



Animal Disease Traceability¹

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Animal disease traceability or knowing where diseased and at-risk animals are, where they have been, and when is important to ensuring a rapid response when animal disease events take place. Although animal disease traceability does not prevent disease, an efficient and accurate traceability system reduces the number of animals and response time involved in a disease investigation; which, in turn, reduces the economic impact on owners and affected communities.

Overarching Goals to Increase Traceability

A comprehensive animal disease traceability system is our best protection against a devastating disease outbreak. USDA is committed to implementing a modern system that tracks animals from birth to slaughter using affordable technology that allows for quick tracing of sick and exposed animals to stop disease spread. In September 2018, USDA established four overarching goals to increase traceability. These goals are:

- Advance the electronic sharing of data among federal and state animal health officials, veterinarians, and industry; including sharing basic animal disease traceability data with the federal animal health events repository (AHER).
- Use electronic identification tags for animals requiring individual identification in order to make the transmission of data more efficient;
- Enhance the ability to track animals from birth to slaughter through a system that allows tracking data points to be connected; and
- Elevate the discussion with States and industry to work toward a system where animal health certificates are electronically transmitted from private veterinarians to state animal health officials.

“Traceability for Livestock Moving Interstate”

On January 9, 2013, USDA published a final rule (9 CFR, part 86) titled “Traceability for Livestock Moving Interstate.” The rule establishes requirements for the official identification of livestock and documentation for certain interstate movements of livestock.

Specifically, unless exempted, livestock belonging to species covered by the regulations that are moved interstate must:

- Be officially identified, and
- Be accompanied by an Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI) or other movement document.

Livestock species covered under this rule include cattle and bison, horses and other equine species, poultry, sheep and goats, swine, and captive cervids. Official identification and movement documentation is essential to tracing livestock when disease is found.

Preliminary evaluation of the Traceability program published in the Program Executive Summary of April 2017 has shown that moving forward with the program is warranted. Revisions and changes were incorporated based upon the deficiencies noted in the evaluation and now goals and target dates have been set.

IMPORTANT TARGET DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Dec 31, 2019-** USDA will no longer provide metal tags. Vendors will be allowed to provide these tags for purchase on a state- by- state basis until Dec 31, 2020
- **As of Jan 1, 2021,** vendors will no longer be allowed to produce metal tags with USDA shield, and veterinarians and producers can no longer **apply** metal tags with the USDA shield. **Only official RFID tags can be applied.**
- **January 1, 2023-** RFID tags will be required for cattle and bison moving interstate. Official RFID tags will be required for movement so cattle carrying a metal tag will need to be retagged. Feeder cattle and animals moving directly to slaughter are not subject to RFID requirements. The tags should be applied at birth or before animal moves off farm in interstate commerce. A premise ID number will be required to purchase official RFID tags.

For information pertaining to the Traceability program, you can contact USDA at the following website- <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/> or email them at [traceability@ usda.gov](mailto:traceability@usda.gov). Additionally, you are encouraged to contact the New Mexico Livestock Board at www.nmlbonline.com for more information pertaining to New Mexico's traceability activities and requirements.

¹ Taken from USDA website

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