

National Animal Identification System (NAIS)

A State-Federal-Industry Cooperative Effort

DRAFT
Strategic Plan
2005 to 2009

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**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Animal Plant Health
Inspection Service**



USDA and our stakeholders in animal agriculture must continue moving forward with the National Animal Identification System. NAIS must be implemented for our country to maintain its reputation as having the most efficient and effective animal health surveillance and response system in the world. I believe a fully functional animal tracking system will keep us competitive in international markets, helping us retain and expand our market share. This Department is wholly committed to making NAIS a reality.

*Mike Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture*

We have been working on an animal identification plan here at USDA in conjunction with a lot of interested parties over a number of years now, and our goal has remained consistent—to be able to track animals within a 48-hour period. We are prepared to roll up our sleeves and get this implemented.

The attention garnered from the BSE case last December, coupled with the increasing number of animal disease outbreaks worldwide over the last decade, has intensified the level of interest in developing NAIS. September 11, 2001, also taught us that we have to prepare for potential intentional disease introductions. NAIS is a top USDA priority.

*William “Bill” Hawks
Under Secretary for Marketing and
Regulatory Programs*

APHIS is committed to helping producers maintain healthy animals and prosperous industries, and one of the best ways to do this is to continue to build a national animal identification program that will support Federal, State, tribal, and industry efforts to respond to future disease outbreaks. The NAIS will be a great tool in containing and eliminating diseases that could affect all species that will become a part of the system.

*W. Ron DeHaven
Administrator
Animal and Plant Health
Inspection Service*

For nearly 2 years, industry and government have worked to develop a comprehensive animal identification system. We value industry's strong leadership in this effort. Much of the framework for NAIS—the data standards in particular—is the result of these partnership efforts. We will rely on these partnerships as we move forward to implement NAIS.

*John R. Clifford
Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services*

Executive Summary

Introduction

- **Background** – For years, animal health officials have used animal identification to help trace animals so diseases could be eradicated. In 2002, the National Institute of Animal Agriculture (NIAA) initiated meetings that led to the development of the U.S. Animal Identification Plan (USAIP). That work provided the foundation data standards for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). This Draft Strategic Plan represents the current thinking of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) regarding the implementation of the NAIS.
- **Organizational location** – The NAIS is administered by Veterinary Services (VS), a division of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), which is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Critical Issues

- **Driving force** – The strongest driving force for developing the NAIS is the risk of an outbreak of a foreign animal disease (FAD). There is broad support for NAIS among government, industry, and public stakeholders.
- **Overall support** – External to APHIS, stakeholders provide broad support for national animal identification.
- **Voluntary versus mandatory** – Most individuals (by a ratio of 3:1) who spoke about this in the listening sessions prefer a mandatory program or one that becomes mandatory to a purely voluntary program. A survey of members of the NIAA shows even stronger support (a ratio of 8:1) for a mandatory program or one that becomes mandatory.
- **Four key stakeholder concerns:**
 1. **Financial** – Who will pay what costs and how will the program be funded?
 2. **Confidentiality** – Who will have access to the data, and how will the data be used?
 3. **Flexibility** – Will the NAIS accept data from existing identification systems, and will producers be able to use the NAIS for other purposes?
 4. **Liability** – Will producers be exposed to unfair financial or legal liability?

Goal, Key Components, and Guiding Principles

- **Goal** – The goal of the NAIS is to be able to identify all animals and premises that have had contact with a foreign or domestic animal disease of concern within 48 hours after discovery.
- **Key components** – The NAIS consists of three key components: (1) Premises registration, (2) animal identification, and (3) animal tracking.
- **Principles** – There are five principles that guide the development of NAIS:
 1. **Uniform** – The NAIS must be based on national data standards to ensure that a uniform and compatible system

evolves throughout the United States.

2. Flexible – The NAIS must allow producers to use NAIS in coordination with production management systems, marketing incentives, etc.
3. Inclusive – APHIS is developing the NAIS for various species and must make the NAIS mandatory at a specified date to drive investment and progress.
4. Cooperative – Successful achievement of the 48-hour traceback goal will result through State, Federal, and industry partnerships.
5. Secured, reliable, and confidential information – To ensure that animal health officials have immediate, reliable, and uninterrupted access to essential information that is protected from open disclosure.

Timeline

Key milestones:

- July 2005: All States capable of premises registration.
- July 2005: Animal Identification Number system operational.
- April 2007: Premises registration and animal identification “alerts”.
- January 2008: Premises registration and animal identification required.
- January 2009: Reporting of defined animal movements required; entire program mandatory.

