

## Use of RFID Implants in Farmed Cervids

### Issue:

There is some confusion within the farmed cervid industry and States that administer federally approved CWD herd certification programs (HCPs) and TB/Brucellosis herd accreditation programs regarding the use of implantable RFID devices and which devices/ numbering systems are currently approved for use in these cervid disease programs.

### Background:

Title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations (9 CFR), part 86 – Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) rule – defines official identification methods as a means approved by the [USDA APHIS] Administrator of applying an official identification number to an animal of a specific species or associating an official identification number with an animal or group of animals of a specific species.

The Animal Identification Number (AIN), defined below, is one official identification numbering system and the only numbering system approved for implantable radio frequency identification devices (RFID):

***Animal identification number (AIN):*** A numbering system for the [USDA] official identification of individual animals in the United States that provides a nationally unique identification number for each animal. The AIN consists of 15 digits, with the first 3 being the country code (840 for the United States or unique country code for any U.S. territory that has such a code and elects to use it in place of the 840 code). The alpha characters USA or the numeric code assigned to the manufacturer of the identification device by the International Committee on Animal Recording may be used as an alternative to the 840 or other prefix representing a U.S. territory; however, only the AIN beginning with the 840 or other prefix representing a U.S. territory will be recognized as official for use on AIN tags applied to animals on or after March 11, 2015. The AIN beginning with the 840 prefix may not be applied to animals known to have been born outside the United States.

Two international standards provide compatibility of devices include ISO 11784 and ISO 11785. ISO 11784 defines the code structure for ISO compliant transponders and ISO 11785 provides the technical communication specification for readers to interrogate the transponder. The AIN, defined above, conforms with ISO 11784 code structure format and is the official animal numbering system used in the United States in ISO compliant RFID transponders (implants).

All the cervid disease programs consider ISO 11784 and 11785 compliant implantable RFID devices to be USDA official identification methods. This is consistent with language in the ADT rule.

Some industries, including the farm raised cervids, have utilized non-ISO compliant implants in the past. Removal of non-ISO compliant implants and application of compliant implants is

impractical and stressful to the animal. However, traceability must be maintained and documented for non-compliant implants through use of a registration certificate with the implant number recorded, certificates of veterinary inspection (CVIs) or other movement certificates that list the implant numbers for individual animals, herd records and/ or other documents. If the implants are not ISO 11784 and 11785 compliant, the owner/ producer may be requested to provide a reader capable of reading and displaying the implant numbers. It should be noted however, that this method of providing traceability is less robust than using 840 implants issued through the Animal Identification Management System (AIMS) as is required for implants applied after March 11, 2015.

**Resolution:**

To minimize impacts on stakeholders, the application of non-ISO compliant implants to cervids before March 11, 2014 will be considered official identification for the life of the animal. However, producers using implants for official identification are encouraged to switch to the 840 implants when their current non-ISO compliant implant supply is exhausted.

Further, RFID implants applied to cervids after March 11, 2014 **must** be ISO compliant to be recognized as an official identification method (these transponders would use either 840 or the manufacturer code prefixes). Transponders applied to cervids after March 11, 2015 **must** contain the 840 AIN to be recognized as USDA official identification.