United States Department of Agriculture

National Animal Identification System (NAIS)

A User Guide

And Additional Information Resources

Draft Version
November 2006

A State - Federal - Industry Partnership
The NAIS is a Voluntary Program

The November 2006 User Guide is the most current plan for NAIS and replaces all previously published program documents, including the 2005 Draft Strategic Plan and Draft Program Standards and the 2006 Implementation Strategies.

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PREFACE

The purpose of this comprehensive document is to provide the public with basic information about the National Animal Identification System (NAIS)—a voluntary national program that will help producers protect the health of their animals and their investment in the case of an animal disease event.

Part I of the document provides a brief overview to familiarize producers with NAIS, the need for this voluntary program, its advantages and benefits, and other helpful information concerning its cooperative development and implementation. In Parts II through IV of the document, each of NAIS' components are discussed in greater detail and operational-level information—meaning "*how to*" information—and resources are provided.

Again, NAIS is a voluntary program at the Federal level[1]. This document provides guidance to producers[2] and owners of animals included in the NAIS, as well as other sectors involved in the animal agricultural industry, on how to participate in the NAIS if they so choose, and how participation would benefit them.

At the end of this comprehensive document, we have also included additional documents for reference and a glossary of terms that producers may encounter in reading this and other documents concerning NAIS.

The November 2006 User Guide is the most current plan for NAIS and replaces all previously published program documents, including the 2005 Draft Strategic Plan and Draft Program Standards and the 2004 Implementation Strategies. These documents provided the opportunity for the public to comment and offer feedback on the NAIS. USDA worked through many issues with industry and the States and Tribes. The User Guide represents the most up-to-date information resource on NAIS today. NAIS will continue to evolve as details are addressed through ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders.

[1] NAIS is voluntary at the Federal level. U.S. animal health is protected by existing Federal and State regulations for disease surveillance, control, eradication, and response. While NAIS is a national system, it does not alter any regulations in the *Code of Federal Regulations* or any regulations that exist at the State level. Rather, NAIS enhances ongoing animal health protection efforts by offering national standards and increasing the level of participation beyond what is already required in existing disease programs.

[2] In this guide, the term "producer" is used to simplify the reference to all individuals engaged in the ownership, management or marketing of livestock included in NAIS. While owners and or managers of certain species may not typically be referred to as a "producer," owners of horses for example, these individuals are to be interpreted as being included in this broad use of "producer" in the context of the NAIS User Guide.

NAIS: AT A GLANCE

What is NAIS?

Simply put, NAIS is a modern, streamlined information system that helps producers and animal health officials respond quickly and effectively to animal disease events in the United States. The NAIS program—a voluntary State-Federal-Industry partnership—is beneficial because it helps us protect U.S. livestock and poultry from disease spread, maintain consumer confidence in our food supply, and retain access to domestic and foreign markets.

USDA is not requiring participation in the program. NAIS can help producers protect the health and marketability of their animals—but the choice to participate is theirs.

Animal health officials across the country agree that premises registration, the foundation of NAIS, is a necessary first step to achieving these goals. Premises information ensures that producers will be notified quickly when a disease event might impact their area or the species of animals they have. In an animal health emergency, we cannot help producers protect their animals if we do not know they are there. By voluntarily registering their premises and providing contact information, producers will ensure that they receive the information they need—when they need it most—to protect their animals and their investment. In an emergency, animal health officials will be able to quickly locate at-risk animals and take precise actions to address the situation, minimize hardships, and speed disease eradication efforts as much as possible.

The voluntary NAIS also encompasses animal identification and animal movement tracking systems. These components are currently being refined by NAIS' industry and private sector partners. While the focus today is on premises registration, animal owners should know that the other components of NAIS will be additional options for them when they're ready to make decisions about what level of participation best suits their needs.

USDA is required by law to protect individuals' private information. Regardless of the level of participation animal owners choose, the voluntary NAIS is limited in terms of the type and quantity of information maintained by the Federal Government. At the Federal level, the system will hold and maintain only minimal premises information. Beyond the premises registration system, USDA will not "own" any additional data on participants in the system. If USDA needs animal movement and location information to respond to an animal health emergency, data will be requested from the private and State databases where it is held. Federal law protects individuals' private information and confidential business information from public disclosure.

Costs of Participating in the NAIS

Premises registration is free in all States and participating Tribes. NAIS participants will have the opportunity to choose which animal identification devices and which database they wish to use. (Participants should check with their respective State for the various options.) Participants will pay the cost of the animal identification devices and any fees that may be associated with participating in a database. The cost of animal identification methods will vary among species and will also depend on the device chosen by the animal owner, as well as whether the owner or a veterinarian applies the device. The cost will also be determined by the services that may be packaged with the device.

The animal tracking databases will be provided by industry organizations and State entities. Costs associated with the databases may vary depending on the services the producer/owner elects to use. Competition among these databases will help keep costs down.

Basic Steps for Participating in NAIS

Animal owners who are interested in taking part in the voluntary NAIS may participate in premises registration only, premises registration and animal identification, or all three components when the program is fully operational. The following information provides a brief explanation of how to participate in NAIS.

Step 1: Register your premises and obtain a Premises Identification Number.

To register your premises, contact your State (e.g., State Veterinarian office) or Tribal animal health authority. Contact information for each State and Tribe is provided in the Appendix of this document. Premises registration forms are available on each State's department of agriculture Web site; participants may opt to register their premises online or by mailing or faxing the forms to their State or Tribal NAIS contact. Part II (Premises Registration), located on pages 17-27, includes detailed information regarding the premises registration process.

Step 2: Identify your animals.

After you have registered your premises, you may participate in the animal identification component of the voluntary NAIS. Animals of the same species that typically move through the production chain as a group can be identified by a group/lot identification number (GIN), rather than as individual numbers. The GIN is determined by the animal owner using the premises identification number and the date the group was assembled. For more information about assigning animals a group/lot identification number, NAIS participants should refer to page 30 of Part III (Animal Identification).

Animals that move through commerce individually can be identified with a USDA-recognized animal identification number (AIN) tag or device. NAIS participants interested in identifying their animals individually should refer to pages 37-38 for the basic steps and requirements involved in obtaining and applying AIN tags and devices to their animals. Owners should contact authorized AIN manufacturers for the AIN device managers in their area. A list of authorized AIN devices and AIN manufacturers is available through the AIN Management System Information Web page (http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/animal_id/ain_mngt_sys.shtml). Identification devices can be applied by the owners themselves or by tagging service providers; additionally, owners can use approved tagging sites to apply the devices to their animals. We recommend that livestock owners first check with their States to find out what animal identification options and requirements may already be in place at that level.

Step 3: Choose an Animal Tracking Database (ATD) for tracing certain individual animal or group/lot movements.

After NAIS participants have registered their premises and identified their animals either individually or by group/lot, they may choose an ATD. USDA recognizes that every animal movement does not need to be recorded or reported. To ensure that the system is practical and workable for NAIS participants, only those movements that pose a greater risk of disease transmission will be the focus of tracing efforts. A number of factors—the number of animals, their source(s), health status/certification, and nature and location of the event—influence disease risk. For a list of recommendations regarding reportable animal

movements, please see page 47. Participants should contact State or local animal health officials if they are uncertain about the need to report an animal movement.

Private industry groups and States will operate and maintain the ATDs; NAIS participants can choose the ATD they wish to use for reporting animal movements. USDA will operate a portal or communication system that will enable animal health officials to submit requests for information to the ATDs in the event of a disease occurrence. A list of NAIS State and private databases that have an approved cooperative agreement with USDA is available on USDA/APHIS' Animal Identification Web site at www.usda.gov/nais.

For further information on how you can take part in this important initiative, please review the November 2006 User Guide and visit the USDA/APHIS Animal Identification Web site at www.usda.gov/nais. You may also call the USDA-NAIS Staff at (301) 734-0799 to request copies of NAIS documents.

PART I: OVERVIEW OF NAIS

This part of the comprehensive document discusses:

- Introduction to NAIS
- Why NAIS?
- Voluntary Participation
- NAIS Components and How They Would Work Together
- The Benefits of Voluntary Participation
- The Concept Behind NAIS
- Estimated Costs Associated with NAIS
- Economic Benefit of NAIS
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Outstanding Issues and the Role of the Species Working Groups

INTRODUCTION TO NAIS

NAIS is a modern, streamlined information system that helps producers and animal health officials respond quickly and effectively to animal disease events in the United States.

When producers consider participating in NAIS, there are three key points to remember in understanding how this program works:

1) Participation in NAIS is ***voluntary*** at the Federal level. There is no Federal requirement for producers to participate in any aspect of the program.
2) Federal law ***protects*** individuals' private information and confidential business information from disclosure. USDA will continue using its authority to protect individuals' private information and confidential business information provided by NAIS participants.
3) NAIS is a State-Federal-industry ***partnership*** that continues to evolve to meet producer demands. NAIS works best if there is active involvement and feedback from the States, industry, and producers.

WHY NAIS?

When an animal disease event occurs, producers and animal health officials must be able to act quickly to prevent disease spread to surrounding premises, protect valuable animals against infection, and preserve producers' business and economic interests. NAIS is a valuable animal health management tool that helps accomplish these goals. It provides timely, accurate information in the case of a disease event, allowing producers and animal health officials to coordinate their efforts and respond as quickly, efficiently, and effectively as possible.

There are a number of reasons for producers to participate in NAIS. One of the most important reasons is to better protect animal health. People who own or work with animals, or depend on them for income, understand how absolutely important this is—for themselves, their neighbors, and their surrounding communities. Producers who choose to participate in NAIS become part of a national animal disease response network, which ensures that they will receive timely information and assistance to protect their animals against disease threats. This gives producers more control over the health of their animals in a disease situation and facilitates rapid response. Rapid response reduces the hardships caused by disease spread and eases the economic strain on affected communities.

Participating in NAIS also protects market access and gives producers a competitive advantage in domestic and international trade. Prices are dictated by the overall demand for U.S. products. To maintain and protect prices for domestic commodities, it is crucial for international markets to stay open. In a disease situation, local and State officials can use NAIS information to quickly define which regions of our country are, and are not, affected by an outbreak—keeping markets open for unaffected producers and preventing unnecessary movement restrictions.

Participating producers also opt to use NAIS information for marketing purposes. For example, a producer who participates in the voluntary animal identification and animal tracking components of NAIS may use the same methods of identification and information reporting to support source and/or age verification programs—a strategic advantage in a highly competitive market. The greater the level of participation in NAIS, the greater the potential for producers to expand their marketing opportunities at home and abroad.

The NAIS will also assist first responders and State and Federal officials in conducting disease investigations. When an outbreak occurs, three essential questions must be answered as quickly as possible— "Where has the infected animal been?"; "What other animals have been exposed?"; and, "What additional premises and animals are at risk of exposure?" The information included in NAIS will answer these questions, which are critical in determining the size and scope of a disease outbreak. The more quickly these answers can be found, the less the disease will spread, and the less impact the outbreak will have on producers and the economy.

It is important to understand that NAIS is ***not*** a "real-time" tracking system for animals. Government agencies will not have constant, continuous, or routine access to the locations of animals in NAIS. Additionally, NAIS is not a food safety protection system. The United States already has a comprehensive system of food safety policies, testing, and inspection requirements in place to ensure the safety of our products.