Stages of Development

- Much of the responsibility for delivering the program remains at the State level. Stages of development will allow States to more readily establish their local action items. Additionally, the stages provide a system for APHIS to measure performance at regular intervals to ensure uniform progress is achieved.

VS Lines of Action

- **Resources and staffing** – Hire staff for APHIS to help develop and implement NAIS; develop a cooperative budget; and use cooperative agreements to fund initial implementation and the infrastructure that States and Tribes need.
- **Regulation, policy, and guidance** – Develop strategic, implementation and operational plans; develop Uniform Methods and Rules; develop an interim rule to allow new identification and a proposed rule to make the system mandatory; develop memorandums of understanding with States and Tribes as needed; and propose legislation to resolve confidentiality issues.
- **Information systems development and implementation** – Develop information and supporting systems for premises registration and animal identification and tracking; and establish a help-desk to support users of the NAIS information systems.
- **Input, outreach, and training** – Develop a network of input through a Subcommittee of the Secretary’s Advisory Committee and associated working groups; receive and track input from stakeholder organizations; develop and implement outreach plans targeting industry, States, Tribes, USDA, and APHIS; and

- develop a Web site to help with outreach; and develop and implement systems training.
- Measurement**
- **Annual test exercises** – APHIS would sponsor test exercises to check on the progress of tracking animal movements. These would include most species, States, and Tribes each year.
 - **Milestones** – Progress would be measured by determining whether key milestones have been reached.
 - **Stages of development** – Progress of States and Tribes can be measured against prescribed stages. National progress can be measured by counting numbers of States and Tribes at each stage.



Under the proposed plan, all locations that hold, manage, or board animals will be required to have a unique Premises Identification Number by January 2008. *(Photo by USDA Agricultural Research Service photographer Scott Bauer.)*

Introduction

Background

Animal identification is not a new concept in the United States. In the 1940s, the predecessor agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) initiated an extensive program to identify cattle vaccinated for brucellosis. The official brucellosis vaccination tag and an ear tattoo has provided the United States with a highly successful animal identification program for cattle for decades. However, since brucellosis is almost eradicated in the United States, that system of tagging and identification is being phased-out rapidly.

Animal identification did not start or stop with brucellosis. Other animal health programs also include an animal identification component, and certain classes of livestock must be officially identified before entering interstate commerce. In addition, some animals must be identified before they can compete in shows or race on a track. So, there are multiple identification systems in place that exist for different purposes, but no uniform nationwide animal identification system exists for all animals of any given species. That is about to change. For the past several years, a State-Federal-industry effort has been underway to develop a nationwide animal identification system. This Draft Strategic Plan represents APHIS' current thinking regarding the implementation of the NAIS.

USAIP

The effort began to take shape in April 2002 when the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) established a task force to provide leadership in creating an animal identification plan. APHIS and over 30 livestock organizations were part of this task force. A preliminary report was given at the NIAA's ID Info/Expo in July 2002. The final report was presented at the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) annual meeting in October 2002, where the work plan was accepted through a unanimous resolution. APHIS then established the National Identification Development Team (NIDT), a joint, State, Federal, and industry group to further advance this effort.

Throughout 2003, the NIDT, consisting of approximately 100 animal and livestock industry professionals representing more than 70 associations, organizations, and government agencies, expanded upon the work plan to produce the initial draft of the U.S. Animal Identification Plan (USAIP). Although early versions of the USAIP focused on food animals only, other livestock species (such as alpacas, llamas, and horses) were incorporated into the plan.

The USAIP was well underway when one case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was confirmed in the United States on December 25, 2003. On December 30, 2003, the Secretary of Agriculture announced additional protection to guard against BSE and indicated that USDA would expedite the implementation of the

National Animal Identification System (NAIS). In making the announcement, the Secretary stated:

USDA has worked with partners at the Federal and State levels and in industry for the past year and a half on the adoption of standards for a verifiable nationwide animal identification system to help enhance the speed and accuracy of our response to disease outbreaks across many different animal species.

Beginning of NAIS

Animal identification is worthwhile to producers and animal owners for various reasons, including performance recording and marketing opportunities. However, APHIS is focusing on animal identification for one reason: to establish the animal information foundation necessary to support animal disease monitoring, surveillance, control, and eradication programs.

Individuals associated with animal industries recognize that finding potentially infected animals early in a disease outbreak is essential to containing the disease quickly. The NAIS is designed for rapid tracing of animals during an outbreak situation, limiting the scope and expense of the outbreak, and allow APHIS and its partners to minimize the impact on domestic and foreign markets. NAIS will also be critical as APHIS works to complete disease eradication programs in which the Federal government, States, and industry have invested many years and millions of dollars.

