

COMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION

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The Committee met on October 4, 2011 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Buffalo, New York, from 8:00 am – 10:50 am. There were 25 members and 75 guests present.

The Committee remembered Dr. David Morris of Colorado, who passed earlier in 2011.

Animal Disease Traceability - remarks on the Animal Disease Traceability Proposed Rule Neil Hammerschmidt, USDA-APHIS-VS

APHIS published the proposed rule on traceability for livestock moving interstate on August 11, 2011 and the comment period has been extended an additional 30 days to December 9. The rule proposes, with some exceptions, that all livestock moved interstate must be officially identified and accompanied with an Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI) or other documentation. This is the first time ICVIs are mentioned in a federal regulation, with the intent to give authority to enforce compliance.

The proposed rule addresses several species; captive cervids, cattle and bison, equines, poultry, sheep and goats and swine. For the most part, there will be no changes for species that currently have requirements — such sheep and goats, captive cervids, equine, poultry, and swine. However, the proposed rule would provide additional requirements in the cattle sector for interstate movements to help improve traceability. Therefore, our report today reviews the proposed requirements for cattle and bison.

The regulation would, for official ID, include all ages and classes of cattle. Cattle under 18 months of age, or the feeder/stocker cattle, would be phased in. In the initial phase, official ID would be required for:

- Cattle and bison 18 months or older
- Dairy cattle (any age)
- Cattle and bison (any age) for:
 - Rodeo/recreational events
 - Shows or exhibitions

Beef cattle under 18 months (feeder/stocker cattle) would be exempt during the initial phase.

We plan to expand the official ID requirements to feeder/stocker cattle only when the initial phase of the traceability regulation has been successfully implemented. Therefore, we plan to assess the

workability of the requirements for cattle in the initial phase. When we are ready to start the assessment, we will publish a notice in the Federal Register describing the assessment procedures. The assessment will involve an advisory group with industry representation from sectors most affected by the official ID requirements. The advisory group will let us know the effectiveness of the various elements of the initial phase of identifying cattle. It will also make recommendations regarding application of the official ID requirements to feeder cattle. As part of the phase-in, we will also propose delaying the official ID requirements for feeder cattle until at least 70 percent of all cattle initially required to be officially identified are in compliance. While higher rates of compliance are ultimately expected and necessary, the 70 percent figure would represent a significant increase in the use of official ear tags on adult cattle, indicating that effective tagging practices are in place.

We will publish the results of the assessment through a second Federal Register notice seeking public comments. APHIS will consider the advisory report and all feedback from the public regarding the official ID of feeder cattle.

If we decide to implement the final phase, we will publish a third notice on the implementation of official ID for feeder cattle discussing the comments and announcing the effective date of these official ID requirements. We expect to do this 1 year after the third notice is published.

Compliance with the regulation will be critical. APHIS Veterinary Services will assemble a working group with State and Federal resources to develop guidelines for monitoring and enforcing these new requirements as well as existing ones. This plan, we believe, will ensure we have various options and defined practices that can be administered cost effectively while achieving a high level of compliance with the regulations that affect traceability. Likewise, we have made collection of ID at slaughter a priority. We plan to establish a memorandum of understanding with the Food Safety and Inspection Service to ensure we have support and understanding to oversee these processes, so we can work collaboratively. Most importantly, we want to ensure that the collection of ID at slaughter is properly achieved.

Q&A topics were responded to by John Clifford and Neil Hammerschmidt, regarding the following questions: final rule timing, back tags, dairy steer ID, state's role in ID requirements, minor species questions, replacement of official ID tag, ICVIs, state and fed cooperation, enforcement of removal of ID, etc.

Discussion and update on USDA Secretary's Advisory Committee on Animal Health (SACAH) Boyd Parr, South Carolina and Don Hoenig, Maine

Parr and Hoenig provided an update of committee structure, members, and method of communication and also reviewed major comments that have been received.

The purpose of the committee is to advise the Secretary on strategies, policies, and programs that prevent, control, or eradicate diseases of national significance, and lead the dialogue on public health concerns, conservation of natural resources, and the stability of livestock economies. In addition, to engage the public in dialogue on topics such as Livestock disease management, and traceability strategies as well as prioritizing animal health issues.

Major areas of Traceability interest:

- Role of brands
- Avoidance of an unfunded mandate scenario
- Inclusion of feeder cattle
- Security and confidentiality of information collected
- Extension of the comment period for the proposed rule
- Maintaining the speed of commerce
- Technology for both identification devices and certificates of veterinary inspection
- Tribal sovereignty
- Statement of objectives of the framework and the problems it is intended to address

Avoidance of an unfunded mandate scenario:

Issue: Information technology, data management, tags, and other performance requirements could impose costs that would burden stakeholders.