Simply put, the NAIS is an ***information system*** that helps provide producers with timely information in a disease situation, supports State and Federal disease response efforts, and enables the livestock and poultry industries to quickly respond to and minimize the health and economic effects of animal disease outbreaks.

The focus of NAIS is protecting animal health and minimizing the hardships associated with an animal disease outbreak. With this in mind, the goal is to have a system that will:

- Enable industry partners and State and Federal animal health officials to respond rapidly and effectively to animal health emergencies such as foreign animal disease outbreaks or program diseases with potentially significant animal health, public health, economic, or social consequences;
- Support ongoing animal health safeguarding and disease detection and response capabilities in order to complete current eradication programs;
- Protect U.S. exports and meet the growing international market demand for systems that provide timely animal identification capabilities, thus expanding international trade opportunities; and,
- Protect domestic markets and consumer confidence, thus increasing overall consumer demand that benefits all producers.

NAIS brings many positive benefits to animal agriculture. A modern, streamlined national animal identification system ensures that producers, industry representatives, and animal health officials are prepared to address urgent animal health concerns—as quickly and effectively as possible. Defending the health of our Nation's animals supports consumer confidence in a secure and safe food supply and protects producers' access to markets at home and abroad. Producers already take so many measures to safeguard the health of their animals, which ultimately protects their industries and contributes to a safe and wholesome food supply. By choosing to participate in NAIS, producers demonstrate their total commitment to doing everything they can to protect their animals, their investment, and their neighbors.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in NAIS is voluntary at the Federal level. Under our current authorities, USDA could make the NAIS mandatory, but we are choosing not to do so—again, participation in every component of NAIS is voluntary at the Federal level. The NAIS does not need to be mandatory to be effective; we believe the goals of the system can be achieved with a voluntary program. As producers become increasingly aware of the benefits of the NAIS and the level of voluntary participation grows, there will only be less need to make the program mandatory.

Producers who choose to participate in NAIS will find many positive benefits. They will be better informed to protect their premises and their livelihood. They will be better positioned to protect their market access and expand their marketing opportunities. And they will be better equipped to reduce the hardships caused by animal disease events in their communities.

NAIS participants will also find that the program's scope is limited in terms of the type and quantity of information held by the Federal government. Moreover, Federal law protects individuals' private information and confidential business information from disclosure.

NAIS is a State-Federal-industry partnership. The program works best if there is active involvement and feedback from the States, industry, and producers. As NAIS has evolved, we have put participant feedback to work to adjust the program and address their thoughts and concerns. We will continue working collaboratively to ensure that NAIS is easy to use and makes sense for everyone. The best way to know if the system is working is for producers to participate and provide input.

All individuals who are responsible for the care and management of livestock and/or poultry would benefit from and are encouraged to participate in the program. Specifically, these animals include cattle and bison; poultry; swine; sheep; goats; cervids (e.g., deer and elk); equines (e.g., horses, mules, donkeys, burros); and camelids (e.g., llamas and alpacas).

Household pets (e.g., cats and dogs) and animals not listed in the paragraph above are ***not*** included.

For producers who choose to participate in NAIS, the procedures they follow and level at which they participate will vary based on how they move animals to other premises and/or the extent to which their animals have contact with animals from other premises. (Further guidance on participation is provided throughout this document.)

NAIS COMPONENTS AND HOW THEY WOULD WORK TOGETHER

NAIS consists of three components: premises registration, animal identification, and animal tracing. Each of these components continues to evolve to meet producer demands.

Premises registration is available now and is a valuable tool for any producer. Animal identification is progressing; this component is available for several species and is being expanded to others. The animal tracing options for producers will be available in the future. The States and private industry are working at this time to perfect these components.

NAIS is a voluntary program at the Federal level. Individuals' private information and confidential business information is protected by Federal law.

Producers may choose to participate only in premises registration, both premises registration and animal identification, or all three components. Voluntarily registering a premises does ***not*** automatically enroll a producer in the other components of NAIS. If producers choose to participate, NAIS will offer additional options for them when they are ready to make decisions about what combination of tools best suits their needs.

Premises Registration

Premises registration, the foundation of NAIS, ensures that producers are notified quickly when a disease event might impact the area(s) or species of animals they have. This is fundamental to containing animal diseases. In a disease situation, we cannot help producers protect their animals if we do not know they are there. Contact information provided during premises registration opens the lines of communication between producers and animal health officials—which is critical for preventing the spread of disease. By choosing to register their premises, producers ensure that they will receive the information they need—when they need it most—to protect their animals and their investment.

The first step is for producers to register their premises—a location where livestock or poultry are housed or kept—and provide their contact information. A unique premises identification number, or PIN, is then assigned and contact information recorded for that location. Premises information is securely held in databases maintained by the States and by USDA (see page 25 of this document for details on premises databases and USDA's minimum data standards). The goal is to establish a complete record of all locations, or premises, in the United States that manage or hold livestock and/or poultry. Because NAIS is a voluntary program at the Federal level, this goal can only be reached if producers choose to register their premises.

Animal Identification

Based on their needs, producers may choose to participate in the second component of NAIS whenever they are ready. Animal identification is currently available for some species, but not all. The States and private industry continue working on this component. Eventually, animal identification will be an option for all animals that are moved from one location to another where the risk of exposure to disease increases (e.g., auctions, feedlots, or fairs). In addition to being useful for protecting livestock and poultry and investigating diseases, animal identification will provide producers with an efficient, cost-effective tool for managing their animals.

The animal identification component involves assigning animals or groups of animals a unique identification number. The number is assigned at the animal's birthplace (premises of origin). Initially, the number may also be assigned to a location that is not the birthplace, if that location is where the animal is first identified. This information gives animal health officials a "starting point" for epidemiologic investigations when necessary. Distribution data on animal identification numbers/devices is held in an animal identification number (AIN) device distribution database maintained by the private sector or the States. [3]

Only animals that enter commerce or commingle with animals at other premises (e.g., salesyards; State or national exhibits/shows) would be identified. However, producers may elect to use the AIN devices within their operation to support herd management identification at any time they desire.

Animal Tracing

The final NAIS component is under development by the States and private sector. Once complete, voluntary animal tracing will offer another option to improve animal management and better protect animal health. Producers will be able to choose an animal tracing database (operated and maintained by private industry groups or States) and report certain animal movements that might pose a significant risk of disease transmission. When linked with other information, animal tracing will provide timely, accurate records that show where animals have been and what other animals have come into contact with them. In addition to protecting livestock, a producer who chooses to participate in the animal identification and animal tracing components of NAIS may use the same methods of identification and information reporting to support source and/or age verification programs; this offers a strategic advantage in a highly competitive market.

Animal movement records will be securely held in animal tracking databases operated, managed, and controlled by the private sector or the States. Animal health officials will only request animal movement information from these databases when there is a risk to animal health—such as an outbreak of avian influenza, brucellosis, or tuberculosis.

How All Three Pieces Would Work Together

All three of the NAIS components would be used together to provide a streamlined system of information in a disease situation. This information would be available to help investigate the source of a disease outbreak and identify any animals and/or locations in the United States that may be at risk of spreading disease.

> ***Example:*** *A diseased animal is detected at a slaughterhouse. Authorized animal health officials enter the animal's identification number into the NAIS information search portal. The search will provide information on AIN devices distributed to a premises and animal movement records for that animal from the private/State animal tracking database, along with animal health events recorded in systems maintained by USDA/APHIS for animal health purposes. Authorized animal health officials then have a listing of locations (premises identification numbers) associated with the animal. The search will also provide the other animal identification numbers that were present on the premises during the time the animal in question was there. This helps officials identify animals that may have been exposed to the disease. Animal health officials can then*

[3] During the initial phase of the AIN devices, the distribution record of AIN devices distributed to a premises will be maintained by USDA. The transition to having AIN device distribution records to the private sector and States is explained on page 36.

begin an epidemiologic investigation and take precise actions to address the situation, minimize its impact on producers, and speed disease eradication efforts as much as possible.

While NAIS will not "prevent" the initial occurrence of a disease, it can reduce or prevent the spread of disease. Without this system of information, it can take days, weeks, and too often, months of manual searching to complete a disease investigation. Moreover, the inability to quickly address an emerging animal disease can have negative economic and domestic/international trade implications for the livestock industry and governments. Having NAIS—a streamlined, modern information system—in place will not only speed up disease response and eradication work but also ensure that these efforts are as comprehensive and accurate as possible. The faster and more precise the response, the sooner life gets back to normal for everyone.

By making the choice to participate in NAIS, producers have the power to protect their animals and their community against the impact of a disease situation. Premises registration is available for use now and is a valuable tool for any producer. Animal identification and animal tracing are additional options for producers in the future. The States, industry, and producers are working together to actively shape a system that meets everyone's needs. NAIS can help producers protect their animals and their investment—but the choice to participate is theirs.

THE BENEFITS OF A VOLUNTARY PROGRAM

Participation in NAIS is voluntary at the Federal level. There are no Federal penalties or enforcement mechanisms associated with the program. USDA believes that measures of this nature are simply unnecessary. NAIS brings a range of positive benefits to producers, and these advantages offer strong reasons for voluntary participation. Signing up for the first component of NAIS—premises registration—is a quick and easy process, and Federal law protects individuals' private and confidential business information from disclosure.

Everyone who lives off of the land understands how important it is to protect the health of the animals, plants, and humans who share it. Producers also know that we must promote both domestic and foreign markets and remain competitive in trade. They also recognize our added responsibility to be vigilant against any attempt to tamper with our food supply. NAIS helps producers achieve all of these goals. For producers and others in the animal agriculture sector, NAIS will ensure that—in the case of a disease event—everyone can benefit from rapid response.

In a market-driven economy, the ability to locate and rapidly respond to a disease situation is key to protecting access to both domestic and international markets. A single report of disease can shut down consumer demand for U.S. products. With NAIS, animal health officials will be able to use premises information to quickly define which regions of our country are, and are not, affected by an outbreak—keeping markets open for unaffected producers and preventing unnecessary movement restrictions. Prices at home are dictated by the overall demand for U.S. products. Therefore, to maintain and protect prices for domestic commodities, it is crucial for international markets to stay open.

Rapid disease response reduces the number of producers impacted by an outbreak. This, in turn, reduces the hardships associated with an outbreak—the loss of irreplaceable breeding stock and bloodlines, the animal distress and loss resulting from the disease itself and the eradication effort, as well as the labor and time involved with this work. By facilitating rapid disease response, NAIS also helps to protect the larger community from the impact of a disease situation. Rapid disease response reduces the strain on social programs, the environmental impact, and the loss of jobs and tourism in affected communities.

Market demands—such as product and source verification, etc.—are increasing in importance and are another important reason for producers to participate in NAIS. A number of other countries are already using animal identification to give their exports a competitive edge. NAIS allows American producers to share that advantage. The greater the level of participation in NAIS, the greater the potential to expand marketing opportunities—which is of merit to the entire industry.

In this regard, USDA believes participation in the main components of NAIS can occur as a result of standard business practices. For example, in order for producers to obtain official identification devices, they first need to register for a premises identification number. Accordingly, the success of the premises registration component would be achieved through the participation of producers in longstanding disease management programs and compliance with interstate movement regulations.

