

NATIONAL CATTLEMENS FOUNDATION PARTNERS WITH USDA TO REGISTER PREMISES AS PART OF THE NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

DENVER, Nov. 30, 2007--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced a partnership with the National Cattlemen's Foundation in cooperation with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). The partnership will facilitate the registration of additional cattle premises as part of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). And soon, USDA will release a business plan to advance animal disease traceability. That plan outlines strategies to be undertaken to help achieve the long term goal of NAIS which is to retrieve sufficient trace forward and traceback data within a 48 hour window. This will allow animal health officials to trace a disease back to its source, which ultimately protects other premises and cattle from the adverse economic impact of a disease outbreak.

"This cooperative agreement will help USDA reach out to the large and varied American cattle industry to promote the merits of a national animal identification system," said Bruce Knight, under secretary for USDA's marketing and regulatory programs. "For the future success of the industry, it is essential that producers and animal health officials have the information they need to respond quickly and effectively in the event of an animal disease situation. The National Animal Identification System provides that framework."

Under the terms of the agreement, the National Cattlemen's Foundation and NCBA will use print and electronic media opportunities including National Cattlemen magazine and NCBA's "Cattlemen to Cattlemen" television program, as well as radio segments to create a foundation for future cattleman-to-cattleman outreach efforts.

Funding also will be used for educational efforts to reach the organization's 29,000 members as well as approximately 230,000 additional cattle producers. These efforts will include direct producer contact along with education through the Livestock Marketing Council. NCBA will use its trade show and Web site to provide educational outreach.

USDA previously announced similar cooperative agreements with the American Angus Association, the U.S. Animal Identification Organization, the National Pork Board, the American Sheep Industry, the National FFA Organization and the National Milk Producers Federation, which represents IDairy, a consortium of six dairy organizations.

NAIS is a voluntary program and consists of three components: premises registration, animal identification and tracing. The premises registration component of NAIS ensures the availability of a nationwide communications network to assist livestock owners and animal health officials in the event of an animal disease event. A total of 426,671 premises nationwide