

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY
COMPREHENSIVE REPORT & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) traceability framework is a coordinated approach to the mandatory identification of animals moving interstate. This approach embraces the strengths and expertise of States, Tribes, and producers and empowers them to find and use the most effective traceability approaches to identify animals moving interstate nationally. Moreover, this approach builds on the success of disease programs. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has experienced successful traceability through the identification methods used in disease eradication programs, including some programs that are concluding. Our refocused approach builds on the successful, fundamental identification requirements of those programs. These fundamentals include reestablishing the use of the basic identification methods that are successful, widely accepted by producers, and cost effective. Specifically, APHIS will establish traceability regulations for the interstate movement of farm-raised livestock and poultry. Cattle are the priority because of the void in traceability in that sector. For other species, we will maintain and build on the identification requirements of existing disease program regulations.

USDA's traceability framework will be codified through rulemaking. We will add a new section to title 9 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (9 CFR) containing the requirements for the interstate movement of livestock. These regulations will require that livestock moved interstate be officially identified and be accompanied by an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI) or other official documentation, with some exemptions. The regulation will specify the authorized methods of official identification for each species that must be accepted by all States and Tribes, thereby ensuring national uniformity. Identification and documentation requirements will be phased in for some classes of cattle to allow adequate time to ramp up compliance and enforcement efforts.

The traceability regulation will be outcome based. These outcomes will be defined by traceability performance standards that the States and Tribes must meet. As the national tracing capability improves over time, we will strengthen and tighten our performance standards, thus ensuring regular, steady progress toward full animal disease traceability. APHIS assembled a State, Tribal, and Federal Traceability Regulation Working Group to develop our rulemaking and to ensure broad-based national support for our approach. We plan to publish a proposed rule in April 2011; a final rule is planned to follow in 12 to 15 months.

To facilitate the implementation of our new animal traceability approach, APHIS intends to consult an advisory group with representatives from APHIS, States, Tribes, and industry. The advisory group could offer recommendations on various issues relating to traceability, such as our phase-in of official identification requirements for cattle and bison and what additional traceability requirements should be applied to States and Tribes that do not meet our proposed performance standards. In addition, the group may provide feedback on the effectiveness of various elements of the traceability program during the implementation process.

The approach of the new animal disease traceability framework will bring tangible results that will markedly improve our Nation's traceability, specifically of cattle. While the transition to the official identification requirement for all ages and classes of cattle will be over a period of time, more cattle will begin to be officially identified when the framework details are confirmed as producers get ready for the new requirements established through the rulemaking process. The results of the framework, unlike any previous effort and a first in the history of the United States, will achieve the official identification of nearly all cattle that move interstate. Moreover, USDA's performance-based approach will measure tracing capabilities to ensure the activities support more timely and complete response to animal disease events.

This discussion is intended to provide technical assistance at the Appropriation Committees' indication. This document is not a budget request, as it was not developed through the budget process. Future budget requests will be based on the availability of funds and Administration priorities.