Every producer can find good reason to participate in NAIS. Premises registration—which is available now—is a valuable tool for producers and is independent of the other NAIS components. Signing up for premises registration in no way obligates a producer to participate in the other parts of the program. Producers can register their premises today and decide later whether to participate in the rest of the program. Whatever decision they make, NAIS will provide additional options for producers when they are ready to make decisions about what combination of tools best suits their needs.

THE CONCEPT BEHIND NAIS

Animal identification is not a new idea. Federal and State animal health programs—such as cooperative eradication programs for brucellosis and scrapie—include an animal identification component, and certain classes of livestock must be officially identified before entering interstate commerce. In addition, under current laws and rules, some animals must be identified before they can compete in shows or races.

There are already multiple identification systems in place that exist for various purposes. (For more information about how existing animal health identification systems fit into the NAIS, please see 34.) The critical difference with NAIS is the national scope and uniformity of the system across many animal species. But, the basic components of NAIS—identifying premises and animals—are not any different from the approaches Federal and State officials have taken for centuries through animal disease programs to maintain the health of livestock and poultry in the United States.

When diseases such as bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis were widespread in this country, animals were identified through disease eradication and control activities. Animals were identified with a unique number every time they were tested or vaccinated for a disease for which there was a program. During the height of these eradication programs, a large percentage of the U.S. livestock population was identified. Now, with the successful eradication of many diseases, the need for and level of vaccination and testing is low—as is the percentage of uniquely identified animals and premises in the United States. With this void of information, the ability to quickly find, control, and eradicate disease can be hindered.

Today, new challenges in the industry pose new risks. In commerce and the production chain, animals move from place to place and are in close contact before moving yet again. Contagious diseases can spread quickly and across great distances. Many States have information systems in place to locate at-risk animals and prevent the spread of outbreak. But these systems are not consistent or connected, which can slow the disease response should an infected animal cross State lines—just when time counts most.

The voluntary NAIS program will help producers and animal health officials respond more quickly. It offers a modern, streamlined information system that fills the current void in animal identification and provides a vital tool for rapid disease response.

ESTIMATED COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH NAIS

The NAIS is a voluntary, cooperative program, with all partners sharing the costs of the system. While State/Federal government and industry will bear the overall costs of developing and implementing NAIS, certain costs will fall to individual producers who choose to participate in certain components of the program.

Participation Costs

For each NAIS component, the anticipated costs for producers are briefly explained below:

- **Premises registration**
  Premises registration is free in all States and participating Tribes.
- **Animal identification**
  The cost will vary among species and the method of identification selected by the producer/owner. For example, animal identification number (AIN) devices for cattle may range from $1 for visual identification tags to $2-$3 for devices with radio frequency identification. In other species where injectable radio frequency transponders can be used, the cost will vary depending on whether the owner implants the animal him/herself or has a veterinarian perform this work. Some sheep producers are using injectable transponders for approximately $5 to $7, while some horse owners are paying $20 to have a horse implanted with injectable transponders. If the owner has the expertise to implant the transponder him/herself, the cost of the transponder would be a few dollars. Again, the service associated or "packaged" with the device determines the cost that the provider of the device(s) charges.
- **Animal tracing**
  The animal tracing databases are provided by industry organizations and the States. Because many of the animal tracking databases provide additional services to the producer/owner, cost may vary depending on what services the producer elects to use. The development and integration of animal tracking databases is being established by the private sector and the States through 2006; therefore, no specific participation cost figures are available at this time. USDA expects that competitive forces in the free market will help keep costs down.

Development/Implementation Costs

By the end of fiscal year (FY) 2006, USDA had made available $84.8 million to develop and implement NAIS. Approximately 60 percent of these Federal funds are used through cooperative agreements with the States and Tribes to carry out NAIS activities at the local level. Because premises registration is the foundation of NAIS, the priority focus has been on implementing this component. Through these cooperative agreements, States and Tribes have additional resources to conduct education and outreach efforts and to administer the program.

USDA has also devoted significant resources to the development of the information system, including the National Premises Information Repository, the Web-based Standardized Premises Registration System (available free of charge to any State wishing to use it), and the Animal Identification Number (AIN) Management System. In addition, USDA is providing the interfaces and information technology needed to implement NAIS. The Animal Trace Processing System, which supports the integration of multiple private and State animal tracking databases and AIN device distribution databases, is now under development. USDA has also funded selected field trial projects to explore innovative methods of animal identification and automated data collection technology.

ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF NAIS

The threat of a foreign animal disease outbreak in the United States is real. Unfortunately, the timing and severity of an outbreak are impossible to predict.

It is, however, certain that—when it comes to a disease event—the time it takes to contain and control or eradicate the disease is the key factor that determines the economic losses and other social harms associated with the situation. This is true both for producers and for animal health officials on the ground. In other words, time is money.

Rapid response has a number of economic benefits for producers. Any producer whose premises has been impacted by disease can attest to the serious losses and hardships that result—the loss of irreplaceable breeding stock/bloodlines, lower prices, lost business and income, animal distress and loss resulting from the disease and eradication effort, and the labor and time involved with this work. The more quickly and effectively a disease is contained, the less likely it is that the disease will spread to additional premises. This means all the difference for producers who are spared from the losses of having their premises exposed to disease. When fewer producers are affected by disease, the economic strain—decreased incomes, lost jobs, loss of animals and livelihoods—on entire communities is reduced. The faster the disease response, the faster an animal disease is isolated, the sooner life gets back to normal for everyone.

NAIS can also help maintain valuable domestic and foreign markets for producers, or even achieve new ones. Choosing to participate in NAIS helps producers preserve the marketability of their animals—whether their markets are at home or abroad. For example, if producers' animals are not linked to any affected premises or areas in the event of a disease outbreak, they could use NAIS animal identification numbers and movement records to demonstrate that their animals are disease free.

Furthermore, prices are dictated by the overall demand for U.S. products. To maintain and protect prices for domestic commodities, it is crucial for international markets to stay open. In many foreign trade situations, having the ability to quickly define which regions of our country are—and are not—affected by an outbreak translates into real savings for U.S. livestock industries and producers. For example, in February 2004, when the first U.S. case of highly pathogenic avian influenza in more than 20 years occurred, more than 30 countries placed nationwide bans on U.S. poultry meat. NAIS offers the ability to generate detailed data showing the scope of a disease outbreak very quickly. This can be a valuable tool in helping to prevent widespread market closures.

Future competition in today's market-driven economy depends on producers' ability to maintain consumer confidence and protect the health of their animals. A modern disease response system helps reassure consumers and trading partners that we are doing everything we can to contain disease spread and protect animal health.

By facilitating rapid response, NAIS also brings economic benefits to the U.S. economy as a whole. For example, while our work to eradicate exotic Newcastle disease in 2002-2003 was ultimately successful, this year-long eradication effort cost U.S. taxpayers nearly $200 million. Given the high expense associated with such efforts, reducing the time it takes to eradicate a disease by several months—or even several weeks—can save millions of dollars in costs for everyone involved. When fewer animals and herds/flocks become infected, the number of quarantined and/or depopulated animals is reduced. This saves the producer both time and money, and government agencies spend significantly less in terms of eradication (i.e., surveillance, testing, euthanasia, carcass disposal, cleaning and disinfection) and manpower costs.

Rapidly locating potentially infected animals is an essential first step for the rapid control and eradication of a disease outbreak. The length of time it takes to gain control over the situation in the initial days of the outbreak often dictates the overall success of the eradication effort and the ultimate extent of its economic impact. NAIS facilitates such activities by increasing the efficiency of the disease response.

Consider the following example:

> If a highly infectious foreign animal disease (such as foot-and-mouth disease) is introduced along the border of two States, and there is average traffic among production sites in these and other neighboring States, the disease has the potential to spread to numerous States in a matter of days.
>
> WITHOUT NAIS: On day one of the response, animal health officials are unable to identify many of the potentially infected premises. Epidemiologists spend the day interviewing herd owners, veterinarians, county agents, and others to gather names and addresses of potential producers in the area. Investigators may actually need to drive up and down rural roads to look for animals and identify premises. Depending on available resources, this process takes several days, weeks, or even months to complete. With each day that passes, the disease spreads further, and increased numbers of animals/herds are exposed. As the number of exposed animals/herds increases, more producers are directly impacted by the outbreak. The cost of eradication efforts increases by hundreds of thousands of dollars each day; producers' loss of animals and their livelihoods would grow exponentially with each passing day.
>
> WITH NAIS: On day one of the response, animal health officials use the system's databases (with the initially infected premises as a starting point) to identify all potentially affected premises and exposed animals in the surrounding area. Epidemiologists are able to generate a map of this area and, within minutes, have a clear picture of the potential scope of the outbreak. That same day, they are able to contact the owners of the premises and begin taking steps to prevent the disease from spreading further. In addition, the successful integration of the private and State animal tracking databases provides information on animals that have moved from the infected zones. Again, for a highly contagious disease, this could involve several States. Being able to locate these premises is, likewise, imperative. Using the NAIS databases, animal health officials are able to complete this important task quickly and thoroughly.

As this example illustrates, by enabling rapid response, NAIS helps protect U.S. producers from the devastating losses that are often associated with a disease outbreak. USDA plans to have a cost-benefit analysis conducted that will help us more precisely forecast the potential economic effects of the NAIS. But we already know that, to best protect our Nation's producers from the devastating consequences of a disease event, it is critical that animal health officials have the capability to carry out their jobs as efficiently and effectively as possible. NAIS will help reduce the time required to locate infected animals and notify at-risk producers, thereby reducing the opportunities for exposing other susceptible animals and the costs of additional exposure. The more quickly we can identify infected animals and isolate a disease, the fewer farms quarantined, the fewer animals depopulated, the fewer livelihoods lost, and the less spent on eradication activities. The faster we can assure consumers and trading partners that our food supply is healthy and safe, the less economic impact the disease situation has on everyone—from producers, to U.S. taxpayers, to State and Federal agencies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to make the voluntary NAIS successful, it has been designed as a State-Federal-industry partnership. The responsibility for implementing and administering NAIS is shared among numerous entities—State and Tribal governments, industry groups/private companies, and USDA. Understanding the different roles of these groups will help producers identify the appropriate sources to contact for NAIS-related services and for answers to any questions that may arise as the system is implemented.

Below is a general overview of the various sectors' responsibilities:

States/Tribes

- Maintain Premises Registration Systems;
- Identify and register premises within their geographic areas;
- Submit premises data to USDA's National Premises Information Repository;
- Approve tagging/identification sites and services (used by producers who cannot tag/identify own animals);
- Conduct extensive public outreach to keep producers informed about NAIS and encourage participation;
- Serve as primary point-of-contact for producers seeking guidance/clarification on NAIS requirements within their States or Tribes;
- Report shipment of animal identification number (AIN) devices to an authorized AIN Device Distribution Database; and,
- Conduct public outreach to keep producers informed about NAIS and encourage participation.

Industry Groups/Private Industry

*Note: This bulleted list refers to industry as a whole and **not** the responsibilities of individual producers.*

- Develop and maintain animal tracking databases (databases are also being developed by some States);
- Act as "authorized agents" to register premises for producers (only with permission from the producer);
- Develop and maintain AIN Device Distribution Databases (databases are also being developed by some States);
- Manufacture and distribute animal identification number (AIN) devices;
- Report shipment of animal identification number (AIN) devices to an authorized AIN Device Distribution Database; and,
- Conduct public outreach to keep producers informed about NAIS and encourage participation.

