



News Release

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Confidentiality and Data Housing Give Way to Funding, Producer Participation as NAIS' Major Concerns: NIAA Opinion Survey

Who's going to pay? How much is it going to cost me? Common questions frequently pondered by producers and other stakeholders when contemplating the new National Animal Identification System (NAIS) being implemented by USDA and state animal health agencies.

According to a recent survey by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA), 20.5 percent of respondents indicated funding as the their biggest concern for implementation of NAIS. Producer participation followed, chosen the biggest concern by 16.7 percent of respondents, trailed by data confidentiality with 15.2 percent, and data collection and housing with 10.6 percent.

Another aspect of the program that has been a contentious issue for many is whether the program will be voluntary or mandatory. However, only 4.6 percent of respondents listed this as their biggest concern.

"The implementation of NAIS is clearly an important issue for multiple sectors of animal agriculture," said NIAA Chairman of the Board Dr. Rick Sibbel. "NIAA continues to provide an important role regarding industry input. This survey gives us a better pulse on our membership's sentiments, ultimately allowing NIAA to address ID issues across the country and continue building consensus for NAIS."

The 25-question opinion survey was mailed electronically to 502 individuals nationally with NIAA members comprising the pool. One hundred thirty-two (132) responses were received for a 26.3 percent response rate. The survey was conducted Oct. 14-19.

When asked specifically about support for a voluntary or a mandatory program, only 10 percent of respondents (9.9 %) said they support a voluntary program. In contrast, 79 percent of respondents feel the program should either be mandatory now or upon a set date in the future. *(Twenty-five percent (25%) said they support a mandatory program. The most popular choice, made by 53.8 percent of respondents, was "voluntary during developmental stages, but with a decided date for making the program mandatory.")*

Other findings include:

... Consensus on who holds the database has not been achieved: 27.3 percent of respondents support a centralized database operated by USDA; 13.6 percent support a centralized database that is privatized; 28.0 percent support a decentralized database system operated by state animal health agencies; and 15.9 percent support a decentralized database system that is privatized.

... More than three-fourths of respondents feel that more federal dollars are needed for FY'05 than the \$33 million request by USDA.

... Forty-three percent of respondents do not feel that necessary information and education is being delivered to stakeholders in a timely fashion to help further NAIS.

... Three-fourths of respondents feel somewhat or very prepared to participate in NAIS; only six percent feel unprepared.

... Forty-seven percent (47%) agree that concerns have been heard and are being or will be addressed. Twenty-five percent (25%) disagree.

... Over half of respondents feel progress is moving at an average rate or better, while one-third of respondents feel the rate of progress is below average or poor.

Complete survey results can be viewed at www.animalagriculture.org/survey/NAIS.htm.

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture provides a forum for consensus-building 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, or call 270-782-9798.

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