NAIS is for all animals that will benefit from having a system in place that facilitates rapid tracing in the event of a disease concern. Currently, working groups are developing plans for alpacas and llamas, bison, cattle (beef and dairy), deer and elk, horses, goats, poultry, sheep, and swine.

In implementing the NAIS, APHIS is drawing from some of the data standards first established in the USAIP. However, the USAIP should not be viewed as an exact blueprint for the NAIS. APHIS continues to seek recommendations from industry and other interested parties throughout the design and implementation of the NAIS.

APHIS has established a Subcommittee of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases that focuses on the implementation of NAIS. This Subcommittee is made up of State and industry stakeholders, with Federal staff providing administrative resources.

The NAIS Subcommittee is responsible for making regular, formal recommendations to the Secretary's Advisory Committee about how the NAIS should progress. As part of this process, the Subcommittee will accept recommendations about the NAIS from species and issue-specific working groups. The Subcommittee will also accept recommendations from national organizations, such as USAHA, NIAA,

and other industry associations.

The NAIS is continually evolving as those responsible for its implementation receive input from various sources. For example, policymakers will:

- incorporate the results of field trials funded through cooperative agreements between USDA and States/Tribes;
- review information submitted as part of an advance notice of proposed rulemaking and through USDA listening sessions; and
- work to integrate recommendations they receive from various advisory committees and working groups.

Organizational Placement

The program to support the NAIS is administered by the USDA, APHIS, VS.

The USDA is a department of the executive branch of the Federal Government responsible for providing leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, and related issues. APHIS is the agency of USDA whose mission is to protect the health and value of American agriculture and natural resources. VS is the program within APHIS that protects and improves the health, quality, and marketability of our nation's animals, animal products, and veterinary biologics by:

- Preventing, controlling, and eliminating animal diseases and
- Monitoring and promoting animal health and productivity

NAIS integrates smoothly within all three of its sponsoring organizations.



Animal identification is not a new concept. In the United States, many animals are already identified through eartags, brands, or tattoos. The NAIS will help standardize animal identification at the national level for all animals of a given species. (USDA Photo by Neil Hammerschmidt.)

Critical Issues

Driving Force The strongest driving force is the risk of adverse animal health events that require quick response. With the outbreak of exotic Newcastle disease in California in 2002 and 2003 and the Canadian cow that tested positive for BSE in 2003, the need for rapid tracebacks has become more urgent. Recent outbreaks worldwide of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), especially in the United Kingdom in 2001, show the United States is at risk, too. In addition, the September 11, 2001, attacks make clear that an intentional introduction of an animal disease is a real risk.

Overall Support In a meeting (October, 2004) to discuss Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) participants said one of the strengths of the program is the broad industry, governmental, and stakeholder support for a national animal identification program. In listening sessions held by APHIS (June-November, 2004), 59 of 60 comments indicated support for NAIS.

Voluntary Versus Mandatory In the listening sessions, 47 people commented on whether an animal identification system should be mandatory or voluntary. Only 12 of the 47 said they prefer a voluntary system. 17 people suggested that the system should be mandatory, while 18 people suggested the program begin as voluntary, but should eventually become mandatory. Therefore, a ratio of 3:1 respondents preferred a mandatory program to a purely voluntary program.

In addition, the NIAA conducted a survey of its members about national animal identification. In results that are even stronger than the listening sessions, 8:1 prefer a mandatory program. A majority preferred a voluntary program that eventually becomes mandatory on a future date. See the table below and the NIAA Web site (www.animalagriculture.org/survey/NAIS.htm) for more information:

| Do you support a voluntary or mandatory program? | |
|--|-----|
| No response | 08% |
| Voluntary | 10% |
| Voluntary during developmental stages, but with a decided future date for making the program mandatory | 54% |
| Mandatory | 25% |
| Unsure/No Opinion | 03% |

Transition from Voluntary to Mandatory

Phased-in Approach

We must ensure the participation requirements of the NAIS not only provide the results necessary to maintain the health of the national herd, but also that the program is practical for producers and all others involved in production. Therefore, full implementation of the NAIS will be a phased-in plan.

During the initial implementation period, participation is voluntary. Stakeholders have the opportunity to obtain experience with the system and provide feedback as successful and practical solutions evolve.

The first priority is to identify locations that hold and manage livestock with the nationally unique, 7-character Premises Identification Number. States and Tribes administer premises registration.

Producers that have registered their premises may obtain official identification devices with the Animal Identification Number (AIN). As producers acquire these AIN Tags, the initial record of which premises receives tags also provides NAIS with information to determine the origin of the animal, or where the animal was first tagged. The AIN provides a unique lifetime number for each animal identified as an individual. Producers with species identified as groups or lots may use their premises number to establish the official Group/Lot Identification of their animals.