Federal

- Develop and maintain the National Premises Information Repository and premises number allocator and provide the Standard Premises Registration System for States and Tribes;
- Establish minimum performance standards for official identification devices;
- Approve animal identification number (AIN) devices and AIN device manufacturers;
- Maintain the Animal Identification Number (AIN) Management System to support the allocation of AINs to manufacturers and recording of device types shipped (not to include the premises identification number to which the device was distributed);
- Provide the Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS), a communications system that will allow timely interaction with the multiple private and State animal tracking databases and AIN device distribution databases to address an animal disease event; and,
- Conduct public outreach to keep all interested parties informed about NAIS and ongoing progress in implementing the system.

Archive

OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND THE ROLE OF THE SPECIES WORKING GROUPS

NAIS continues to evolve to meet producer demands, and participant input to the program is critical. As the NAIS has progressed, the needs and comments of many individuals have shaped its development. Unique needs and preferences must be considered and addressed to make the system work well for different parts of the animal industry and also for U.S. producers who raise many different species of animals in many different environments.

Some issues can only be addressed sequentially as the NAIS is developed and more fully implemented. The answers to some very important questions will depend on the choices not yet made by producers themselves. The answer to the very important question, "How much will this cost me?" depends, for example, on the choices a producer will make in selecting the type of identification device(s) he or she will use. Competitive forces in the free market most likely will be a primary driver in reducing producer costs.

The Species Working Groups represent a significant, first-tier level of those individuals who will help shape the answers to many of the remaining technical and procedural issues concerning NAIS. The groups' primary objective is to provide their species-specific knowledge and experience to address species-specific issues to further NAIS' development and implementation.

The working groups include representatives from various levels and segments of industry. Their input to NAIS' development is critical, and they contribute the species-specific, ground-level information that is necessary to create an effective system. NAIS working groups are focused on the production of cattle (beef and dairy), bison, poultry, swine, sheep, goats, deer and elk, equine, and camelids and llamas. Interested individuals may contact the working group chairperson to learn more about becoming a member.

The recommendations developed by the various Species Working Groups are provided to the NAIS Subcommittee which serves under the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases. The Subcommittee is comprised of State and industry stakeholders, with Federal staff providing program resources and administrative support.

In addition to the recommendations from the Species Working Groups, the Subcommittee also accepts recommendations from State and national organizations.

The NAIS Subcommittee reviews and consolidates recommendations it receives, and in turn, reports its findings to the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases. This structure for gathering input and shaping decisions provides an excellent opportunity for industry issues—including those unique to producers—to be thoroughly discussed and to have a consensus position shared with USDA.

Comments concerning NAIS' development are valuable to guide efforts as the NAIS moves forward. We encourage producers to make suggestions about NAIS by contacting the working group(s) for the species

of animal(s) they raise. The working group information is on the USDA/APHIS Animal Identification Web page (www.usda.gov/nais/). To provide input to a species working group, click on the "Contact a Species Working Group" link, which is on the right side of the page under the heading "I Want To..". More information is also available through the "Species Working Group" link, which is on the left side of the page under the heading "Browse by Subject."

Producers can submit comments via e-mail at animalidcomments@aphis.usda.gov. Producers should include the species name and the term 'working group' in the subject line of the e-mail. Comments can also be mailed directly to USDA. The address is NAIS Program Staff, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA, Unit 200, 4700 River Road, Riverdale, Maryland 20737.

In addition, there are animal health officials and APHIS representatives, Area Veterinarians in Charge (AVICs), in each State who can provide assistance. The AVICs work through area offices to support and carry out APHIS-Veterinary Services activities at the State level. For example, AVICs provide health certificate endorsement, supplies for disease control/eradication programs, export certifications, import inspections, and many other APHIS programs and services.

Producers are encouraged to contact the appropriate State animal health officials and AVIC if they have specific questions about NAIS. An "AVIC Contact List" and "States, Territories, and Tribes Contact List" with telephone numbers and other contact information is included in the Appendix of this document. AVIC information is also available on APHIS' Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/area_offices.htm.

It is important for producers to know:

- Comments to the Species Working Groups and to USDA concerning NAIS' development are still being accepted.
- The Species Working Groups' consensus recommendations are made available on USDA/APHIS' Animal Identification Web site at www.usda.gov/nais.

PART II: PREMISES REGISTRATION

This part of the document discusses:

- Background on Premises Registration
- Which Locations Should Be Registered
- Multiple Premises Numbers for the Same Owner
- The Premises Identification Numbering System
- Process for Collecting Premises Information
- Non-Producer Participants
- Protection of Information
- The Costs Associated with Premises Registration
- How to Register a Premises (process, contacts, etc.)

BACKGROUND ON PREMISES REGISTRATION

Premises registration, the foundation of NAIS, is fundamental to containing animal diseases. Knowing where animals are located and how to reach owners is the key to rapid, accurate, and cost-effective disease response. By choosing to register their premises, producers become part of a national animal disease response network. They join industry, State and Federal partners, and other producers in controlling and preventing the spread of animal disease.

Opening the lines of communication between producers and animal health officials is critical. By voluntarily registering their premises, producers ensure that they will be notified quickly by animal health officials when a disease event might put their animals at risk. They will then have the information they need—when they need it most—to take action and protect the health of their animals. In addition, premises information can be used to define quickly which regions of our country could and are not, affected by an outbreak—keeping markets open for unaffected producers and preventing unnecessary movement restrictions.

Premises registration also helps safeguard producers against a slow disease response. When animal health officials know where at-risk premises and animals are, and have contact information for the owners, they can respond quickly and strategically to prevent disease spread. The more quickly and effectively a disease is isolated, the less likely it is to spread to additional premises—which means fewer producers are impacted.

Animal owners can participate by registering their premises—a location where livestock or poultry are raised, held, or boarded—with their State, Tribal, or Territorial animal health authority. During the registration process, owners provide basic contact information for their premises and obtain a unique Premises Identification Number for that location.

There are several key points about premises registration:

1.) Premises registration is free.
2.) The registration process is quick and simple—producers simply fill out a short form with their contact information.
3.) Individuals' private information and confidential business information is protected by Federal law from disclosure.

4.) Registering a premises does not obligate a producer to participate in the other two components of NAIS.

WHICH LOCATIONS SHOULD BE REGISTERED

For the purposes of NAIS, a "premises" is defined as "a unique and describable geographic location where activity affecting the health and/or traceability of animals may occur." Such locations include farms, ranches, other production units, markets, abattoirs (slaughter facilities), rendering facilities, ports of entry, veterinary clinics/laboratories, exhibitions, and any other location where livestock are raised, held, or boarded.

The definition and examples listed here are general guidelines for premises. Livestock management practices vary depending on a variety of factors. We realize that, as a result, there is no "one size fits all" definition of a premises, and that some operations are difficult to categorize. Producers should consult State and local animal health authorities in their area to determine how their premises fit into NAIS. Officials at the local level will be better able to address variations in production systems and methods, such as how to distinguish between multiple production units within a premises, or how to identify open range and public grazing lands (see "Multiple Premises Numbers for the Same Owner" for further detail).

MULTIPLE PREMISES NUMBERS FOR THE SAME OWNER

Livestock farming and ranching operations differ across the country in terms of geographic size, degree of animal movement, proximity to other operations, the number of livestock within the operations and within the area, and the interaction between operations. Therefore, coming up with a "one size fits all" definition of a livestock premises is not possible. In general, a premises is a location where livestock are raised, held, or boarded. Knowledge of where these locations are during an animal health event is key to the timely containment of the disease.

As livestock owners register their premises, they should decide if their operation needs more than one premises identification number (PIN). Some farms have only one location where livestock are held or raised, and a single PIN is needed. Other operations have several locations where livestock can be found. In this case, consultation between the owner and the State/Tribe animal health official may be needed to decide how many of the locations should be assigned a PIN. This decision should be based on the following epidemiological considerations:

1. *Permanence.* Locations that have permanent livestock facilities such as pens, corrals, stables, sale rings, or buildings have a greater need for individual premises identification than locations where livestock are held on a temporary basis such as rented corn stubble fields, wheat pastures, etc.
2. *Area livestock density.* In areas where livestock are densely populated, it is important to identify a sufficient number of premises in order to establish the true epidemiologic picture of the area.
3. *Animal movement between locations.* If there is routine movement of livestock between multiple locations and the movement does not pose a risk to other operations through animal contact, there may be no epidemiologic advantage to giving each location a separate PIN. On the other hand, locations that are handled separately with no animal movement between them could qualify for separate PINs. Again, owners should feel free to consult with their State/Tribal animal health official in cases like this.
4. *Geographic separation.* The risk of exposure of other operations increases when the distance animals are moved from one location to the other increases.
5. *Proximity to other livestock operations.* If routine animal movements involve contact with other livestock along the movement route, or if the location has close contact with a neighboring operation, identification of that premises would be of particular importance to epidemiologists.

In disease outbreak situations, a location or herd identifier is assigned if the location does not already have one. In such cases, the determination of having one or more premises assigned includes the following factors:

- *Herd disease status.* If the location has animals that are under quarantine, or are known to have tested positive for a disease of concern by Federal or State animal health officials, a separate identifier may be necessary.
- *Area disease status.* In the event of a disease outbreak, it may be necessary to identify each and every premises (regardless of size or permanence) within an affected zone.

Fortunately for producers, they do not have to make these determinations by themselves. State/Tribe and Federal animal health officials are available to help producers register premises in accordance with State/Tribal guidance for establishing animal disease response programs. These animal health officials have access to trained veterinary epidemiologists to assist in making these decisions.

NAIS is a voluntary program at the Federal level. Registering at least one premises in a multiple location operation is certainly preferable to registering none. As outreach and education efforts begin to explain

the need for more detail, additional premises can be added to an operation profile when the information is updated. It is important for animal health officials and producers to have flexibility in determining what will work best for each individual livestock operation.

Voluntarily registering an operation with multiple locations and obtaining a PIN for each location does ***not*** mean that producers should report the routine movement of animals in and out of those locations as long as the movements are within the same livestock operation. Certainly, producers could choose to report these movements.

PREMISES IDENTIFICATION NUMBERING SYSTEM

A premises identification number (PIN) is a unique, 7-digit code that includes both letters and numbers.

Example: A123R69

The owner of the premises, or a person designated by the owner of the premises, can register his/her location. A premises identification number, or PIN, is then permanently assigned to that location associating it with the mailing address. If there is no mailing address at the property, geographic coordinates—latitude and longitude—can be used instead to describe the location. (This does ***not*** provide any satellite tracking capability of either animals or people living at the premises.) Geographic coordinates can be determined by using driving directions from a point of reference with existing mapping program software. Producers do not need to collect geographic coordinates.

Assigning premises numbers avoids having multiple numbers assigned to the same operation, regardless of species. It is important to remember that the premises identification number (PIN) is assigned permanently to a geophysical location. If an owner or entity sells his/her farm, the next operators of the premises use the original premises identification number that had been assigned to that location. If the seller buys a new location to build a new operation that never had livestock, he/she would register that location and obtain a new premises identification number (PIN).

