APRIL 2019
ADVANCING ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY
ROAD MAP FOR
FLORIDA

A Three-Year Plan
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# Table of Contents

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ................................................................................................................. 3

II. CURRENT TRACEABILITY SITUATION ....................................................................................... 5
  2.1 Who are we? ....................................................................................................................... 5
  2.2 Where are we now? ............................................................................................................ 5
  2.3 Strengths and weaknesses ................................................................................................. 10
  2.4 Opportunities and threats ............................................................................................... 11
  2.5 Inventory of existing infrastructure and suitability assessment ........................................ 11

III. VISION AND MISSION CONTEXT FOR ADVANCING TRACEABILITY ...................... 12
  3.1 Vision statement ............................................................................................................... 12
  3.2 Mission statement ........................................................................................................... 12

IV. TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS ......................................................................................... 12
  4.1 Strategic goals ................................................................................................................... 12
  4.2 Objectives ........................................................................................................................ 12
  4.3 Animal disease traceability performance measures ......................................................... 13
  4.4 Data requirements ........................................................................................................... 13
  4.5 Information technology plan ........................................................................................... 14
  4.6 Resource requirements .................................................................................................... 15
  4.7 Organizational needs
    4.7.1 Executive support ....................................................................................................... 15
    4.7.2 Coordination and oversight ......................................................................................... 15
    4.7.3 Policy .......................................................................................................................... 16
    4.7.4 Staffing ....................................................................................................................... 16
    4.7.5 Budget requirements .................................................................................................. 16
    4.7.6 Outreach .................................................................................................................... 17
      4.7.6.1 Accredited veterinarians ....................................................................................... 18
      4.7.6.2 Livestock markets ............................................................................................... 18
      4.7.6.3 Industry as a whole ............................................................................................ 19
  4.8 Monitoring and reporting interstate movement activity .................................................... 19

V. TRACEABILITY IMPLEMENTATION ....................................................................................... 19
  5.1 Ranking priorities for advancement of traceability ........................................................... 19
  5.2 Implementation objectives ............................................................................................... 20

Current traceability capability .................................................................................................. 21

Measurable outcomes ............................................................................................................. 21

Acquisition and search capability of animal disease traceability data .................................. 22

Implementation of outreach and producer education ............................................................. 22
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has developed this written Animal Disease Traceability Road Map in accordance with guidelines provided by USDA. It is expected that this document will support the USDA Animal Disease Traceability Framework which has been developed as a guide for a national animal identification and traceability program.


On September 4, 2014, Florida Cattle Identification Rules (Chapter 5C-31, Florida Administrative Code) became effective. These rules require that cattle and bison 18 months of age and older, moving intrastate, bear Official Identification unless specifically exempted under the rules.

In March and April of 2017, the USDA conducted meetings with all livestock industry “stakeholders” in an effort to gain feedback from the nation and the industry on animal disease traceability. USDA expressed commitment to helping the industry move towards mutually agreeable goals and relying on industry to lead any effort to increase the focus on animal identification and animal disease traceability.

In June of 2017, the Florida Cattlemen’s Association formed a Cattle Identification Task Force. The Task Force includes representatives from each sector of Florida’s cattle industry and animal health professionals. The purpose of the Task Force is to develop a blueprint of a cattle identification program that will serve the industry. Other stated goals of this industry-led group include finding ways to increase the utilization of Official Identification. The consensus points from the first meeting were:

1. Animal Disease Traceability is needed.
2. A National System must utilize electronic technology.
3. A mandatory system will be required to be fully efficient and comprehensive. The Task Force acknowledged the difficulties of marketing a “Mandatory” rather than a “Voluntary” system.
4. Official Identification should be applied as animals first enter into commerce to link them to premises of origin.

State animal health officials recognize the need for traceability but also recognize the role that USDA will need to play by providing uniformity, funding, and a lasting commitment to make the efforts successful. Significant reductions in program activity and staffing over the last 15 years by both USDA and the state of Florida have resulted in reduced animal disease surveillance and traceability. Florida animal health officials plan to collaborate with the USDA to assist the industry with implementation of the state and federal rules that provide for a uniform, effective, and flexible system to control and eradicate animal disease.

State animal health officials can be very effective in working with industry to implement programs. A federal program is needed to establish a consistent baseline of uniformity across
state lines for animal disease traceability. The U.S. livestock industry is dependent on interstate commerce. It makes little sense to mandate premises registration, animal identification, and record-keeping only at the state level.

In September 2018, Under Secretary Ibach announced four priority goals for the progression of Animal Disease Traceability. These goals are the core of Florida’s plan to move forward over the next three years. The further announcement of a timeline for the transition to electronic individual identification in April 2019 is a critical part of the federal role in a national strategy for advancing Animal Disease Traceability.