Advancing animal identification data collection systems at packing plants will be a priority, so animals removed from the population can be recorded as efficiently as possible. Collecting interstate movements will be another priority, thus the USDA will implement the electronic interstate certificate of veterinary inspection and electronic movement permit systems. As more animals are identified, the systems necessary to record animal movements through other concentration points will be tested and implemented.

USDA anticipates that adequate advances in the NAIS will continue to occur, and it will enact regulations by early 2008, requiring stakeholders to identify their premises and animals. At that time, all animals leaving their current premises must be identified with the AIN or Group/Lot ID.

Collecting and recording animal movements is the greatest challenge ahead. USDA will continue to support field trials and gradual implementation of successful data collection systems to collect animal movement records. Ongoing collaboration with market operators, dealers, and service providers will be essential. The requirement for collecting and reporting defined animal movements to the national animal identification and tracking repository is

scheduled for January 2009.

A full timeline of the phased-in approach to the NAIS implementation is available, beginning on page 16. Additionally, greater detail of how the NAIS will work is in the NAIS Program Standards document. This resource document will be updated as species and issue-based working groups provide feedback on the mechanics of the plan.

Regulatory Process

The Animal Health Protection Act (AHPA) authorizes the Secretary of the USDA to carry out operations and measures to detect, control, or eradicate livestock pests or disease. It also provides ample authority to establish and implement either a mandatory or voluntary system of animal identification. Further, the AHPA enables the Secretary of the USDA to enter into agreements with States or other stakeholder organizations to implement either a mandatory or voluntary animal identification program.

USDA will follow the normal rulemaking process in changing the status of NAIS from voluntary to mandatory. The public will have the opportunity to comment on any proposed regulations. The following provides an overview of how the USDA plans to move forward with distributing information about the NAIS requirements and revising regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

Timeline:

June 2004: USDA listening sessions began, providing stakeholders the opportunity to discuss the development, structure, and implementation of NAIS and to submit public comments.

July, 2004: USDA, along with the Department of Health and Human Services, publishes a joint advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPR), which gives interested parties the opportunity to comment on additional regulatory and policy measures under consideration to strengthen protections against the spread of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Among other things, APHIS sought comments on the implementation of NAIS, specifically, when and under what circumstances the program should move from voluntary to mandatory, and which species should be covered now and over the long term. The comment period for this section of the ANPR closed on September 13, 2004

April 2005: USDA publishes a notice of availability in the Federal Register announcing the publication of a Draft Strategic Plan for NAIS and a Draft NAIS Standards Document.

Summer 2005: Taking into consideration all of the public input received through the listening sessions and comments on the ANPR and draft standards document, USDA will begin drafting a proposed rule that will establish new regulations for requiring premises to be

registered and for animals to be identified and tracked according to NAIS standards.

July 2006: USDA will publish a proposed rule establishing new requirements for premises registration and animal identification that follow NAIS standards. (The rule may define rolling effective dates, allow for delays in implementation as producers transition from scrapie ID to NAIS AINs, etc.) Premises registration and animal identification according to NAIS standards will be required by January 2008.

Fall 2007: USDA will publish the final rule establishing mandatory animal identification and premises registration requirements.

January 2008: Final rule requiring premises registration and animal identification as defined under NAIS program standards will become effective.

January 2009: The animal tracking component will become mandatory.



By January 2009, USDA anticipates that the animal tracking component of NAIS will become mandatory. USDA will continue to support field trials and gradual implementation of successful data collection systems to collect animal movement records. Technology such as these radio frequency identification panel readers may be incorporated into the system for certain species. (USDA Photo by R. Anson Eaglin.)

Stakeholder Concerns

Even with general support for the program and further support for a mandatory program, participants in the listening sessions and the SWOT meeting have some concerns about a national animal identification system. According to these two sources of information, the main concerns are:

1. **Financial** – There are two financial concerns: costs and funding. Producers are concerned about the costs of national identification generally and personally. Some suggest sharing the costs between the program and industry. Also, participants indicated that because of the benefit to the public at large, much of the funding of the animal identification program should be supported by public funds. Even with public funding, there will be costs to producers.
2. **Ability to Maintain Confidentiality** – Producers who will be providing data for the system want assurances about who will have access to the data and how the data will be used. First, they are concerned that the data collected be used only for animal health tracing and not for other purposes by government or businesses without permission (such as food safety, animal welfare, or environmental concerns). Second, they are concerned about public access to data through the Freedom of Information Act and sunshine laws. Their concern is that someone could use the data to harm them or their businesses.
3. **Flexibility** – It is important that the national system be flexible enough to accept data from existing identification systems (particularly branding systems). Also, the system needs to be flexible enough to allow producers to use it for their herd management needs.
4. **Liability** – Some participants voiced concerns that the NAIS information would be used by individuals (other than animal health authorities) for food safety issues and that traceability of food products would increase the participants' risk of liability and financial loss from food safety issues for which they are not responsible.