States and Tribes are responsible for collecting premises information from producers and registering locations in their geographic areas. This information is entered into the Premises Registration System (a database) used by the State or Tribe and then passed electronically to USDA's Premises Identification Number Allocator. Access to the system is safeguarded by using login procedures and requiring eAuthentication. The PIN allocator validates the address/location of each premises and ensures that the address/location has no other premises number already on record. The allocator issues a nationally unique premises identification number (PIN) for the address/location and returns that information to the Premises Registration System. The State/Tribe then informs the premises owner of the official premises identification number (PIN) for his/her location. Some States currently utilize an Internet option for registering one's premises, and in such cases, the premises identification number (PIN) is provided while online.

PROCESS FOR COLLECTING PREMISES INFORMATION

Each State or Tribe adheres to the national data standards and guidelines for premises registration established by USDA. The way premises information is collected and entered is at the discretion of the State or Tribe, and each may have its own additional information requirements for premises registration.

To meet USDA's data standards for premises registration, States/Tribes collect and maintain at a minimum the following pieces of information:

- premises identification number (PIN);
- name of entity;
- owner or appropriate contact person;
- street address, city, state, and zip or postal code (or latitude/longitude coordinates) of the premises;
- contact phone number;
- operation type;
- date activated, date retired, and the reason retired (to determine whether animals still exist at the location); and,
- alternative phone numbers.

To ensure animal health officials at the national level have the necessary contact information in case of a disease concern, States/Tribes forward a subset of information to USDA's National Premises Information Repository. National animal health officials can then request and obtain this information quickly during a disease outbreak, helping them coordinate their response with the affected States/Tribes.

Again, USDA has established only minimum standards; each State/Tribe may have its own information requirements for premises registration in addition to the standard information USDA requests.

Note: The concept of premises registration is not new. For many years, numbers for herds, flocks, and locations have been used in Federal-State animal health programs. In addition, different formats have been used by States for herd and/or location numbers. Often, a single producer may be assigned many numbers for the same operation. The establishment of PINs is needed to standardize the number and the information that pertains to the location where the animals are managed, as well as to avoid duplication of numbers for the same location.

NON-PRODUCER PARTICIPANTS

Not all individuals or groups participating in NAIS are directly associated with a premises that manages or holds livestock. The roles of these "non-producer participants" may include, among others, manufacturing and distributing official identification devices, submitting information to designated NAIS databases, or providing device/identification services. (See "How to Obtain Identification Devices" in Part III for information on official identification device distributors.)

These individuals or companies obtain a non-producer participant number (NPN) instead of a premises identification number (PIN). The NPN is obtained using the same procedures for registering premises. The difference is that NPNs are assigned to individuals, organizations, or entities, rather than the address/location of a premises. If a non-producer participant moves to another location, including another State, the NPN will still remain with that entity. The reason for assigning NPNs is to establish a record of each individual/company providing data to NAIS databases. This better enables Federal and State officials to maintain proper data controls and integrity measures for NAIS information.

PROTECTION OF INFORMATION

Federal law protects individuals' private information and confidential business information from disclosure. Through both intent and design, NAIS is limited in scope in terms of the type and quantity of information maintained by the Federal Government. The system will hold and maintain only limited premises information.

USDA's National Premises Information Repository will contain the following pieces of information:

- Premises Identification Number (PIN);
- name of entity;
- owner or appropriate contact person;
- street address;
- city;
- State;
- zip or postal code;
- contact phone number;
- operation type (e.g, farm, ranch, market, packing plant, abattoir, boarding facility, rendering facility, port of entry, veterinary clinic, laboratory, exhibit, etc.);
- date activated in the system;
- date retired from the system; and,
- reason retired.

USDA and State animal health authorities need this basic information so that we can quickly locate premises at risk in the event of an animal disease emergency.

Beyond the premises registration system, USDA will not "own" any additional data on participants in the system. If and when producers apply to participate in the voluntary animal identification numbering system or the tracking database, they will be working directly with State or private service providers. If USDA needs animal movement and location information to respond to an animal health emergency, data will be requested from the private or State databases where it is held. Federal law protects individuals' private information and confidential business information from public disclosure.

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PREMISES REGISTRATION

Premises registration is free in all States/Tribes. Because premises registration is carried out by individual States/Tribes, each may choose to keep premises registration free or not in their respective areas, based on local needs. To date, all States/Tribes are registering premises at no charge. As a result, there is no cost for producers to participate in the premises registration component of NAIS. Producers should also be aware that registering a premises does not obligate the premises to participate in the other components of NAIS (i.e., voluntary animal identification and tracing).

HOW TO REGISTER A PREMISES

The owner of the premises, person designated by the premises owner, or person responsible for the animals at the premises can register premises by filling out the appropriate premises registration form for his or her State/Tribe and sending it to the State/Tribe's animal health authority (e.g., State veterinarian). Many States offer producers the option of registering their premises online at the State agriculture department Web site. Since up-to-date information is vital in responding to an animal health event, the person registering the premises is encouraged to keep the requested information current.

Premises registration forms are available on each State's department of agriculture Web site. Forms can be downloaded from the Web sites and submitted to State animal health authorities via land mail or e-mail. Producers may also contact their State or Tribal NAIS contact by mail or phone to request the appropriate forms (contact information is included in the Appendix under "States, Territories, and Tribes Contact List").

Most States provide step-by-step instructions for the premises registration process on their Web sites. State animal health authorities are also available to answer any questions producers may have about premises registration and/or the registration process.

Tribal members should contact their Tribe's designated liaison for more information and to obtain premises registration forms.

States and Tribes also have the option of allowing industry organizations or groups or other interested third parties to assist with collecting and entering premises data. These groups act as "authorized agents" and, with the permission of the premises owner, are authorized to submit data to the State or Tribe's premises registration system on that person's behalf. Several States are using authorized agents to help promote NAIS and offer producers another convenient option for registering their premises. If producers are interested in working with an authorized agent, they should check with their State animal health authority to identify any opportunities in their area and obtain contact information.

As mentioned previously, a complete listing of each State/Tribe's contact information for premises registration is provided in the Appendix of this document. This information can also be accessed on USDA/APHIS' Animal Identification Web site (www.usda.gov/nais/) by selecting the "Contact Us" drop-down menu at the top of the page and choosing "Directories."

To view a sample premises registration form, please see page 63 in the Appendix of this document.

PART III: ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

This part of the document is separated into two sections. The first section discusses:

- An Overview of Voluntary Animal Identification
- Individual Animal Identification
- Group/Lot Identification
- Animals Not Needing Identification Numbers

AN OVERVIEW OF VOLUNTARY ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION [4]

Depending on their situation, producers may choose to participate in animal identification, the second component of voluntary NAIS. Animal identification is now available for use with several species, including cattle/bison, poultry, swine, sheep, goats, cervids (deer and elk), equines (horses, mules, donkeys, burros), and camelids (llamas and alpacas). The States and private industry continue working on animal identification so that it will eventually be an option for all species.

Animal identification, whether individual or group/lot, provides producers and owners with a uniform numbering system for identifying their animals. It also links their livestock or poultry to a specific premises – a valuable tool for producers and owners whose animals go into commercial production or move frequently.

The need for, and method of animal identification will vary depending on where and how animals are moved or "commingled." Some animals may be identified individually; some may be identified as a group; and some animals would not be required to be officially identified at all. Each of these scenarios is discussed in more detail below.

Additionally, the method of identification or type of identification device varies among species. For example, cattle are identified with a visual ear tag while horses, llamas, alpacas, and other species may be identified with an injectable transponder. USDA has not designated any specific identification technologies beyond the minimum requirements for official identification that have been identified in the *Code of Federal Regulations*. What works for one species may not work for another. This is a decision best left to the producers themselves. NAIS works best if there is active involvement and ongoing feedback from the States, industry, and producers. USDA will continue to work with producers and animal owners to ensure that the system is easy to use and makes sense.

Under the voluntary NAIS, USDA recommends that animals moved from their current premises to other commercial production locations or premises like auctions/markets, feedlots, etc., be officially identified. In situations where commingling of animals from multiple premises at a location takes place, it is important because it directly influences the potential impact of disease exposure and spread, thus determining whether and when an animal needs to be identified. In general, the term "commingle" refers to events where animals are mixed or brought together with animals from other farms, ranches, or other production systems.

[4] Producers should check with their State animal health authority for existing animal identification requirements that are currently in place at the State level and are not affected by NAIS.

INDIVIDUAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

Individual Animal Numbering Systems
The USDA has recognized official numbering systems for many years that continue to be official. In other words, because NAIS is implemented for voluntary participation, no previously recognized official numbering system will be discontinued.

Official numbers for individual animal identification include:

- National Uniform Eartagging System (e.g., the traditional calfhood vaccinations device with nine characters—the two-character State abbreviation, three alpha characters, and four digits)
- Premises Identification Number with a unique herd management number (commonly used in the National Scrapie Eradication Program)
- Animal Identification Number (AIN)

The AIN, through an interim rule published in November 2004, was established as an official number that could be used for all disease programs as well as by industry for breed registry, performance recording programs, etc.

Animal Identification Number (AIN)
USDA recommends individual identification with an Animal Identification Number (AIN) of those animals that move through the production chain as individuals and when there is an event that "triggers" the need for animal identification.

An animal identification number (AIN) is unique, 15-digit number where the first three numbers are the country code and the following 12 digits are the animal's unique identifying number. The first three numbers of an animal identification number (AIN) issued in the United States will always be 840. The AIN is imprinted on identification devices with a space between every 3rd digit to improve readability (the numbers are not stored in databases with the space).

Example: 840 003 123 456 789

Other countries, through international standards, are assigned three-digit codes. For example, Canada's identification numbers have 124 as the first three digits (Canada's country code) followed by 12 additional digits. These numbering systems allow the national number to be unique worldwide.

The person responsible for the care of the animal chooses when to place the identification on the animal (when the AIN device is attached or adhered to the animal). Some producers may want to attach identification devices shortly after birth; others may choose to attach a device later. However, the animal should have identification attached before the animal leaves its current premises when the movement is defined as a "reportable movement." Additional information on "reportable movements," or what types of movement should be reported, are discussed later in this document.

Producers who purchase animals and bring them into their operation will maintain the official identification already on the animal — no additional identification or change of identification of those animals should occur. Likewise, imported animals will have a national number from the country in which the animal was born, and those animals will keep their original national number.

See the section on "Loss or Malfunctioning of Identification Devices" for instructions on how to re-identify animals if they lose their identification devices or if the device malfunctions.

GROUP/LOT IDENTIFICATION

Animals that typically move through the production chain as a group of animals of the same species can be identified by Group/Lot Identification Numbers (GINs), rather than individual numbers. This practice is most common in the poultry and pork industries. However, group/lot identification may be an option for other species when they move through the production chain as a group. The individual identification of such animals in the group or lot with a tag or other identification device is not necessary. An animal removed from the group, however, should be identified individually if it will be making reportable movements.

The group identification number (GIN) is a 15-character number consisting of the 7-character Premises Identification Number; the date that the group or lot of animals was assembled; and a 2-digit number to reflect the count of groups assembled at the same premises on the same day (starting with 01). The date format is mmddyy - for example 041406 for April 14, 2006.

Example: A23456710030204

In the example, this is the fourth group assembled at premise A234567 on October 3, 2002.

The person at the premises who is responsible for animals at that location assigns the group identification numbers (GINs). Since the GIN is "self-generated" by the producer (not assigned by USDA) the GIN of each group is maintained at the premises by the producer in his or her management records. The Species Working Groups will provide more recommendations on a species basis about how group/lot identification applies to each sector of their industry and in particular how group movements should be maintained and reported.

