



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
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## **STATE ANIMAL ID PROJECTS LAUNCH ONLINE PREMISES REGISTRATION**

*Web Site Efforts Spike Numbers; Ease First Step to Tracking Diseased Animals within 48 Hours*

WASHINGTON, March 10, 2005—States and tribes invested in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s new national animal identification system (NAIS) are increasingly offering online premises registration to ease their participants’ first step toward getting involved. Identifying each location that allows for animal commingling is the foundation of the NAIS and must be established before animals can be tracked.

For those who manage farms, ranches, auction barns, feedyards, exhibitions and fair sites, registering their premises is the first tangible action they can take to participate in the NAIS—a system being created to help protect U.S. animal health. With more than a dozen projects now underway in 30 states, USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has seen the numbers of producers interested in learning more and taking part in the NAIS rise dramatically.

“This program is crucial to keeping our producers in business,” said Missouri State Veterinarian Taylor Woods. Missouri’s animal health division has registered more than 1,400 premises since introducing online registration on Jan. 4 at [www.mda.mo.gov](http://www.mda.mo.gov) along with a mail-in .pdf form.

“For example, foot-and-mouth disease could cost Missouri producers over \$550 million in the first 30 days of an outbreak,” Woods said. “Knowing the location of animals is key to efficient, accurate and cost-effective investigations and disease-control efforts.”

With a year-long pilot project now in place, facility owners in Texas can obtain a premises identification number through the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) Web site at [www.tahc.state.tx.us](http://www.tahc.state.tx.us), or by calling TAHC headquarters in Austin at 1-800-550-8242. Ongoing efforts by TAHC include a recent mailing to more than 7,000 stakeholders describing how to register online.

“We’re trying to get the word out in as many ways as possible,” said Texas State Veterinarian Bob Hillman. “We’ve got a few hundred premises registered through the new system so far, and we plan on registering many more in the months to come.”

“We want to reach as many people as possible to let them know how important this initiative is,” Hillman continued. “In the past few weeks, Kenny Edgar—our animal ID coordinator—and I have given many, many presentations to producers to explain why NAIS is so important and to show them how easy it is to register their premises.”

According to the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC), more than 1,375 Wisconsin farm premises have been registered since the beginning of the year at [www.wiid.org](http://www.wiid.org) for a total of more than 5,800. The Wisconsin Premises Registration Act requires all areas where livestock are kept to register by Nov. 1, 2005.

“We knew the Wisconsin agriculture community would step up to the plate because it was our livestock industry that took the national lead on this issue six years ago when we formed the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium,” said state Agriculture Secretary Rod Nilsestuen. “This is a great response and a great way to start the year. I encourage members of the industry to keep the momentum going and get registered now under the voluntary program.”

With a dedicated Web site at <http://animalid.us/>, the state of Nebraska also offers online registration for producers to request a national premises identification number. In addition, the state offers a toll-free telephone number at 1-800-572-2437 if producers wish to request a paper form.

“About 90 percent of the people who’ve registered in our state have done so using the online system,” said Greg Ibach, assistant director for the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, emphasizing the importance of NAIS education and his department’s continual one-on-one communication efforts.

“When we get out in front of people, it gives us a chance to explain the value of what we’re doing, and it gives producers a chance to ask questions,” Ibach said. “This system will help us better protect animal health. When it’s fully up and running, we will be able to contain and control disease outbreaks quickly and minimize their impact. It benefits everyone.”

South Carolina initiated online premises registration program earlier this year at <http://www.clemson.edu/LPH/>. “We just launched online registration on our website in early January and have been attending meetings to show folks how it works,” said Boyd Parr, South Carolina animal identification coordinator.

“We take them through the process step-by-step so they know what to expect. We attended a pork producers meeting and although some folks were still more comfortable filling out a paper form, others registered right there at the computers we had set up on site.”

When fully implemented, the NAIS will be capable of tracing a sick animal or group of animals back to the herd or premises that is the most likely source of infection and potentially exposed animals that were moved out. USDA’s long-term goal is to establish a system that can identify, within 48 hours, all premises and animals that have had direct contact with a foreign animal disease or a domestic disease of concern.

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As of mid-March, a total of 37 states and 5 tribes were capable of registering premises according to NAIS standards. Many of these were offering registration services through their Web sites, either through direct online registration or by posting downloadable forms. In addition to the five states profiled above, those entities offering some form of online registration now include the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, Arizona Department of Agriculture, Colorado Department of Agriculture, Hopi Tribe, Idaho State Department of Agriculture, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Indiana State Board of Animal Health, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Navajo Nation, New Mexico Livestock Board, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, South Dakota Animal Industry Board, Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Washington State Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (coming soon).

Note to Reporters: NAIS news releases, frequently asked questions, state project summaries and program announcements are available at USDA’s NAIS Web site: [www.usda.gov/nais](http://www.usda.gov/nais).