Goals, Key Components, and Guiding Principles

NAIS Goal

The goal of NAIS is to be able to identify all animals and premises that have had contact with a foreign or domestic animal disease of concern within 48 hours after discovery. As an information system that provides for rapid tracing of infected and exposed animals during an outbreak situation, the NAIS will help limit the scope of such outbreaks and ensure that they are contained and eradicated as quickly as possible.

Partnerships among all stakeholders are the foundation for achieving this tremendously important and extremely challenging goal.

The Key Components

The NAIS will be established gradually through the integration of these key components:

- **Premises identification:**

To track animals, we must know where they are born and where they could be moved. Therefore, identifying locations that manage or hold animals, referred to as premises, is the starting point of the NAIS. Each premises will be identified with a unique seven-character identifier, or a premises identification number.

- **Animal identification:**

To track animals as they move from premises to premises, we must also have a standard way to identify them. Animals will be identified either individually with a unique, Animal Identification Number (AIN) or, if they are managed and moved through the production chain as a group, with a Group/Lot Identification Number (Group/Lot ID).

- **Animal tracking:**

As animals move from one premises to another, a few basic pieces of information will be reported to the national animal records repository: the AIN or Group/Lot ID, the premises number of the receiving location, and the date of the event being reported. Our ability to achieve the 48-hour traceback objective will be directly affected by the percentage of animal movements we are able to record. Collecting animal movement information might be the most challenging component of the NAIS.

NAIS Guiding Principles

In achieving the 48-hour traceback goal, APHIS believes the system must follow several core guiding principles that include the following:

- **Uniform** – The NAIS will be based on national data standards to ensure that a uniform and compatible system evolves throughout the United States. The program will support all needs of official identification, including animal disease programs, intrastate, and interstate commerce.
- **Flexible** – The NAIS must allow producers to use NAIS in coordination with production management systems, marketing incentives, etc., allowing for the transition to a “one number – one animal” system for disease control programs and other industry administered programs.

While animals must be identified before moving from their current premises, producers can decide whether to identify their stock at birth or through other management practices.

The integration of animal identification technology standards (electronic identification, retinal scan, DNA, etc.) will be determined by industry to ensure the most practical options are implemented, and that new ones can easily be incorporated into the NAIS.

- **Inclusive** – The NAIS is being developed for animals that will benefit from a system that facilitates rapid tracing in the event of a disease concern. Currently, working groups are developing plans for camelids (llamas and alpacas), cattle and bison, cervids (deer and elk), equines, goats, poultry, sheep, and swine.

The NAIS is now voluntary, so producers and other stakeholders can participate in the design, development, and testing of the system to ensure practical solutions evolve. To achieve the goal of 48-hour traceback, all producers and affected industry segments must eventually participate.

While market forces may eventually create more inclusiveness, the clear stakeholder support for transitioning to a mandatory program and the urgency of achieving the goal, suggest that setting a date for that transition would benefit the program. Being clear about when the program will become mandatory will increase producer participation in the initial, voluntary phase and will help move the overall cooperative development and program implementation of the program along more quickly. Other stakeholders in the preharvest production chain will know when they must participate and can plan accordingly. Establishing a date when the program will become mandatory will also help bring more and earlier investment of private funds to the effort, particularly for the support of the integration of automated data collection systems.

In keeping with the gradual approach, the transition from voluntary to mandatory will occur in phases. An extensive communication “alert” for mandatory premises registration and animal identification is targeted for April 2007. The 9-month campaign provides a period during which everyone can acclimate to the new requirements for premises registration and animal identification beginning in January 2008. The requirements for reporting of animal movements would then be implemented January 2009.

- **Cooperative** – The NAIS is a joint effort. Successful achievement of the 48-hour traceback goal will occur through State, Federal, and industry partnerships. While animal health authorities have significant responsibilities, it is important to ensure that this effort does not unduly increase the size and scope of Federal or State governments.

Both public and private funding will be required for the NAIS to become fully operational. The Federal government is providing the standards, national databases, and basic infrastructure. States and Tribes will register premises within their areas. They will also support the administration of animal identification and tracking systems that will feed information into the national databases. Producers will identify their animals and provide necessary records to the databases. Managers of shows and events will report a record of participating animals. Market operators and processing plants will provide animal location records. Service providers and third parties will assist by providing animal identification and movement records to the NAIS on behalf of their producer clients. All groups will need to provide labor.

