

# CALVING EASE

December 2005

Sam Leadley, Attica Veterinary Associates

## IDairy.org

### Background

Over the past fifty years, the US dairy industry has depended on registrations for two disease eradication programs to identify cattle. These were brucellosis and tuberculosis. As we have approached eradication, fewer and fewer dairies have vaccinated for these diseases.

In the past ten years there has been increasing interest in a national animal identification system (NAIS). In 2001, industry leaders and USDA officials began developing a national plan to create such a system. The BSE and hoof-and-mouth crises have cranked up the urgency of getting a system in place. A US animal identification plan (USAIP) was sent to the USDA in 2004.

### Where are we today?

The USDA has both long and short-term goals. Eventually, the USDA wants a 48-hour traceback on animals. That would allow identification of every premise an animal has been on during its entire life. In addition, contact animals or cohorts could be identified.

In the short term, the first goal is to develop a premise registration system. Each location at which dairy animals are kept will be identified. Current plans call for recording:

- Type of premise (for example, dairy)
- Contact name - a person to contact in case of a traceback
- Contact address
- Contact telephone number
- GPS coordinates of the location.

Each registered location will be issued a Premises Identification Number (PIN). State plans vary. In New York, successfully registered premises will receive a letter of notification, registration certificate, and wallet-sized laminated card.

The second and third goals are to set up systems for individual animal identification (physical ear tag) and radio frequency identification (RFID). The unique animal identification will be a fifteen-character numbering system (AIN#).

## **How do I register my premises?**

It depends.

One way to find out what is going on in your state is to go to [www.idairy.org](http://www.idairy.org). Click on the menu item, "Where to register your premise." A US map will come up. Click on your state.

This is where one state differs from another. Some states have a downloadable premises registration form (for example, Vermont, Wisconsin). At other states, you frequently get the state department of agriculture home page. Those are frustrating since there is seldom any mention made of premises registration or even the national animal identification system (NAIS).

My best advice is to be patient. Most states have a target date sometime in 2006 for completing dairy premises registration. Thus, something will happen before too long.

If you are participating in any kind of disease control program (for example, Johne's, salmonella, Mycoplasma), you may already be in the state database. All that will have to be done is processing by the USDA in order to get the unique premise identification number (PIN). Often, state veterinarians are familiar with these details.

In New York, Commissioner of Agriculture Rudgers said, "Where possible we are utilizing existing data, and gathering information on additional livestock premises to submit in a coordinated and consistent fashion to the NAIS. We intend to register all New York's 20,000 livestock and poultry premises by March, 2006."

## **What is next down the road?**

Individual animal identification is the next step in the NAIS. Yet to be agreed on are the details on who will store the data and make it available 24/7 for traceback if a foreign animal disease incident happens. As of September 2005, USDA Secretary Johannes is supporting a privately run database system.

Radio frequency identification (RFID) tags will eventually follow. If you go to [www.nationalfair.com](http://www.nationalfair.com) and click on "FAIR statistics" you can see the number of cattle and farms already active with RFID tags.

If you know of someone that doesn't currently receive **Calving Ease** but would like to, tell them to e-mail [calvingease@rochester.rr.com](mailto:calvingease@rochester.rr.com) to receive a monthly link to the letter. Links are for both high speed and dialup connections. Or, **WRITE** to **Calving Ease**, 11047 River Road, Pavilion, NY 14525 or to **CALL** 585-591-2660 (Attica Vet Assoc. office) or **FAX** (585-591-2898). A limited number of back issues may be accessed on the Internet at either [www.atticacows.com](http://www.atticacows.com) or [www.calfnotes.com](http://www.calfnotes.com) and clicking on the link, Calving Ease.

Our thanks to Alharma for sponsoring this issue of Calving Ease.