Committee Recommendation: The proposed rule should incorporate concrete provisions to ensure it will not result in an unfunded mandate. The proposed rule should provide that the regulatory requirements will be suspended if, at any point, there is insufficient funding, specifically for the costs to producers for

identification devices; costs to States for necessary personnel and technology; and the costs to other impacted individuals (such as veterinarians, sales facilities, and other market facilitators) for any mandated practices and technology.

Issue: Inclusion of feeder cattle in the proposed rule.

Committee Action: The committee voted during its 3/4/11 teleconference with 13 of 17 on the call in favor of a framework that requires phase-in inclusion of feeder cattle.

This is an ongoing committee to address the issues.

Veterinary Inspection Documentation Study

Susan Keller, North Dakota

Identification of animal evaluation study demonstrated various examples of ID, including orange metal tags, bangle tags, etc., and associated with other tags. DNA testing and confirmation exercise of animal ID.

Example of kill order and lack of ID completeness. Accredited vets have range of accuracy of animal ID entry on official forms. Brucellosis vaccination and/or state ID tags on health certificates would have helped ND with traceback- and showed examples of vets recording partial/incomplete lists of tags.

Owner affidavit is a tool, but not a preferred method of traceback. Reading brands at slaughter is very challenging. She showed an example of a CVI at an auction market where animals were sold and bought back same owner so animals avoid TB and brucellosis testing and other examples of lack of, and incomplete IDs on CVIs. Another trace indicated that animals were from a state auction market, but state import clerk noticed animals were from five states, and shipment was then rejected.

TB test chart example indicated smudged numbers, and illegible identification. Suggests electronic recording of numbers for improved compliance.

Evaluation of Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVIs) to Support Animal Disease Tracing.

Ryan Smith, USDA-APHIS-VS CEAH

Co-Authors: Katie A. Portacci, Michael Buhnerkempe, Lauren Abrahamsen, Philip Riggs, Colleen T. Webb, Agricola Odoi

The Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI) is one of the foundations of the National Animal Disease Traceability System. When filled out completely, an ICVI can enhance a State's ability to rapidly trace an animal's origin and destination location, improving animal disease traceability. We evaluated ICVI paper records for cattle issued in 2009 for the quality and content of information. To evaluate the paper ICVIs for each state a statistically significant sampling methodology was developed for each State. Sixteen data elements on the paper forms--important for accurate tracing of animals--were evaluated and classified as present, illegible, or blank based on the completeness of information provided by the accredited veterinarian on the ICVI.

Nationally, it is estimated that 195,050 paper ICVIs are completed annually. We evaluated 7,630 randomly sampled paper ICVIs. The National average for complete shipment origin address was 59.8%, which ranged from 21.2% to 100.0% by State. Shipment destination address was lower with a National average of 50.7% ranging from 10.0% to 91.7% by State. Shipment, examination and issue date were present on 43.4% of ICVIs and varied from 0.0% to 100.0% by State. Official animal identification was present on 25.1% of ICVIs and ranged from 0.0% to 85.0% by State. For all sixteen data elements evaluated the reason for incomplete information was blank (63.0%), illegible (0.7%), data element not collected (33.2%), and not useable (3.0%). Reports detailing the specifics for each State have been provided to the AVICs and are intended to help States gauge the quality of information provided by accredited veterinarians and focus efforts as States strive to meet the new traceability performance standards.

Global Animal Management, Iris Scan - "eyeD™"

Michael Coe, Global Animal Management

Introduction to eyeD™

eyeD™ is a non-invasive, intelligent equine identification system. eyeD utilizes equine iris patterns as the foundation for unique identification. Three basic components of the system include the eyeD™ Camera, eyeSync™ client software, and the eyeD processor.

The enrollment process utilizes a 640 x 480 monochrome video image to analyze the iris patterns. An algorithm is used to create an eyePrint™ to describe the patterns. The eyePrint is sent to the eyeD processor where a 15 digit alpha-numeric unique identifier to be issued. The verification process utilizes a 640 x 480 monochrome video image to analyze the iris patterns, match the code to all eyePrints stored in the eyeD processor and authenticates or rejects individual.

The iris is measurable with great precision via feature extraction & quantification for height, width, spatial relationship. It is stable for life and naturally protected and visible without intrusion and imaging can be accomplished from a distance. No two irises are alike, even clones have different iris patterns making an eyeD eyePrint more accurate than a fingerprint.

Three Simple Steps

1. A digital photo is taken of each of the horse's eyes using a special camera
2. The images are then automatically converted into a unique eyePrint; one for each eye.
3. The eyePrints are electronically stored in the eyeD processor along with other optional information and records. When verification is necessary, a photo is taken of either eye and the resulting eyePrint is then matched to those that have been stored with the eyeD processor.

For questions Contact: David Knupp, david.knupp@mygamonline.com, <http://www.eyeD.com> or <http://www.veteyeD.com>.

Committee Business

Last year's Committee resolutions were reviewed. There was no further old or new business, with no resolutions presented.