- **Secured, reliable, confidential information** – The NAIS will store a limited amount of essential information, just enough for animal health officials to be able to track an animal’s movements and identify any other animals it may have exposed. To ensure that animal health officials have immediate, reliable, and uninterrupted access to this information in the event of a disease concern, certain basic data must be maintained at the Federal level. Accordingly, essential information will be maintained within data repositories managed by APHIS.

Animal identification and tracking systems maintained by the States or regional alliances will be an integral part of the overall NAIS information infrastructure. The essential data from those systems will be sent to the national repositories. The State/regional systems will be able to collect and maintain more information than is required for the NAIS, but will send only the minimally required information to the national animal records repository.

At our listening sessions held throughout the country, producers have consistently identified as a prerequisite for participation in

the NAIS, the need for assurance that their information will be kept confidential.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552 et seq.) creates a presumption towards disclosure of Federal agency records, unless the records fall within one of the exemptions contained in that statute. Information withheld from a FOIA requester under exemption (b)(4) [confidential business information] and (b)(6) [privacy] may be required to be released in the event that a court finds that these exemptions do not apply. While much of the information collected by the NAIS might qualify for these exemptions, the USDA cannot assure the confidentiality of all the information at the present time. Consequently, in order to secure full participation from livestock producers, the USDA is pursuing legislation to establish a system for withholding or disclosing information obtained through the animal identification system established by the Secretary of the USDA.



The NAIS is a cooperative effort. The exact definition of "premises" will be determined by each State's or Tribe's animal health authority. Local animal health officials will be better able to address regional variations in production systems and methods, including how to identify open range and public grazing lands such as those found in the West. (*USDA photo.*)

Timeline

Introduction

The plan reflects a phased-in approach for each of the next 4 years to ensure practical implementation through producer and stakeholder input and participation. Actions for each component are targeted within each phase to support the transition from voluntary to mandatory as full implementation is achieved.

2005:

- Premises registration: July 2005: All States operational
- Animal identification: August 2005: Initiate “840” number with AIN tag manufacturers and AIN tag managers
- Animal tracking: January-December 2005: Test identification and automated data collection technologies

2006:

- Premises Registration: April 2006: Performance measure: 25% of all premises registered
- Animal identification: April 2006: AIN Management System fully operational
- Animal tracking:
 - July 2006: Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI) operational in all States
 - Focus on integration of management systems to forward animal locations/sightings

2007

- Premises registration: April 2007: Premises registration “alert” (scaled up communication campaign to create awareness of January 2008 requirements for premises registration).
- Animal identification: April 2007: Animal identification alert (scaled up communication campaign to create awareness of January 2008 requirements for animal identification).
- Animal tracking:
 - April 2007: Incentives to report interstate movements using ICVI or electronic movement permit system.
 - October 2007: Infrastructure established to collect animal termination records at high capacity abattoirs.
 - Initiate collection of animal movements at concentration points (markets, feedlots, etc.).
 - Expand the integration of management systems to forward animal locations/sightings.

2008:

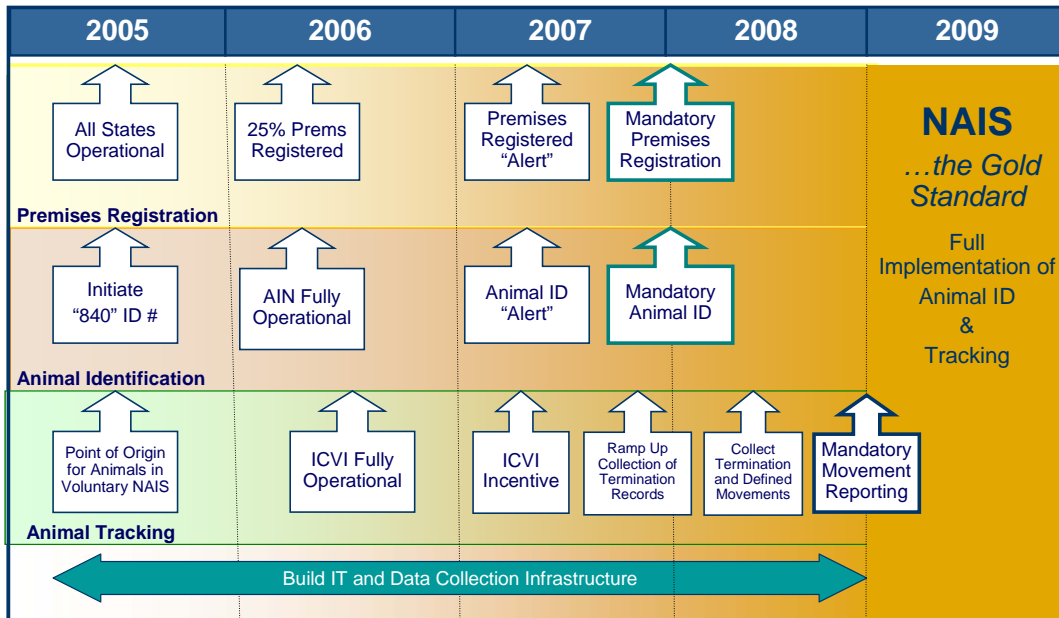
- Premises registration: January 2008: All premises registered with enforcement (regardless of livestock movements).
- Animal Identification: January 2008: Animal identification required with enforcement.
- Animal tracking:
 - July 2008: Collect high percentage of animal termination records at abattoirs (processing plants).
 - July 2008: Collection and reporting all defined movements.