ANIMALS NOT NEEDING IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

Some animals do not need to be identified under NAIS, specifically animals that never engage in a reportable movement, due to the way they are reared. Such cases include:

- Animals that never leave the farm or are only moved directly to custom slaughter for personal consumption would not need to be identified in NAIS. In such cases, these movements have little impact on the potential spread of disease and the traceability, if necessary, is adequate. (State requirements for custom slaughter may differ from this Federal guidance.)
- Animals that do not leave their birth premises for reportable movements and that die and are buried at their birth place would not need to be identified.

In such cases, an individual may choose to participate only in the premises registration portion of NAIS. Voluntarily registering premises does not automatically enroll an individual in the other components of NAIS. USDA encourages all animal owners to register their premises, regardless of the number of animals present, because many animal diseases (such as avian influenza, foot-and-mouth disease, and vesicular stomatitis) can be spread whether an animal leaves its home premises or not. Registering a premises ensures that animal owners will receive the information they need to protect their animals and their investment in the event of a disease outbreak. Contact information provided during premises registration opens the lines of communication between animal owners and animal health officials, which is critical to effective and efficient disease response.

Note: Animals that die on the premises and are taken to a rendering plant need to be identified to ensure there is a means of determining the location from which they were taken. While an AIN device may be used to support this identification requirement, other means of identification are adequate and producers should discuss this with the representative of the rendering plant.

PART III (CONTINUED): ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

The second section of Part III discusses:

- Options for Identification Devices
- Existing Animal Health Identification Systems
- Cost Considerations for Identification Devices
- USDA's Role in Authorizing Manufacturers and AIN Device Distribution Databases
- How to Obtain Identification Devices
- Applying Identification Devices
- Intentional Removal of Identification Devices
- Loss or Malfunctioning of Identification Devices

OPTIONS FOR IDENTIFICATION DEVICES

At the Federal level, participation in NAIS is voluntary. However, existing regulations in the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) for certain diseases such as brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis and the interstate commerce of certain classes and ages of animals define requirements for animal identification, and in some cases, define the devices that can be used. These include official ear tags, tattoos, and radio frequency identification devices (RFID). Registered brands administered through recognized brand authorities are recognized as official identification within the States that have brand regulations, but are not considered official individual animal identification for interstate certificates of veterinary inspection.

Brands were originally established however, to support "proof of ownership," and they have frequently played an important role in tracing animals for disease purposes. Brands and the brand infrastructure will continue to be a vital part of animal identification. A Brand State Working Group was recently established to ensure that NAIS capitalizes on the merits of branding and the brand infrastructure as the program moves forward.

NAIS does not alter any regulations in the CFR or at the State level. However, AIN tags used in NAIS are official identification devices and may be used to meet the needs for official identification that is regulated through the CFR or by the States.

USDA has not designated any specific identification technologies beyond the minimum requirements for official identification that have been identified in the CFR. NAIS remains open with regard to the technology used to identify an animal and will not require any specific identification technology—such as RFID tags or injectable transponders. NAIS works best if there is active involvement and feedback from the States, industry, and producers.

The Species Working Group recommendations[5] will contain other guidelines that further explain what animals should be identified, when, and what methods are recommended. The Species Working Groups are working on an analysis of which identification devices and methods work best for their species and will help determine appropriate standards for identification devices and methods.

[5] The Species Working Groups' recommendations are made available on USDA/APHIS' Animal Identification Web site at www.usda.gov/nais.

Identification devices that use the animal identification number (AIN) in accordance with the CFR and NAIS criteria are also recognized as official for use in interstate commerce.

AIN Devices

For livestock industries that generally use visual identification, such as cattle and sheep, animal identification number (AIN) tags are the accepted industry standard when unique individual animal identification is warranted. USDA, with industry input through the species working groups, has established standards for AIN tags (readability, durability, printing characteristics, etc.). Other animals—such as horses—that are not typically identified with eartags would not need to be identified with such devices.

Supplemental Identification

Producers and owners of animals may choose to incorporate supplemental identification methods or technologies with the animal identification number (AIN) tag or device. If they do, the animal identification number (AIN) tag or device is the official identifier. For example, the cattle working group has recommended RFID eartags, which use radio frequency to convey information, as a preferred form of identification. RFID tags that meet the minimum visual characteristics, when so authorized, can be used as animal identification number (AIN) tags.

The flexibility of supplemental identification allows higher radio frequencies, biometrics (DNA, retinal imaging, etc.), and other technologies to be used with the animal identification number (AIN) tag or device. While visual identification eartags are the standard for certain species—cattle, for instance—different methods are used for other species. The Equine Species Working Group, for example, recommends a microchip implant. Other Species Working Groups continue to analyze the types of identification devices and methods that are best for their species and industry and will provide recommendations in that regard. In cases where group/lot identification is appropriate, no identification device is needed for individual animals that are managed and move together through the production chain as a group.

EXISTING ANIMAL HEALTH IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS

In addition to USDA's animal identification number (AIN) system, there are currently several other official numbering systems and several methods of identifying individual animals. The goal, however, is to move to a single numbering system when practical and use standard identification methods that the Species Working Groups recommend as the most effective for their species. Over time, the animal identification number (AIN) will become the standard national numbering system used for unique individual animal identification for certain species and/or methods of identification.

USDA is working to incorporate identification numbers and devices already in use for animal health programs. Animals currently identified through official programs like the National Scrapie Eradication Program do not need to be re-identified for NAIS. Use of the AIN has begun in the chronic wasting disease program and the tuberculosis program. Eventually, the AIN numbering system will be made available for use with other disease programs, such as brucellosis. Brands can also be of use and are considered official in brand law States.

COST CONSIDERATIONS FOR IDENTIFICATION DEVICES

The cost of the AIN devices varies based on the type of identification device the producer chooses. Such costs are determined by the species being identified and the intended use of the device for herd management. For example, plastic eartags with a panel for writing or imprinting each animal's herd management number may cost in the neighborhood of $1 each, while some of the button-like radio frequency eartags are between $2 and $3. Devices can come with a variety of services, and thus the person selecting the device will likely consider the options offered by each organization providing the animal identification number (AIN) device.

The administration of other devices, radio frequency injectable transponders for example, may typically be implanted by a veterinarian. In such cases, the cost of these identification devices may include the service charge for implanting the transponder in the proper implant site. Currently, such cost for implanting the transponder in horses is approximately $15 to $20 per horse and is also dependent on variation in travel cost of the veterinarian to the premises. Individuals with the expertise to implant the transponders themselves would only pay for the cost of the transponder.

USDA'S ROLE IN AUTHORIZING MANUFACTURERS AND AIN DEVICE DISTRIBUTION DATABASES

Using the Web-based AIN Management System (AINMS), USDA allocates animal identification numbers (AINs) to manufacturers that are authorized by USDA to produce official identification devices or technologies. The AIN device manufacturers are only permitted to use AINs allocated to them; this ensures that the uniqueness of the animal identification numbers is maintained. All of the manufacturers have the responsibility for issuing AINs only on official devices.

AIN device manufacturers have representatives that provide AIN devices to producers and animal owners. The AIN device manufacturers report the animal identification number imprinted or embedded on each device Product Code of each device to the AINMS.

The USDA will also authorize AIN Device Distribution Databases for the NAIS. These databases, maintained by AIN device manufacturers, industry organizations, service providers, States, etc., will receive and maintain the record of distribution for AIN devices to a premises[6]. Animal health officials will only request access to the AIN device distribution records when there is an animal disease issue that warrants their use. This access will follow prescribed protocols used by the Animal Tracking Databases (see page 42).

[6] The AIN Device Distribution Databases are slated to become operational after April 2007. Until these systems are operational, the AIN Management System will receive the distribution record of AIN devices (the record that indicates what AINs were on each AIN Device that went to each premises).

HOW TO OBTAIN IDENTIFICATION DEVICES

Individuals who choose to participate in the voluntary NAIS and choose to use AIN tags/devices for their animals can obtain devices from a representative of authorized AIN device manufacturers, referred to as AIN device managers. Here are the basic steps and requirements:

1. Make sure the premises where the animals are located is registered and has a premises identification number (PIN). See this document's section on premises registration for details.
2. Contact an AIN manager who provides the AIN device(s) of your preference. A list of authorized AIN identification devices, their manufacturers, and the species for which each is recommended is available through the AIN Management System Information Web page (http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/animal_id/ain_mngt_sys.shtml). Contact the device manufacturer to obtain the contact information for manager(s) in your area[7].
3. Give your premises identification number (PIN) to the animal identification number (AIN) device manager. The manager will validate the premises identification number (PIN), and the devices will be shipped or delivered to the premises.

In the future, animal identification number (AIN) devices may be available through farm supply centers that become AIN device managers. Also, some devices, such as injectable transponders, may more commonly be available through veterinarians who are trained to apply the device.

IMPORTANT: Producers should obtain devices only from representatives of authorized AIN device manufacturers. This will ensure that they are getting USDA approved and official identification devices. In addition, the representatives of the AIN device manufacturer can provide information to the producers on the proper use of official animal identification devices.

Official AIN tags (eartags) contain the animal identification number (AIN), the U.S. Shield, and the words, "Unlawful To Remove." Additionally, the approved tag manufacturer has its trademark or logo imprinted or engraved on the tag. The Animal Identification Number is only allowed to be imprinted on official identification devices.

The U.S. Shield

[7] Some States require additional identification. Producers should check with their State animal health authority for such existing requirements. These requirements are not affected by NAIS.

APPLYING IDENTIFICATION DEVICES TO ANIMALS

For individuals who choose to participate in the voluntary NAIS, the person responsible for the care of the animal chooses when to place the identification on the animal. However, the animal should have identification attached according to the instructions provided by the manufacturer of the device before leaving its current premises when the movement is reportable (see the section on animal movement). Animals are identified only once, not every time the animal is moved. The animal identification number (AIN) device is to be maintained on the animal, and the AIN on the device is associated with the animal for the animal's entire life.

While many producers will tag or identify their animals, options are available for producers that do not have facilities to tag their own animals. For example, if the animals cannot be tagged at their current premises, producers might elect to have their animals tagged at an auction market that provides tagging services when they are ready to market their animals. In such cases, when the animals are unloaded, they will be tagged before they are commingled with animals from other premises. In addition, in some areas, tagging services are also available. Producers can hire an individual to come to their premises with portable gates and chutes and tag the animals there. Some veterinarians may also offer tagging services for their clients when providing herd health services. With input from States and industry, USDA is currently developing the approval process for tagging sites and service providers and will make this information available at a later date.

INTENTIONAL REMOVAL OF IDENTIFICATION DEVICES

USDA has no plans to make participation in any component of NAIS mandatory. However, as mentioned previously, there are existing regulations for certain diseases such as brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis in the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) that require identification for interstate movement for some animals and, in some cases, define the devices that can be used. Under § 71.22, intentional removal of or tampering with official identification devices is prohibited. Specifically, it is unlawful to remove an official identification device or cause the removal of one unless the animal is terminated, except in cases when a device has become illegible or the device malfunctions.

