

USDA to Hold Public Meetings for National Animal Identification System

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will host two public meetings to discuss the implementation of private/state animal identification number device distribution databases for the animal identification component of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS).

The first public meeting will occur on Monday, March 5 from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., and Tuesday, March 6 from 8 a.m. until noon. The second meeting will be held on Monday, March 12 from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., and Tuesday, March 13 from 8 a.m. until noon. Both meetings will be held in the Hilton Kansas City Airport, 8801 NW 112 Street, Kansas City, Mo.

Beginning in April 2007, animal identification number device distribution databases (AIN DDDs), administered privately or by a state, will start to house the records associated with the distribution of animal identification (AIN) devices to producers that voluntarily participate in the NAIS. Currently, these records are housed in APHIS' AIN management system. APHIS believes that this program change will foster more participation in the voluntary animal identification component of the NAIS.

The meetings will provide a forum for discussing this transition and the issues related to privately and state-administered AIN DDDs. Interested private organizations and state agencies that have databases that could integrate with the NAIS as AIN DDDs are encouraged to attend. Other stakeholders, including livestock owners, AIN tag manufacturers, device managers and resellers, are also encouraged to participate.

For additional information contact Neil Hammerschmidt, coordinator, NAIS, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 200, Riverdale, Md. 20737-1231 or phone (301) 734-5571.

Notice of this meeting was published in the Feb. 28 *Federal Register*.

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