2009:

- January 2009: Enforcement for the reporting of animal movements.
- NAIS fully implemented and all components are mandatory.

* See Transition from Voluntary to Mandatory, page 8.

NAIS Timeline



Stages of Development

Introduction The concept of using stages of progress as a way of measuring national implementation is not new. It is how we measure progress in the brucellosis, tuberculosis, and pseudorabies eradication programs. The NAIS is also a cooperative State-Federal-industry program and lends itself to similar tracking.

Stage I: Preparatory

Qualifications:

To qualify for Stage I recognition, the State would have meet the following standards:

1. A State animal identification committee composed of representatives of major segments of the farm animal industry is formed and functioning. Membership could include, but not be limited to the following stakeholders:
 - a. Major producer organizations;
 - b. Major breed organizations;
 - c. Major marketing organizations;
 - d. Major packer organizations;
 - e. State and Federal animal health agencies and Tribal organizations;
 - f. Technology providers (tags, readers, integrators);
 - g. Data service providers; and
 - h. Transportation (trucking industry).
2. Plans are formulated for a reliable system of determining the number of animals and the number of premises in the State.
3. State officials and/or industry representatives have, or are actively seeking, legislative and regulatory authority to:
 - a. Participate in the NAIS;
 - b. Require the registration of premises where animals reside that are susceptible to known foreign animal diseases or diseases with State or Federal eradication programs; and
 - c. Require identification of animals that move to a point where they are commingled with other animals.
4. A system for distribution of the NAIS literature to producers and other interested groups is developed and functioning.
5. Applicable regulations are enforced.
6. The States will prepare a quarterly report of NAIS activities and submit it to APHIS, VS for tabulation and distribution in a national progress report. APHIS VS shall make reports as requested and at least, annually, to the NAIS Subcommittee of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases, on progress, operation, and use of Federal funds.

Stage II: Premises IdentificationQualifications:

To qualify for Stage II recognition, the State would have to meet the following standards:

1. All qualifying requirements of Stage I continue to be met.
2. The State has implemented a premises registration system that is compliant with the NAIS data standards.
3. 35 percent of the qualifying premises in the State are registered, and that information has been reported to the National Premises Information Repository
4. The State has a requirement that registered premises update the contact information at least annually

Stage III: Animal IdentificationQualifications:

To qualify for Stage III recognition, the State would have to meet the following standards:

1. All qualifying requirements of Stage II continue to be met.
2. The State has begun to identify Nonproducer Participants within their State who may qualify as AIN Managers. These entities will need to apply to APHIS, VS to make certain they meet the strict requirements. APHIS, VS will make a list of all certified AIN Managers available to the States.
3. A system to issue AIN's to producers has been implemented in the State.
4. 80 percent of the qualifying premises in the State are registered, and that information has been reported to the National Premises Information Repository.
5. 25 percent of the qualifying animals in the State are identified, and that information has been reported to the National Animal Identification and Tracking Repository in accordance with the requirements of the NAIS.

Stage IV: Animal TrackingQualifications:

To qualify for Stage IV recognition, the State would have to meet the following standards:

1. All qualifying requirements of Stage III continue to be met.
2. The State has begun to implement an animal tracking system that is compliant with the NAIS data standards.
3. Key locations where animals commingle are equipped with the infrastructure to record the information required by the NAIS and report it to the National Animal Tracking Information Repository.
4. 95 percent of the qualifying premises in the State are registered, and that information has been reported to the National Premises Information Repository.
5. 60 percent of the qualifying animals in the State are identified, and that information has been reported to the National Animal Tracking Information Repository in accordance with the requirements of the NAIS.

