessary to accomplish this goal.
 9. Maintain the historical state flexibility allowing State Animal Health Officials discretion in assigning an identifier for the person responsible for livestock.
 10. The 48-hour Foot and Mouth Disease traceback model is currently unachievable. The goal of this program should be to enable the cattle industry, state and federal animal health officials to respond rapidly and effectively to animal health emergencies.
 11. Renewed emphasis on preventing the introduction of foreign animal diseases of concern.
 12. We support the flexibility of using currently established and evolving methods of official identification.