



News Release

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Contact: Ben Richey
270-782-9798
brichey@animalagriculture.org

NIAA Animal ID Survey Shows Concern for NAIS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – A recent survey by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) shows that, though individuals are very engaged in the implementation of the national animal identification system, there are concerns with the development of a private database. Fifty-six percent of respondents indicated that they either disagree or strongly disagree with the action to pursue a private database. Twenty-five percent agree or strongly agree with the move, while 18 percent were unsure or had no opinion.

“The survey revealed some interesting perspectives from the industry on animal identification,” said NIAA president and CEO Glenn Slack. “Regardless of the interpretation of these results, there are many unanswered questions among the stakeholders, thus it is ever important that we remain focused on moving ahead with NAIS to protect our nation’s herds and flocks.”

The non-scientific survey was conducted Oct. 5 to Oct. 10 among NIAA members and attendees to the ID/INFO EXPO 2005, held in late September. A total of 198 responses were collected from this broad scale audience, for a response rate of 22 percent. Of the responses, 76 percent were in attendance at EXPO. A portion of the results were presented yesterday at the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s public stakeholders meeting on animal identification in Kansas City, by Slack.

The survey asked how industry should move forward with establishing a consortium for a privately managed tracking database. Responses, with the percentage, is as follows:

- Adopt the current consortium concept being proposed by NCBA 12.12 percent
- Start from scratch on an industry initiative, and rely on all stakeholders to participate in reaching an effective solution 13.64
- Rely on an approach similar to the 2002 National Animal ID Task Force to coordinate a consortium that will develop an effective solution 39.90
- Allow each species to pursue a private tracking system 12.63
- Sit and wait, hoping USDA will resume responsibility for the database 11.62
- No Opinion/Unsure 10.10

The highest response, at nearly 40 percent, shows that respondents feel that a process similar to that which produced the U.S. Animal Identification Plan (USAIP) would be a viable option in establishing a private consortium to manage the animal tracking database. However, the table is still open as to what direction industry will pursue.

Funding issues continue to arise. When asked who should bear the greatest cost of implementation, including premises registration, AIN management and animal tracking, 57 percent believe the federal government should pay for a majority of the system. Other notable statistics say the consumer should bear the most cost (16 percent), while 14 percent felt the onus belongs to producers.

When asked about the aggressiveness at which USDA is pursuing NAIS implementation, 48 percent indicated an adequately aggressive manner. Forty percent say the timeline is somewhat or very unaggressive, while only 12 percent indicated the timeline is highly or too aggressive.

On the issue of confidentiality, 82 percent say they agree or strongly agree that legislation will be necessary to protect data, as animal health officials are expected to have 24 hour access to the data. Only 11 percent disagree or strongly disagree that legislation would be necessary.

The survey asked what the biggest concern for NAIS implementation was. Responses include:

• Funding	21.72 percent
• Establishment of Industry Consensus for a Privately Held Database	21.21
• Producer Participation	14.65
• Other	12.12
• Data Collection	7.07
• Voluntary vs. Mandatory	7.07
• Federal Infrastructure	5.56
• State/Local Infrastructure	4.04
• AIN Management System Availability	3.54
• Data Confidentiality	3.03
• No major Concerns	0.00

The complete results of this survey are available on the Internet at www.animalagriculture.org/id.

In related news at the stakeholders meeting yesterday in Kansas City, some 36 individuals provided comments to USDA and industry participants as to concerns for NAIS, specifically the future of a privately held animal tracking database. Dr. John Clifford, deputy administrator for USDA , Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, reiterated some key points for industry to mind as a consortium is developed. These included:

- USDA has put the private animal tracking database in the hands of the industry, which must collectively decide how to move forward
- USDA will not provide funding for the establishment or operation of the database
- Federal and state animal health officials will have 24/7 access to the data, with no user fees

- USDA is seeking a single interface to access this data, indicating that a single database is not necessarily the only option
- Premises registration continues across the country, and the Animal Identification Number system has been targeted for implementation in the next 90 days by USDA .

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, or call 270-782-9798.

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