



## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 6, 2004

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### **NIAA Encourages Producers, Stakeholders to Attend ID Listening Sessions**

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. Producers and industry stakeholders are encouraged to take part in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's listening sessions on the national animal identification system. To date, USDA has completed three of the sessions with 11 more scheduled throughout the summer.

"These sessions are a great opportunity for the industry to hear USDA's intentions for a national animal identification system," said Glenn Slack, president and CEO of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA). "They are also a prime venue for interested parties to voice opinions and concerns regarding such a system."

The sessions are designed as a public forum to address identification issues. Topics of discussion include the development, structure and implementation of a national animal identification program for all livestock and poultry animals.

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced in December 2003 that USDA would expedite the implementation of a national animal identification program. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has received more than \$18 million to begin implementing a national system that will quickly and efficiently traceback diseased or potentially diseased animals. A premise identification system is to be completed this summer, which will allow for the beginning of pilot programs to test identification systems.

"NIAA has been involved with the development of a national system over the last few years, so we understand the importance of having industry input and producer understanding of how a national identification system would work," said Slack. "Many species have been represented throughout the process, and these sessions provide a great opportunity for individuals at the grassroots level to directly take part."

Remaining listening sessions will be held in: Stockton, Calif. on July 10; Socorro, N.M. on July 16; Pasco, Wash. on July 23; Greeley, Colo. on Aug. 10; Billings, Mont. on Aug. 13; Kissimmee, Fla. on Aug. 16; Columbus, Ohio on Aug. 18; Ames, Iowa on Aug. 26; Joplin, Mo. on Aug. 27; Appleton, Wis. on Aug. 30; and St. Cloud, Minn. on Aug. 31. More details about each listening session, including the site and time of the meeting, will be posted on the APHIS Web site at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/issues/nais/nais\\_listening\\_sessions.html](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/issues/nais/nais_listening_sessions.html).

Transcripts of the listening sessions are also available on the Internet. If attending the session is not possible, NIAA encourages producers to review comments from the sessions, said Slack. Individuals also may send comments directly to USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Please e-mail comments to [animalidcomments@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:animalidcomments@aphis.usda.gov), or mail written comments to:

Animal ID Comments  
c/o USDA APHIS LPA  
4700 River Road, Unit 51  
Riverdale, MD 20737

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture provides a forum for building consensus and advancing solutions for animal agriculture and provides continuing education and communication linkages to animal agriculture professionals. NIAA is dedicated to programs that: work towards the eradication of diseases that pose risk to the health of animals, wildlife and humans; promote a safe and wholesome food supply for our nation and abroad; and promote best practices in environmental stewardship, animal health and well-being. Visit us on the Internet at [www.animalagriculture.org](http://www.animalagriculture.org), or call 270-782-9798.

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