

Animal Identification: Obtaining a Premises Identification Number in Nebraska

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An animal identification system for the United States has been considered for several years by industry associations and government. Rapid development of protocols and useable technology have quickly advanced the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), following two North American cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in 2003. The goal of NAIS in the U.S. is to enable 48-hour traceback of animals that have been exposed to diseases. This ability to quickly trace animals that have been exposed to diseases through presence at a particular livestock facility or interaction with infected animals is critical not only in maintaining the national animal herd health, but also in providing safety assurances to domestic and international meat consumers.

Developing an animal identification system that can track large numbers of individual animals through multiple production and harvest facilities as they are commingled with other animals is a complex task. As a result, implementation of NAIS will occur in stages, with the initial stage being registration of livestock premises, followed by individual animal identification. Although NAIS provides guidelines for acceptable procedures to use, it does not mandate a uniform system across the U.S. Thus, states are able to adopt animal identification procedures that best meet the needs of its livestock producers and related industry participants. In Nebraska, protocols for registering premises where livestock are kept, or may be kept, have been defined as the Nebraska Animal Verification Enhancement (NAVE). This NebFact, which explains premises identification, is the first in a series examining the procedures livestock producers in Nebraska can follow to participate in the animal identification program.

What Is Premises Identification?

A premises is a livestock facility where animals are kept, or are expected to be kept, that represents a unique and describable geographic entity. Premises are identified and assigned a unique seven-character alphanumeric identification number. This premises identification number will eventually be linked to individual animal identification numbers to enable traceback of individual animals to a particular premises and livestock owner/operator/handler.

Obtaining a Premises Identification Number in Nebraska

Producers of cattle, swine, sheep, goats, and other food animals are eligible to register their production facility in Nebraska. In addition, other persons or entities that handle, care for, or own food animals may also register for a premises identification number. This includes slaughter plants, rendering plants, county fairgrounds, veterinary clinics, tagging sites, livestock auction markets, and nonproducer participants (third party vendors) who do not have an association with animals, but may provide a service to customers to assist with premises registration and animal tracking information.

For production units, typically the owner of the livestock will register the premises. In cases where the land/facilities owner is not the caretaker of the animals, either the land/facilities owner or the livestock owner could register the premises. However, the owner is recommended to register the premises because they would be contacted in the event of a disease traceback. If the land/facility owner sells the facility, the premises identification number will be transferred to the new owner (it remains with the site). In some cases, such as custom feedyards, caretakers of the livestock will be the facility owner and would register the premises.

For nonproduction units (e.g., auction markets, veterinary clinics, fairgrounds), the facility should be registered by the person or entity responsible for the site. Thus, the owner of the auction market or veterinary clinic should register the site because they are responsible for the animals while they are on the premises. Livestock facilities like county/state fairgrounds pose unique difficulties for premises registration. County extension educators could register the county fairgrounds because they are responsible for fair activities. However, if the fairgrounds are used for nonfair related activities, the premises identification number would need to be available to those other parties.

Under NAVE, Nebraska livestock producers and other entities wanting to register their premises can do so three ways. First, application for a premises number can be completed online at <http://www.animalid.us> by creating a user account and completing five short screens of information. Second, a form can be downloaded from that site, printed and completed, and returned to the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA),

**STATE OF NEBRASKA
PREMISES IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM**

This form allows you to apply for a premises identification number. Once you complete and return this form, your request will need to be approved by state officials.

You must fill out all fields marked with an asterisk (*).
Other fields are optional.

Owner Information:

This is the information about the actual owner of the livestock.

Business/Owner Name: * Joe Smith

Address: * 65123 195th Street

City/State/Zip: * Anytown, Nebraska 69999

Phone: (308) 123-4567

E-mail: jsmith49@hotmail.com

Preferred Contact Method: * E-mail

Phone

Mail

Driver's License Number: * H81245641

If you do not have a driver's license or have questions, please call 800-572-2437.

Return completed forms to:

Nebraska Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Animal Industry
P.O. Box 94787
Lincoln, NE 68509-4787

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Bureau of Animal Industry, P.O. Box 94787, Lincoln, NE 68509-4787. Third, premises can be registered by calling the NDA at 800-572-2437. (An example of this three-part form is shown above. It continues on pages three and four.)

The information needed to obtain a premises identification number, using any of the methods above, is relatively simple and not generally time consuming. Those registering need to provide the name and contact information of the owner of the livestock, along with the preferred method to contact the owner in the event of an animal health event (e-mail, telephone, or mail). The location of the premises/facility is also provided, including name of the facility, address, county, section, township, and range. Registrants also specify the type of facility. Most livestock producers will select "production unit." Live-stock auction markets should select "market collection point" and veterinarians should select "clinic." A "tagging site" might be selected by a nonproducer participant that provides custom tagging services. In this step of the application, registrants also indicate whether the facility is the primary facility or an additional facility (at least one facility must be registered for the owner of the livestock). The livestock species is not provided when registering premises in Nebraska because it will be possible to use the 15-digit individual identification numbers to determine the species.