LOSS OR MALFUNCTIONING OF IDENTIFICATION DEVICES

USDA recognizes that identification devices might become separated from the animal or others might malfunction (radio frequency transponders). For example, ear tags can be pulled off an animal due to various environmental factors where cattle are managed. Animals that lose their original identification devices or animals on which the devices malfunction should be identified with new devices. It is recommended that such animals be re-identified in as timely a manner as possible. The owner should maintain a record of the animal that was re-identified and, if possible, cross-reference to the previous official number of the animal that was re-identified. The Animal Tracking Databases will provide options for reporting the new number along with the animal's previous number. If the owner or person responsible for the animal does not know that animal's original number, in particular with purchased animals, he/she should keep records of the fact that the animal was re-identified. At a minimum, the owner or person responsible for the animal should maintain a record of all animals that were re-identified and any information about these animals.

Note: Some breed registries provide options where animals are re-identified with "replacement" devices with the same animal identification number (AIN) that was first applied to the animal. This practice helps maintain accurate records of offspring, performance, genetics, etc. Such replacement devices, when administered through breed register programs and when meeting established safeguards, are also a viable option.

PART IV: ANIMAL TRACING

This part of the document is separated into two sections. The first section discusses:

- An Overview of Animal Tracing
- Animal Tracking and Traceback Processing Systems
- Selecting an Animal Tracking Database
- Costs Associated with Animal Tracking Databases
- How the Systems Work When Responding to an Animal Disease

AN OVERVIEW OF ANIMAL TRACING

The final component of voluntary NAIS, animal tracing, is under development by the States and the private sector. Once this component is complete, it will offer an additional option for managing animals and protecting their health.

Producers will be able to choose an animal tracking database and report certain animal movements that might post a significant risk of disease transmission. When linked with other NAIS information, animal tracing information will provide animal health officials with timely, accurate records that show where animals have been and what other animals have come into contact with them. Animal tracing information also makes it easier for producers, States, industry, and USDA to determine the scope of an animal disease event and locate affected animals.

Private or State databases will house and maintain information regarding animal movements. Federal and State animal health officials will request access to this information only if a disease event occurs.

ANIMAL TRACKING AND TRACEBACK PROCESSING SYSTEMS

The voluntary animal tracing component of NAIS is a public/private partnership. Both industry—through private systems—and States will operate and maintain AIN device distribution databases and animal tracking databases (ATDs), which will contain the animal location and movement records needed to help safeguard animal health. On the Federal side, USDA will operate a portal system that will enable animal health officials to submit requests for information to the AIN device distribution databases and animal tracking databases (ATDs) when investigating an animal disease event. This system is known as the Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS). State and Federal animal health officials will use the System only in the following situations:

- An indication (suspect, presumptive positive, etc.) or confirmed positive test of a foreign animal disease;
- An animal disease emergency as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture and/or State Departments of Agriculture; or
- A need to conduct a traceback/traceforward to determine the origin of infection for a program disease (brucellosis, tuberculosis, etc.).

The technical requirements for the integration of private and State animal tracking databases (ATDs) with NAIS is being developed through the balance of 2006. The completion of the Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS) and its full integration with the animal tracking databases (ATDs) is planned for early 2007. Systems that meet these complete specifications will be defined as "NAIS Compliant Animal Tracking Databases" upon the signing of the agreement with the organization responsible for the information system. The full integration should be complete in early 2007.

To ensure that USDA receives timely responses from the ATDs, the systems will be required to have an "up time" of 98 percent as an information technology standard. As an additional safeguard, the ATDs will send an electronic "system on-line" message to the ATPS on a set time interval. This will enable USDA to know the percentage of systems that are available at any time. The time interval for receiving the "system on-line" message, as well as the other technical protocols, will be established during the interim development phase of the ATDs.

SELECTING AN ANIMAL TRACKING DATABASE [8]

IMPORTANT: Producers and other stakeholders may select the animal tracking database (ATD) they wish to use for reporting their animal movements. A list of organizations and States that offer NAIS-compliant ATDs will be posted on the USDA/APHIS Animal Identification Web site once cooperative agreements have been signed.

All approved animal tracking databases (ATDs) must meet certain specifications. The cooperative agreements between USDA and database operators will outline data elements, access privileges, and operating procedures, as well as stipulate how movement data will be archived and transferred to ensure uninterrupted flow of information in case the organization or company ceases business or elects to discontinue the operation of the animal tracking database (ATD).

If and when producers opt to participate in the tracking database, they will be working directly with the private company or State providing the ATD. The information held in ATDs is within the control of private entity or State. USDA will not hold and, therefore, cannot distribute this information. If USDA needs animal movement and location information to respond to an animal disease issue, we will request the data from the private and State databases only for animals involved in the disease of concern. Federal law protects individuals' private information and confidential business information from public disclosure.

Under NAIS, only minimum, standardized tracing information is necessary to participate in animal tracing:

- National premises identification number (PIN);
- Animal identification number (AIN);
- Date of the event; and
- The event itself (move-in or move-out).

Other animal-specific data (age, species, sex, etc.) that supports NAIS in traceback situations is also standardized, but are not necessary for participation.

[8] Producers should first check with their State animal health authority to see what animal tracking database (ATD) options are offered by their State.

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH ANIMAL TRACKING DATABASES

Databases will vary in regards to cost, the range of services offered, and the operational details (such as how to submit animal movement information). Some producers may want to purchase optional services that are not available from all animal tracking database (ATD) providers; others may choose a database that handles only basic information. For example, a database may cost more because it provides marketing information (i.e., carcass information, health records, expected progeny differences (EPDs), etc.). States may also elect to provide an animal tracking database (ATD).

The cost of participating with an animal tracking database (ATD) will therefore depend somewhat on the producer's choice, and it is difficult to pinpoint the costs until the databases are more fully developed. We anticipate that numerous animal tracking databases (ATDs) will become available that offer a range of prices and services. Competition among these databases will help keep costs down.

HOW THE SYSTEMS WORK WHEN RESPONDING TO AN ANIMAL DISEASE

When animal health officials receive an indication (suspect, presumptive positive, etc.) or confirmation of a positive diagnosis of disease, the process to gather the necessary information is initiated. This example provides a general explanation of how the private and State databases[9] participating in the NAIS are utilized. The basic processes are similar for all diseases, but the request for information will vary based on the type of disease. For example, the cohorts, or animals that were herdmates of the subject animal, at each location the positive animal was cared for must be located when contagious diseases (such as avian influenza, brucellosis, foot-and-mouth disease, tuberculosis, etc.) are involved. In a BSE case, the birthplace is the most important location to trace, along with other animals within the same age group as the infected animal at the initial premises.

1. The animal health official initiates the traceback process by logging onto the ATPS through secured and authorized access controls. This official enters the information on the disease case--for example, the subject animal's official identification number and, if known, the premises number of the animal's location. Based on the type of disease, the animal health official will define what date ranges are to be included in the request for information. These specifications define the "search criteria" that will allow the private and State databases to return the necessary information specific for this disease case.
2. The ATPS sends an electronic message to each private and State database's electronic messaging system with the search criteria.
3. Each private and State database automatically processes the request and returns a report to the ATPS within 5 – 20 minutes. If records matching the search criteria are found, the information will be contained in an encrypted (data protected) electronic record back to the ATPS.
4. The ATPS receives and compiles the information from each private and State database. In certain disease cases, additional requests to each ATD will be necessary. For example, the cohort of the animal at Premises 1234XYZ, 840 123 456 789 012 moved to Premises ABC6789. A second request for information for animals that came into contact with this cohort animal and all others found in the first request would be sent to each private and State database. This process may need to be repeated numerous times to obtain all the necessary information.
5. When the request for information has been completed, the AHO logs back on to the ATPS to obtain the report containing the necessary information for the traceback study.
6. Animal health officials that have animals in their State related to the disease case are informed and provided with the information on premises and animals in their areas.
7. These officials continue the contacts with producers that currently have or have had animals included in the disease investigation.

[9] Private and State databases, in the context of the NAIS User Guide, refers to the AIN Device Distribution Databases and Animal Tracking Databases participating in NAIS.

PART IV (CONTINUED): ANIMAL TRACING

The second section of Part IV discusses:

- The Goals of Tracing Animal Movements
- Reportable Animal Movements
- Additional Comment Regarding Reportable Animal Movements
- Non-Commercial Producer Guidance

THE GOALS OF TRACKING ANIMAL MOVEMENTS

Since NAIS is concerned with animal health relative to animal diseases, those movements carrying a high risk of disease transmission will be the primary focus of tracing efforts. In commerce and in the production chain, animals often move from one premises to another where they come into contact with animals that originated from other premises and move again from that point, often in different directions. This commingling and subsequent movement often presents situations where contagious diseases can spread easily and be carried across great distances.

USDA realizes that attempting to record all animal movements is not practical, and that is not the intent in NAIS. Rather, the focus of NAIS is on the type of movement and its potential impact on spreading a disease.

There are a number of factors that can influence whether an animal movement activity may pose a disease risk or impact the spread of a disease. Certainly, some events pose greater risk of disease transmission than others. The number of animals, their source(s), the health status and certification of the animals, and the location of the event, for example, all influence the degree of disease risk in a given situation. For example, taking your animal on a trail ride with a neighbor, animals accidentally wandering off a premises, or moving livestock from pasture to pasture within your operation would pose a relatively low risk or impact of spreading disease. These types of movements are not the focus of the NAIS and, therefore are not reportable animal movement events. While risk of exposure to a disease and its spread is certainly possible for any movement (including local county fairs, parades, etc.), because these events are more localized, they have less potential impact on the spread of a disease than events where animals travel greater distances. From a disease standpoint, it would be unnecessary to report animal movements in such low-risk/impact situations. [10]

[10] Producers should check with their respective State and/or local animal health authority on existing requirements for animal movement reporting that are currently in place at that level and are not affected by NAIS.

REPORTABLE ANIMAL MOVEMENTS

The NAIS Species Working Groups, in collaboration with animal health officials, are developing recommendations for the specific types of movement that pose the greatest potential to impact the spread of diseases for each species and should be reported to an animal tracking database. The following chart provides a preliminary list of animal movement examples and the importance of reporting such events to an animal tracking database. The intent of this chart is to establish guidelines for what types of movements should be reported to ensure an effective system evolves, while, at the same time, remaining practical for stakeholders to participate in.

Again, participation in NAIS—including the animal tracing component—is voluntary at the Federal level. If producers choose to participate in the animal tracing component in the future, it will be an available option when they are ready.

Animal Movement/Reporting Scenarios

Type of Movement	Relative Reporting Importance	Explanation
A private sale of an animal—for example, moving an animal from its birth premises to another premises operated by another person who frequently markets and moves other animals in and out of that premises	High	When an animal moves from its birth premises to another, the potential for disease spread warrants the reporting of the movement and provides an essential record to respond to a disease outbreak.
Selling animals through a public market or auction	High	Reporting the movement of animals that move through a market facility is important since animals come from numerous premises and the animal may also relocate to many different premises.
Participation of animals at regional or national exhibitions and/or sporting events	High	Large shows, particularly when animals come from long distances, are of merit for reporting those related movements. Animal movements to events at a State level, and more so, regional and national events are of value to report.
Participation of animals at local exhibitions and/sporting events	Low	The probability of exposure to and spread of a disease at local fairs is a real possibility. However, since the disease in such cases is more localized, the movement of animals to local fairs is not considered reportable movement. Nevertheless, the use of health papers with premises registration, along with official individual animal identification, of some species is appropriate, warranted, and commonly practiced.

