

## UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION (USAHA) - 2007

**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 39      APPROVED**

**SOURCE:**                      COMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION

**SUBJECT MATTER:**          INCORPORATING STATE CODES ON ANIMAL  
IDENTIFICATION NUMERIC DEVICES

**DATES:**                        RENO, NEVADA, OCTOBER 18 – 24, 2007

### **BACKGROUND:**

Traditional means of rapid visual identification of cattle have utilized the numeric state code on ear tag devices. Many cattle industry members and state animal health officials have identified the need for visual identification continuing into the future.

Cattle producers have requested that state codes continue to be visible on ear tag devices to assist them in rapid visual cattle identification.

Brand inspectors utilize the state code in their daily work of determining animal ownership and state of origin.

### **RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) requests that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) incorporate the standard numeric state code onto animal identification number (AIN) ear tag devices for use in cattle.

### **RESPONSE:**

#### **USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services recognizes the United States Animal Health Association's concerns and appreciates the opportunity to respond. USDA has purchased 1.5 million animal identification number (AIN) radio frequency identification (RFID) tags for use with Federal animal disease programs in high-risk, emergency need areas. These white or yellow tags do not have the State

code. It would be cost prohibitive for USDA to inventory RFID orange tags, limited for use with brucellosis vaccination, for each individual State. In addition, use of State codes on AIN tags to determine the origin of an animal could become problematic. As NAIS evolves, AIN tags will be applied on animals throughout the preharvest production chain. Since many animals will not be tagged at their birth premises, and often in another State, using the State code to accurately determine the origin of the animal will be questionable in many situations. On the other hand, all State and Federal animal health officials have 24/7 access to immediate information regarding the State in which the 840 number was assigned through the AIN Management System, which has been available since March 2006.

Although USDA cannot inventory tags for individual States, State codes could be imprinted on AIN tags when States order tags directly from an AIN device manufacturer. If this practice is considered, however, USDA requests that the States, through the National Assembly of State Departments of Agriculture or the USAHA Livestock Identification Committee, offer a consistent format: either the alpha or the numeric codes. USDA could establish guidelines for positioning the agreed-upon State code format for approved AIN tag manufacturers to establish uniformity, when such tags are ordered by animal health official.