
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 8 APPROVED

**SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND INTERNATIONAL
 COMMERCE**

SUBJECT MATTER: Identification and Documentation of Cattle in Commerce

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On March 11, 2013, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) rule became effective. Under the final rule, unless specifically exempted, livestock moving interstate must be officially identified and accompanied by an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection. Owner-shipper statements or brand certificates may be used in certain circumstances when shipping and receiving states agree to alternative movement documentation. Beef breed stocker/feeder cattle less than 18 months of age are exempted from the ADT rule regarding official identification unless they are destined to an exhibition, show, rodeo, or recreational event. At that time, states were encouraged to issue official National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES) tags to producers to identify livestock.

Traceability has improved since the implementation of the ADT rule. There continues to be gaps in the ability of states to trace diseased cattle back to their premises of origin. States have encountered challenging problems such as improper administration of NUES tags, errors in recording NUES tags, and lost time and errors in transcribing information from paper forms into easily searchable databases to trace cattle in some disease cases.

The cattle industry, the United States Department of Agriculture, and State Animal Health agencies rely on traceability to control and respond to disease incidents quickly, facilitate business continuity in the event of a disease outbreak, and satisfy domestic consumers and international trading partners. To be more effective and efficient in these tasks, the United States' cattle traceability program must be strengthened.

While it is expected that increased efficiency and decreased labor costs will allow the industry to purchase tags and equipment and maintain equipment after the program is in place and functioning properly, it is equally expected that the USDA will provide seed money to states and/or industry for the same. The successful implementation of a conversion to electronic identification (ID) from NUES tags will depend on the ability to negotiate a cost sharing agreement between the involved parties.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary

Services (VS) and State Departments of Agriculture, Animal Health Commissions, and Boards of Animal Health to set a mandatory date of January 1, 2021 to discontinue allowing visual only tags (including NUES tags) to be applied as official identification (ID) and a date of January 1, 2023 for all cattle and bison which are currently required to be officially identified under the rule to have electronic official ID tags which meet the standards defined by the USDA.

USDA shall be responsible for determining the specifications of the electronic official ID tags and reading equipment on or before July 1, 2019 after consultation with technology companies, industry, and other countries that have successfully implemented electronic ID programs. Official electronic ID tags must be read at the speed of commerce. Cattle and bison shall be identified prior to or when they leave their premises of birth or at the first point of commingling. Traceability to the premises of birth shall be maintained. Federal and State cost sharing shall be considered.

Federal/State Agencies, Industry, and Technology Companies shall ensure cost sharing for this project.