Animal Movement/Reporting Scenarios		
Type of Movement	**Relative Reporting Importance**	**Explanation**
Moving an animal from its birth premises direct to custom butcher	Not applicable	If the animal is moving from its birthplace to custom slaughter for one's personal use, the animal movement does not need to be reported, since this type of movement poses minimal risk of disease exposure or spread (and the animal does not need to be identified with an AIN device). Owners of the animals that intend to resell or distribute the products need to follow State regulations regarding such practices.
Participation in a local trail ride	Low	Local trail rides are not considered a necessary reportable movement. While the exposure to disease and possibility of disease spread exist, the effect would be more local and thus have less impact.
Animals moved within the operation or premises—for example, from one pasture to another	Not Applicable	Animals that move within the same premises—for example, moving close-up bred heifers from the heifer lots to the free stall barn, or moving the cow herd from one pasture to another—do not need to be reported since these types of movements are considered within the operation's management movements. The entire operation is considered a single premises during a disease outbreak.
All movements pose some risk related to exposure to or spread of disease. The movements associated with the potential of having a "high" impact on the spread of a disease are considered "reportable movements" within the context of NAIS. However, any movement may be reported if the producer/owner so desires.		

Again, it must be noted that, if certain animal disease issues are present in a given geographic area, the reporting of animal movement becomes more critical and may vary during the period when greater monitoring of the disease is being administered by animal health officials.

The instructions on how to report animal movements will vary depending on the animal tracking database (ATD) chosen by the producer. If producers elect to participate when the ATDs become operational, they are encourage to have reportable movements reported within 24 hours or by the close of the next business day.

IMPORTANT: Producers should consult with State or local animal health officials when uncertain about the justification or need to report an intrastate animal movement.

ADDITIONAL COMMENT REGARDING REPORTABLE ANIMAL MOVEMENTS

As noted earlier in this document, the Species Working Groups' recommendations are made available on USDA/APHIS' Animal Identification Web site at www.usda.gov/nais.

Stakeholder feedback has been a valuable tool throughout the development of NAIS. Species Working Groups provide recommendations and reports to the NAIS Subcommittee—made up of industry, State, and Federal representatives. The NAIS Subcommittee (1) provides overall program recommendations, based on the Species Working Group reports; (2) reviews/acts on the reports; and (3) reports to the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases. This structure helps ensure that stakeholder feedback is heard and considered throughout the development and implementation of the program.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCER GUIDANCE

Animal diseases can affect producers with operations of all sizes. Swiftly moving, highly contagious diseases such as highly pathogenic avian influenza and exotic Newcastle disease can harm producers, regardless of the number of animals they have. Diseases can spread through a variety of sources — human contact, tainted food or water supplies, insects, airborne viruses, or migratory birds — and the number of animals, their source(s), the location of the event, and the health status and certification of animals all influence the potential for disease spread. The spread of disease can affect all types and sizes of producer operations.

APPENDIX

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TRIBES

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Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes
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Osage Nation
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Rosebud Sioux Tribe
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San Carlos Apache Tribe
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Seminole Tribe of Florida
Contact: Dr. G. Ashby Green, Veterinarian Manager
greeng@doacs.state.fl.us
Address: Florida Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services
Division of Animal Industry
407 S. Calhoun Street, Mail Stop M-7
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800
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Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley
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Boise, ID 83701
Phone: (208) 332-8540 / FAX: (208) 334-4062

Ute Tribe Agriculture Products, LLC
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Ute Mountain Tribe
Web: www.livestocktrust.com

Yomba Shoshone Tribe
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NAIS PREMISES REGISTRATION
ND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
STATE BOARD OF ANIMAL HEALTH
SFN 54250 (2-05)

For Official Use Only
Account Number: _____
Premises Number: _____

600 E. Boulevard Ave, Dept 602
Bismarck, ND 58505-0020
(701) 328-2350
1-800-242-7535
FAX (701) 328-4567
Dr. Jim Clement - jcclement@state.nd.us
Becki Bass - rbass@state.nd.us

Premises or Business/Farm/Ranch Account Information
This is the contact information for your livestock business entity. This may be different than the location where the animals are kept.

Business/Farm Name			
Business/Farm Mailing Address			
City	State	Zip Code	County
Business Telephone		Business Email	
Primary Contact: First Name	Middle Name		Last Name
Telephone Number		Fax Number or Email	
Secondary Contact: First Name	Middle Name		Last Name
Telephone Number		Fax Number or Email	

Business Type - Optional (for indemnity purposes only)	☐ Individual	☐ Limited Liability Corporation		☐ Non-profit Organization	
	☐ Partnership	☐ Limited Liability Partnership		☐ Incorporated	
Operation Type: (check all that apply)	☐ Producer Unit/Farm/Ranch	☐ Clinic	☐ Exhibition	☐ Quarantine Facility	
	☐ Market/Collection Point	☐ Port of Entry	☐ Tagging site	☐ Slaughter Plant	
	☐ Non-producer Participant	☐ Rendering	☐ Laboratory		
Species at Premises (check all that apply)	☐ Cattle	☐ Bison	☐ Sheep	☐ Goats	☐ Emu ☐ Poultry
	☐ Swine	☐ Horses	☐ Llama	☐ Deer & Elk	☐ Other_____

Premises Information (if different than account information):

Premises Name/Description: (Primary location where animals are housed. i.e. farm/ranch/headquarters, feedlot)			
Premises Address			
City	State	Zip Code	County
Legal Land Description: Township	Range		Section
Name	Telephone Number		Fax Number or Email

Comments:

Producer/Contact Signature	Date

GLOSSARY

Animal Identification Number (AIN): Ultimately, the Animal Identification Number will be the sole national numbering system for the official identification of individual animals in the United States. The format contains 15 digits: the first three are the country code (840 for the United States), and the following 12 digits are the animal's national number.

AIN Management System: The AIN Management System (AINMS) is a Web-based system maintained by USDA/APHIS to maintain a record of authorized AIN devices and the allocation of AINs to manufacturers of AIN devices.

AIN Device Distribution Database: Information systems, maintained by private entities and States, that will contain the records of what AINs are distributed to a premises. AIN device distribution databases will be integrated with the NAIS through the Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS) to provide information to Animal Health Officials when responding to animal disease issues.

AIN Device: Official, animal identification devices that have an AIN printed and/or encoded on them.

AIN Device Manager: An entity that represents an AIN device manufacturer for the distribution of AIN devices. The AIN Device Manager agrees to validate the premises number of the receiving premises or non-producer participant and report the AINs they ship or deliver to an AIN Device Distribution Database.

AIN Device Manufacturer: A company that is authorized by USDA/APHIS to receive AINs, produce AIN devices and agrees to report the distribution of AIN devices to the AINMS.

Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS): Provides the technological solution to interact with multiple Animal Tracking Databases (ATDs). The ATPS provides the information technology platform for security, electronic data transfer, and auditing processes.

Animal Tracking Database (ATD): Information systems, maintained by private entities or States, that will contain information related to the locations of a subject animal and the records of other animals that the subject animal came into contact with at each premises. ATDs will be integrated with the NAIS through the Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS) to provide information to Animal Health Officials when responding to animal disease issues.

Commingle: Refers to events where animals are mixed or brought together with animals from other farms, ranches, or other production systems.

Country Code: A 3-digit numeric code representing the name of a country in accordance with ISO 3166.

Emerging Diseases: From time to time, diseases or disease syndromes are identified by livestock producers, veterinarians, and researchers. These diseases are not on the list of known foreign animal diseases. They may be diseases that have been present in the United States but not previously considered to be economically significant, or they may be new diseases whose origin is not known. Examples of emerging diseases include Porcine Respiratory and Reproductive Syndrome (PRRS), Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), and Johne's Disease.

Epidemiologic: Of or related to the study of the causes, distribution, and control of disease, as well as the factors controlling the presence or absence of a disease or pathogen.

Group/Lot Identification Number (GIN): The number used to identify a unit of animals of the same species that is managed together throughout the pre-harvest production chain. The GIN consists of a 7-

character Premises Identification Number, a 6-digit representation of the date that the group or lot of animals was assembled and 2-digits (1-99) to reflect the count of groups assembled at the same premises on the same day (MMDDYY01).

Individual Animal Identification: A means of identification that differentiates one animal from another. Official individual-animal-identification uses APHIS-approved protocols.

Identification Methods: A means of identifying an animal, including ear tags, biometrics, brands and brand inspection records, breed registry certificates, etc.

Interstate Movement: Movement that crosses State lines, regardless of ownership, at either shipping or receiving premises.

Intrastate Movement: Movement within a State that does not meet criteria for being interstate commerce.

ISO: International Organization for Standardization.

National Premises Information Repository: The database maintained by APHIS that stores information from each premises Registration System.

Non-producer Participant: A person or entity who engages in NAIS activity in a designated role/s where that role/s is not associated with a specific premises. Typical roles include USAIN Manager, AIN Distributor, Animal Health Official, Brand Inspection Entity, Diagnostic Laboratory, etc. Non-producer participants may provide data to the national identification database.

Official Identification Device and Methods: Means of officially (approved by the APHIS Administrator) identifying an animal, or group of animals, including, but not limited to official tags, tattoos, and registered brands when accompanied by a certificate of inspection from a recognized brand inspection authority.

Officially Identified: When an official identification number is applied to an animal by means of an identification method or device approved by the APHIS Administrator for purposes related to official disease control programs or animal movements in intrastate, interstate, or international commerce.

Premises: A physical location that represents a unique and describable geographic entity where activity affecting the health and/or traceability of animals may occur. In cases involving non-contiguous properties, the producer/owner should consult with his/her State Animal Health Official or Area Veterinarian in Charge to determine whether there is a need for one or multiple premises numbers.

Premises Identification Number (PIN): A unique, 7-character identification code number assigned by a State or Federal animal health authority to a premises that is, in the judgment of the State or Federal animal health authority, a geographically distinct location from other livestock production units. The premises identification number is assigned permanently to the geophysical location.

Premises Number Allocator: The APHIS computer program that assigns PINs to a specific location through interfaces with Standardized or Compliant Premises Registration Systems.

Premises Registration Systems: The software programs or systems used by States and Tribes to register premises. Compliant premises registration systems meet NAIS data standards and communication security requirements. APHIS validates compliance or noncompliance.

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID): An identification device that utilizes radio frequency technology. The RFID device includes ear tags, bolus, implants (injections), and Tag attachments (transponders that work in concert with ear tags).

Recognized Brand Authorities: State brand inspection agencies or other brand inspection organizations authorized either by a State or the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (USDA).

Standardized Premises Registration System: The Premises Registration System that APHIS makes available to all States and Tribes.

Tagging Services: Authorized tagging service providers are individuals who would come to the producers' premises to apply the AIN tags to the animals on behalf of the owners or persons having possession, care, or control of the animals, if the producers or owners prefer to have their animals tagged by someone else—in particular, if they do not have the capability of doing so themselves.

Tagging Sites: Tagging sites are authorized premises that would receive animals that were not identified with approved tags prior to leaving their premises, if the producer could not identify his/her animals. Individuals at the tagging site would apply the AIN tags to the animals on behalf of the owners or persons having possession, care, or control of the animals when the animals are brought to the site.