

TAKE THE FIRST STEP

REGISTER YOUR PREMISES

NAIS | NATIONAL
ANIMAL
IDENTIFICATION
SYSTEM

NAIS: At a Glance

What is NAIS?

This document provides an introduction to the User Guide 2.0 released in December 2007. For more information, please refer to the complete version of the User Guide located on the NAIS Web site at:

<http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/naislibrary/documents/guidelines/NAIS-UserGuide.pdf>.

Simply put, NAIS is a modern, streamlined information system that helps producers and animal health officials respond quickly and effectively to animal disease events in the United States. Built upon State-Federal-industry partnerships, NAIS is beneficial because it helps protect U.S. livestock and poultry from disease spread, maintain consumer confidence in the food supply, and retain access to domestic and foreign markets.

USDA does not require participation in NAIS. NAIS provides the opportunity for producers that are not part of a disease program to voluntarily participate in national health safeguarding efforts. In order to standardize data, USDA is using NAIS data elements for the administration of Federal disease programs.

Animal health officials across the country agree that premises registration, the foundation of NAIS, is a necessary first step to achieving these goals. Premises information ensures that producers will be notified quickly when a disease event might impact

their area or the species of animals they have. In an animal health emergency, we cannot help producers protect their animals if we do not know they are there. By choosing to sign up for a premises identification number (PIN) and providing contact information, producers will ensure that they receive the information they need—when they need it most—to protect their animals and their investment. In an emergency, animal health officials will be able to quickly locate at-risk animals and take precise actions to address the situation, minimize hardships, and speed disease eradication efforts.

NAIS also encompasses animal identification and animal movement tracing systems, in which producers may choose to participate. Animal identification involves identifying animals, either individually with an animal identification number (AIN) or as a group with a group/lot identification number (GIN). Animal identification serves as a tool to enhance animal disease traceability. It is linked to the PIN where the animal is kept when the identification was first assigned.

Animal tracing involves the reporting of certain movements of an officially identified animal that present a higher risk for disease transmission. Recommended reportable movements include: moving an animal through a public market or auction, private sale of an animal that involves moving it off

its birth premises, and participation of an animal in regional or national exhibitions or sporting events. These movements are reported by the person responsible for the animals and recorded in State and privately owned animal tracking databases (ATDs). If an animal health event occurs, State and Federal animal health authorities are able to quickly request relevant movement information from the ATDs through the animal trace processing system (ATPS) and use it to speed disease investigations. These options are available for use by producers and offer a higher level of traceability and protection against disease spread.

USDA is required by law to protect individuals' private information. Regardless of the level of participation animal owners choose, the voluntary NAIS is limited in terms of the type and quantity of information maintained by the Federal Government. At the Federal level, the system will hold and maintain minimal premises information needed to enable effective traceback or notification in disease situations. USDA will not maintain animal location or movement information collected for NAIS. If that information is needed to respond to an animal health event, data will be requested from the private and State databases where it is held. Federal law protects individuals' private information and confidential business information from public disclosure.

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Costs of Participating in NAIS

Premises registration is free in all States and participating Tribes.

NAIS participants are responsible for purchasing animal identification devices and for fees that may be associated with participating in an animal tracking database (ATD), but they have choices that shape these costs. NAIS participants can choose which animal identification devices and which ATD they wish to use, if they elect to report animal movements. Participants should check with their respective State for available options.

The cost of animal identification methods vary among species and depend on the device chosen by the animal owner, as well as whether the owner or a veterinarian applies the device. Costs can also be shaped by the services packaged with the device.

ATDs are developed and maintained by various industry organizations and State entities. Costs associated with the databases vary depending on the services the producer/owner elects to use. Competition among these databases will help keep costs down.

Basic Steps for Participating in NAIS

Animal owners who are interested in taking part in NAIS may participate in premises registration only, premises registration and animal identification, or all three components. The following information provides a brief explanation of how to participate in NAIS.

Step 1: Register your premises and obtain a premises identification number (PIN).

You can get a PIN by contacting your State or Tribal NAIS Administrator and completing the appropriate

form. For your State or Tribal NAIS Administrator's contact information, please visit: <http://www.usda.gov/nais/getPIN>.

Premises registration forms are also available on each State's department of agriculture Web site. You may opt to register your premises online (as available), or by mailing or faxing the form to the NAIS contact for your area.

Step 2: Identify your animals.

After you have received your PIN, you may participate in the animal identification component of NAIS.

Animals of the same species that typically move through the production chain as a group can be identified by a group/lot identification number (GIN), rather than by individual numbers. The GIN is determined by the animal owner using the premises identification number and the date the group was assembled. For more information about assigning animals a GIN, NAIS participants should refer to the User Guide's section on animal identification.

Animals that move through commerce individually can be identified with an NAIS-compliant animal identification number (AIN) tag or device. NAIS participants interested in identifying their animals individually should refer to the User Guide's section on animal identification for the basic steps and requirements involved in obtaining and applying AIN tags and devices to their animals. Information can also be found online at: <http://www.usda.gov/nais/840>.

Only approved manufacturers are authorized to produce AIN devices. A list of approved NAIS-compliant devices can be found at: http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/naislibrary/documents/guidelines/NAIS_ID_Tag_Web_Listing.pdf.

Step 3: Choose an animal tracking database (ATD) for tracing significant animal movements.

After NAIS participants have registered their premises and identified their animals either individually or by group/lot, they may choose an ATD. USDA recognizes that every animal movement does not need to be recorded or reported. To ensure that the system is practical and workable for NAIS participants, only those movements that pose a greater risk of disease transmission will be the focus of tracing efforts. A number of factors—the number of animals, their source(s), health status/certification, and nature and location of the event—influence disease risk. For a list of recommendations regarding reportable animal movements, please see the User Guide section on animal tracing. Participants should contact State or local animal health officials if they are uncertain about the need to report an animal movement.

Private industry groups and States will operate and maintain the ATDs. When an animal health event occurs, the ATPS posts a request for information regarding the location and movement of suspect animals. ATDs continuously scan (every 15 minutes) for postings from the ATPS. When a request for information is detected, each ATD runs a query on the animal identification numbers (AIN) included in the request and returns relevant records to the ATPS. For example, this includes information about a specific location, animal or group of animals, and/or animal movements that occurred during specific dates.

A list of NAIS State and private databases that have an approved cooperative agreement with USDA is available on USDA/APHIS' Animal Identification Web site at: www.usda.gov/nais.

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Additional Information

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