

Sheep Working Group Update

2006 ID INFO/EXPO
August 2006



Species Working Group (SWG)

- Formed as a result of 2004 USAHA meeting
- Charge: To provide species-specific input into USAIP/NAIS
- Broad industry-wide representation
- Actively considering your grassroots realities and representing YOU!
- Wrestled with many topics, consensus re: build on existing scrapie program, G/L ID, costs, 'cuss and discuss'

Recommendations made by SWG in 2004 regarding NAIS

- Continue with the existing mandatory ID requirements of the National Scrapie Eradication Program
 - Evolve from this program rather than ‘starting over’ is key for producer participation.
 - Most complete federal ID system in existence for any species.
 - Recognize no purely visual ID system will achieve final tracking goal (48 hours).
 - BUT no proven Electronic ID & tracking system for sheep yet exists in the world.

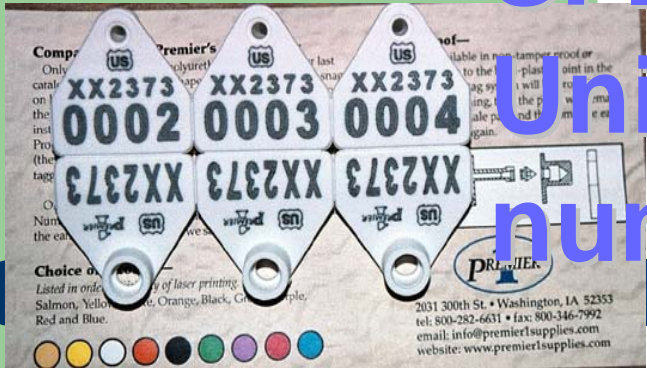
Stats-USDA Scrapie Flock Numbers

- 114,907 sheep and goat premises have flock/herd numbers in the SNGB as of 6/30/06. Approx. 67,000 are sheep.
- Official eartags have been issued to 84,154 s/g premises.
- Market tagging capability encourages compliance.
- Recommendation: tie current Scrapie Flock ID (SFID) number to NAIS PIN in computer database(s) only.

Current Voluntary and Mandatory Scrapie ID programs

- ☑ These are ID programs and ☑ They provide flock of origin data on the tag.
- ☑ They are NOT perfect sheep or goat movement tracking systems but they are valuable.
- ☑ These programs provide much more useful trace back data than exists for cattle not located in brand states and not monitored via private ID systems.

**SFID + Animal ID =
Unique individual
number**



- **MN38418
5425**
- **Tested
choices**

History of Scrapie Mandatory ID



NAIS Movement Reporting

(recommendations cont.)

- Individual ID and movement recording mandated only when sheep **commingle**,
 - move in commerce
 - exhibited intra- and interstate
 - Sale of breeding stock and cull sheep
- Group ID lambs in feeding channels
- Group ID sheep moving intra and interstate for management purposes w/o change of ownership

(green indicates proposed NAIS changes)

Tracking reported when....

- ☑change of ownership,
- ☑interstate movement,
- ☑multiple owners commingling their animals

NAIS Recommendations

- The sheep industry recognizes that exhibitions are currently a high-risk activity for disease transmission. Such events should immediately begin enforcing compliance regarding ID and tracking (health certificates).

Recommendations to NAIS staff and State Veterinarians by SWG in Fall 2005

- Today's scrapie program w/appropriate group/lot identification will work
- The Scrapie Program's Flock ID number plus the animal ID number, as currently used in the NSEP, is a unique number in the US
- Our industry has more premises and animals identified than others (114,907 sheep and goat premises as of 7/06)

NSEP overlap with NAIS

Continue with current scrapie numbering system - on all tags for sheep and goats inclusive of RFID tags. Numbering changes when NAIS becomes mandatory.

NAIS Tag numbering system

- The 840 numbering system is a 15-digit numbering system providing unique individual animal identification
 - Designed solely for electronic reading.
 - Potentially makes visual reading of scrapie tags more error prone
 - SWG opposes this change mandated by NAIS standards from official visual sheep ID at this time.

NAIS AIN – 15 digits intended for electronic reading only



Search for perfect RFID tag: retention, low reactivity, ease of application, functional life



Recommendations (cont.)

- Once electronic identification and tracking technology is proven to work in the sheep industry, it must also be economically feasible for industry.
- Electronic ID has proven merit for disease control programs.



Range and Feeders

- It is imperative that the range flock and feeder segments of the industry be able to move animals via group-lot format.
- To tag or read individual animals in conditions common in these segments are such that it will be very difficult and costly to do so. Compliance will be poor, thus negatively affecting program strength.

Group/Lot ID

- 15-character GIN
 - NAIS Premises alphanumeric ID (7) +
 - Date (MMDDYY) +
 - Lot assembled that day (01)

Number generated & reported by producer



GIN application

- Multiple shipments from the same premises on same day
 - A234567012606**01**
 - A234567012606**02**
- Tracing backwards or forwards would involve ALL groups from the same premises.

Feeding Channels

- Once a group enters feeding channels, normal practices and records will keep track of the group to the extent practical.
- When animals leave the feeding facility they get a new GIN.
- This approach is scientifically sound for sheep.

Auction markets, slaughter plants, feedlots

- Auction markets, slaughter plants, feedlots can not rely upon EID reading systems that read < 100% of the animals at speed of commerce.
- All systems **presently** fail this test. Therefore the current system of counting/accounting must be maintained - forcing the EID system to be an expensive time-consuming add-on to a situation in which throughput is critical.

Requested USDA conduct an economic analysis of cost-benefit of EID methods and tracking for the sheep industry.

- A cost/benefit analysis needed for risk posed by the sheep industry in the event of a disease outbreak.
- The only likely disease that would be addressed by a national sheep/goat tracking system is foot and mouth disease.
- Industry considers the information from this proposed analysis to be valuable but nothing has been initiated.

Where oh where has
my little lamb
gone.....

Thanks to the Sheep Working Group!