The third step to obtaining a premises identification number is to specify a primary contact for the premises by providing name, address, and other contact information. The contact for the premises can be the owner of the livestock, or another caretaker of the livestock. Generally, the contact should be the person responsible for the day-to-day care of the livestock, who would be most knowledgeable about exposure to animal disease threats or commingling with other livestock.

Once producers or others have applied for the premises identification number, NDA verifies the existence of the address and applies for a nationally unique premises identification number from the national premises repository. Once NDA obtains the premises identification number, it is provided to the applicant. Typically, this procedure does not take long and the premises number may be returned within minutes. Some delays can currently be expected when the facility does not have a mailing address because an exception to accept the section, township, and range has to be made to the national premises allocator.

Most of the information collected in the premises registration process is available from other sources, and efforts have been made to limit the amount of information required. Only state and/or federal officials who have a need to know this information will have access to the information.

STATE OF NEBRASKA – PREMISES IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

Facility/Parcel Information:

A facility/parcel is a tract of land where animals are kept. At least one facility/parcel must be registered. The primary facility is the location of your major operation. The national premises identification number will be linked to this location.

Check if primary facility

Check if additional facility

Facility/Parcel Name: * Home Place

Address: 65123 195th Street

City/State/Zip: * Anytown, Nebraska 69999

County: * Husker County

Facility/Parcel Type: * (check only one box)

Clinic

Laboratory

Non-producer Participant

Quarantine Facility

Slaughter Plant

Exhibition

Market Collection Point

Production Unit

Rendering

Tagging Site

Section: * 33

Township: * T- 67

N S

Range: * R- 19

E W

GPS Longitude: 32' 55.40

GPS Latitude: 32' 55.40 (Example: 32'55.40)

Vet Name: Dr. Adam Adamson (Example: 32'55.40)

Make copies of this form if you need to register additional facilities/parcels.

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How Many Premises Numbers Do Producers Need?

Only one premises identification number is allowed per location, regardless of the number or type of livestock species kept at that location. Thus, a farm with both cattle and hogs would have one premises number. Many producers will likely need only one premises identification number, even if they have multiple production facilities in related geographic areas. For example, a rancher might have several outlying pastures in which cattle are moved between throughout the growing season and one ranch headquarters with corrals. One premises number would likely be appropriate if the cattle were moved between the facilities regularly. This would eliminate the need to report movement of individual animals from one ranch location to another location on the same owner's ranch if ever required by the animal tracking system.

Other situations that involve more than one location may warrant having multiple premises identification numbers. When multiple facilities are owned/operated by the same individual, and livestock are not moved between the facilities or commingled with livestock from the other facility, some producers may believe that having separate premises identification numbers could possibly prevent an animal health event from impacting both facilities (e.g.,

only one of the facilities would be quarantined instead of all of the facilities associated with the premises). However, it is likely that the entire operation would, at least initially, be quarantined. Only after providing documentation of no animal movements and commingling between the facility in question and the separate operation would an investigator consider the facilities separately. Likely, the benefit from multiple premises identification numbers would be derived from improved management decisions that result from this level of detailed records.

Producers that have production facilities in Nebraska and other states may need premises identification numbers in each state. They would likely then report animal movement between the premises. This reporting could eventually be integrated into the current health certificates that would be reported to the state. Producers with operations that straddle the state border will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the state veterinarians in the respective states.

Conclusion

Registering a livestock premises in Nebraska is a relatively simple process that only involves reporting location of food animal facilities to the NDA. Although the process is currently

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Contact Information:

A contact can be the owner of the animals or the caretaker. A contact must be associated with at least one facility/parcel. You can use the same contact for more than one facility/parcel. The primary contact will be the primary individual contacted for herd information. There can **only** be **one** primary contact per premises identification number.

Check if primary contact

Check if additional contact

Facility/parcel this contact is associated with: * Home Place

Contact Name: * Bob Smith

Address: * 65123 195th Street

City/State/Zip: * Anytown, Nebraska 69999

Phone: * (308) 789-0123

E-mail: bobsmiths230@yahoo.com

Preferred Contact Method: *

E-mail

Phone

Mail

Make copies of this form if you need additional contacts.

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voluntary, producers should consider registering their premises now in preparation for individual animal identification. Individual animal identification is also not currently mandated by the government or market; however, market forces may eventually create price discounts for livestock without identification or limit access to various markets.

Probably the most important consideration producers or others should have in registering their premises is selecting the appropriate number of premises identification numbers for their operation. By using multiple premises numbers for an operation that moves livestock between facilities (premises numbers), they would likely need to report this intra-operation movement (this determination has not yet been made). Conversely, having only one premises identification number for large confinement operations that do not move animals between its facilities might expose it to more risk in the event of an animal disease occurring at one of the facilities or limit detailed records that could emerge from animal identification which may improve production or marketing decisions. This decision will impact the way producers conduct individual animal identification in the future, the benefits they derive from it, and their recordkeeping and compliance costs.

Even as premises registration begins, there are unanswered questions about how it will integrate into NAIS. Because many issues associated with individual animal identification and recording of animal movement have yet to be resolved, the premises registration system is being constructed to have flexibility to adapt to the needs of individual animal identification and how producers and nonproducer participants report animal movement. Because premises can differ significantly by type and size, it may be that tracing animal movement through some premises will be more difficult than others.

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