

JUST SAY NO:

- ✓ Undue liability to livestock producers
- ✓ Overrides proven disease tracking systems
- ✓ Unnecessary costs to ranchers
- ✓ Corporate profiteering
- ✓ Shifts responsibility away from broken federal health inspection system
- ✓ Creates unfunded state bureaucracy
- ✓ Provides no additional information to consumers
- ✓ Not a food safety issue

TELL USDA TO SCRAP NATIONAL ANIMAL ID SYSTEM

NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is currently in the process of implementing a National Animal Identification System (NAIS). NAIS is designed to identify and track each and every individual livestock and poultry animal owned across the country. Put forth as a disease tracking and trace back security program, its real effect will be to harm American farmers and consumers. NAIS will usurp existing, well-functioning disease response and brand inspection programs run in states, while putting more burden through cost and liability on the shoulders of producers and famers. Furthermore, this program does nothing to improve food safety for consumer or to prevent animal diseases for producers.



NAIS tracking ends at the time of the livestock's death or slaughter. There is no way to equate this program to consumer food safety in any way. USDA and other supporters are simply using NAIS to gain consumer confidence without addressing the real problems of food safety like problems in slaughter plants and faulty handling of meats.

When this cumbersome and costly plan was met with resistance, USDA gave money to states as hoping to entice farmers and ranchers to participate. The farmers and ranchers impacted by this program have added up the costs and understand that USDA has set up an expensive, centralized system that only duplicates tracking systems that already work while doing nothing to stop disease or inform consumers.

TERMS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Premise Registration

Every person who owns any livestock animal would have to register the premises where the livestock is held. Livestock animals include cattle, hogs, sheep and goats, chickens and other poultry, horses, bison, deer and elk, alpacas and llamas.

Animal Identification:

There will be two levels of animal identification: individual animal and lot identification. Most animals in the program would be individually identified with a unique 15-digit number and either implanted with a microchip or tagged with a radio frequency device.



Animal Tracking:

Every time an animal is tagged, a tag is lost or a tag reapplied, an animal dies or is missing, the event would have to be reported to the government within 24 hours. "Commingling events" such as private and public sales, regional shows and exhibitions will also have to be reported.

FOR MORE INFO:

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TAKE ACTION

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is moving forward to force ranchers, farmers and all other livestock owners to be part of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS).



WHAT YOU CAN DO:

USDA has scheduled listening sessions throughout the country to hear producers concerns about NAIS.

- ✓ Attend a listening session near you. A list of locations can be found at USDA's NAIS website, <http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/feedback.shtml>.
- ✓ Email or write Secretary Vilsack at USDA and tell him to suspend the NAIS program. You can reach Secretary Vilsack's office by emailing AgSec@usda.gov or by writing at U.S. Department of Agriculture at ATTN NAIS, Surveillance and Identification Programs, National Center for Animal Health Programs, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 200, Riverdale, MD 20737.

"USDA needs to hear directly from our stakeholders as we work together to create an animal disease traceability program we can all support. I encourage individuals and organizations to voice their concerns, ideas and potential solutions about animal identification, by either attending these listening sessions or submitting comments online."

—Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack

WHAT YOU CAN SAY WHEN YOU WRITE:

- ✓ USDA should withdraw any proposals that would mandate any portion of the National Animal Identification System and ensure that all components of NAIS must remain strictly voluntary.
- ✓ The problems with NAIS are not fixable. The program is badly designed and will not address disease problems any better than our existing programs; in fact, it will do a poorer job, while costing more money.
- ✓ Instead of NAIS, USDA should focus on preventing disease and addressing the problems caused by factory farms.
- ✓ NAIS is NOT a food safety program because it ends when the animal dies, while food safety problems are due to problems at the slaughterhouses and processing plants.
- ✓ NAIS, including premises registration, should not be linked to any other programs, including branding, existing disease control programs, and youth livestock programs.