6. 25 percent of the qualifying animal movements in the State are recorded and reported to the National Animal Tracking Information Repository in accordance with the requirements of the NAIS

Stage V: NAIS Full implementation

Qualifications

To qualify for Stage V recognition, the State would have to meet the following standards:

1. All qualifying requirements of Stage IV continue to be met.
2. 100 percent of the qualifying premises in the State are registered, and that information has been reported to the National Premises Information Repository.
3. 90 percent of the qualifying animals in the State are identified, and that information has been reported to the National Animal Tracking Information Repository in accordance with the requirements of the NAIS
4. 80 percent of the qualifying animal movements in the State are recorded and reported to the National Animal Tracking Information Repository in accordance with the requirements of the NAIS

Duration of status

Twelve to fourteen months following assignment of any Stage status by APHIS, VS, a State must (1) indicate that it continues to meet the current Stage requirements, utilizing the same certification procedures as followed initially, or (2) certify that it meets the requirements of a subsequent Stage. States failing to recertify as required will automatically lose their current status and revert to the next lowest Stage.

Once the NAIS is fully implemented, producers should be able to register their premises and then contact a USDA-approved Animal Identification Number Manager to obtain official AIN Tags. Group/Lot Identification Numbers will be an option for species, such as swine, that typically move as a group through the production chain. (USDA photo by Gene Alexander.)



VS Lines of Action

- Introduction** APHIS, VS, will successfully manage the NAIS through its National Animal Health Programs by following these lines of action:
- 1. Acquire Resources** Acquire and use the needed **resources** to develop and implement the program
1. Develop the APHIS infrastructure to support the NAIS
 - a. Develop organizational structure and workforce plan for the NAIS for APHIS, VS
 - b. Develop a budget and ongoing plan to fund NAIS
 2. Encourage the development of State infrastructure through the use of cooperative agreements
 - a. Support the State infrastructure where needed through the use of cooperative agreements
 - b. Support implementation projects through the use of cooperative agreements
 3. Develop a cooperative financial plan
 - a. Prepare financial analysis that documents complete annual cost for implementing the NAIS
 - b. Develop a cost-benefit analysis
- 2. Develop Regulations, Policies, and Guidance** Develop the needed **regulations, policies, and guidance** documents to support the implementation of the NAIS
1. Develop strategic, implementation, and operational plans
 2. Develop Uniform Methods and Rules
 3. Develop regulations:
 - a. Interim rule allowing alternative numbering systems
 - b. Proposed rule to make system mandatory for:
 - i. Premises registration and animal identification by January 2008
 - ii. Reporting defined animal movements by January 2009
 - iii. Unify animal identification requirements, definitions, and devices for all animal disease programs
 - c. Support regulation development needed at the State or Tribal level
 4. Establish stages of development to measure performance of States
 5. Develop memorandums of understanding as needed with Tribes and States
 6. Submit proposed legislation to support confidentiality
- 3. Develop Information Systems** Design, develop, implement, and support the NAIS **information systems**
1. Develop and implement components of the National Premises Registration System
 2. Develop and implement components of the Animal

Identification and Tracking System

3. Establish a user help desk for NAIS

4. Input, Outreach, and Training

Develop ways to allow stakeholder **input** into the development of the system and **outreach and training** to help stakeholders understand and use the system

1. Input
 - a. Develop a Subcommittee of the Secretary's Advisory Committee to advise the agency on national animal identification
 - b. Develop a network of working groups to provide input about species implementation and general implementation issues
 - c. Stay connected to existing networks of input through USAHA, NIAA, and other industry organizations
2. Outreach
 - a. Develop and implement outreach plan for industry and external stakeholders
 - b. Develop and implement outreach plan for USDA.
 - c. Develop and implement outreach plan for APHIS
 - d. Update APHIS and USDA leaders of progress
 - e. Develop informational web site
3. Training
 - a. Develop and deliver training for the premises and animal identification systems provided by APHIS
 - b. Train Area Veterinarians in Charge and State Veterinarians in cooperative agreements process

Measuring Success

Three Measures

There would be three ways to measure success of the NAIS:

1. **Annual test exercises** – Annual test exercises would be conducted to determine how long it would take to complete the tracings compared to the NAIS goal. These would be done to include most species and most States and Tribes each year.
2. **Milestones** – The timelines lay out key milestones to be achieved nationally. Progress would be measured against the planned milestones.
3. **Stages of development** – While it would be best if the program progresses equally nationally, that may not be practicable. States and tribal progress can be measured against prescribed stages of development. National progress can be measured by counting the number of States and Tribes at each stage.