Protecting Florida agriculture by safeguarding animal health is vital to producers and consumers of livestock products on local, state, national, and international levels. The availability of healthy livestock and poultry is a core component of providing the public with a safe, abundant, and an affordable food supply. Preventing the introduction or further spread of animal diseases that harms both livestock and the livelihoods of producers has many advantages. Implementation of traceability regulations will enable increased protection and support the economic well-being of the industry.

Although farmers and ranchers work diligently to protect their animals and their industry, there is no guarantee that their animals will be spared from disease. The challenge and threat of animal disease increases incrementally as the movement of humans and livestock domestically and internationally increases. Florida has 21 international ports. Increasing trade of animals and animal products, and a suitable climate for foreign animal diseases and pests makes Florida more vulnerable to the introduction of devastating diseases of livestock and poultry.

Protecting Florida’s livestock safeguards animal health and the marketability of the livestock products produced. The implementation of adequate disease prevention and control measures increases consumer confidence and the marketability of agricultural products. Traceability of animals is a critical factor in the control and eradication of foreign or program animal disease.

Animal disease traceability is critical to the success of Florida’s disease control activities. While prevention is our priority, an effective response system must be in place in the event of a disease outbreak. The potential emergence of highly contagious diseases makes the need even more urgent. To effectively prevent disease from spreading and to eradicate disease where it exists, tracing of infected and exposed animals, in a rapid and accurate manner, is paramount. Advancing animal disease traceability is a critical component of disease control and eradication systems. Rapid and effective response will help to minimize the negative economic impact of animal disease.

A traceability plan will support the sharing of data and animal health information between all entities when it becomes necessary. Resources needed to reach the objectives of advancing animal disease traceability include cooperation between producers, state, tribal, and federal officials and the sharing of costs as necessary.

Annual budgets can be established only after a program is further defined. Since 2009, Florida has spent an average of $245,137 annually on animal disease traceability with approximately 60% of this coming from Federal Cooperative Agreement funding. Costs associated with
animal identification, records capture and data management can be expected to be significant. These costs are expected to be borne by industry, states, tribes, and federal partners.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Division of Animal Industry (DAI), is funded primarily through general revenue dollars with no funding designated specifically for traceability. Only programs supported by fee-generated revenue are guaranteed to be funded. Cost-sharing is achieved via the use of general revenue monies. Existing funding will be utilized in support of traceability programs to the extent that funds are available. Much of the current work that is carried out for disease prevention and control involves traceability activities. In recent years, state contributions have covered approximately 40% of the cost of traceability programs.

II. CURRENT TRACEABILITY SITUATION

2.1 The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry is primarily responsible for implementing traceability initiatives. Since 2004, the Seminole Tribe of Florida has joined the Department in efforts to implement plans to increase animal disease traceability. The Department has also conducted pilot projects with other private ranchers, cattle brokers, and veterinary practitioners.

- The Seminole Tribe of Florida continues to be a partner with FDACS in traceability implementation. The Tribe's large cow-calf operation continues to be a model for demonstrating the utility of electronic identification and record-keeping as a herd management tool.
- The Division of Animal Industry has many constituents. According to USDA Ag Census data, Florida’s animal industry is made up of more than 28,000 individual producers. Approximately 67% of livestock premises are currently registered. State officials believe that these registered premises house greater than 85% of the livestock. Livestock and poultry owners range in size from owners of “backyard” flocks and herds to some of the nation’s largest brood cow herds. The Florida Division of Animal Industry is charged with protecting and assisting producers from all sectors.
- Collaboration between USDA staff, FDACS staff, veterinary practitioners, livestock markets, and producers is used to facilitate traces.
- The Florida Animal Disease Coordinating Group is a subcommittee of the Florida Animal Industry Technical Council. The Coordinating Group includes producers, industry groups, livestock market owners, a tribal representative, and an allied industry’s representative. The Coordinating Group meets as needed and also communicates via electronic mail and telephone.

2.2 Current traceability capacities vary considerably between industry sectors, and the same is true nationally. Commercial poultry and swine have implemented tracing systems that are more advanced than other sectors. Example: “Backyard” poultry and swine producers have low involvement in traceability systems and pose more risk if their animals are entered into commerce. Florida dairy and beef producers range from the most progressive to some who are slower to adopt animal identification and record-keeping measures. Many producers utilize individual animal identification for improved management capabilities or to participate
in age and source verification programs. Other producers manage their cattle without individual identification.

Implementation of the Florida Cattle Identification Rule is helping to drive the utilization of Official ID in the cattle sector. More than 600,000 Official ID devices have been assigned to Florida producers between September 2013 and January 2018.

FDACS and DAI continue efforts to protect Florida agriculture as changes and challenges are addressed. Needs and infrastructure must be balanced against budgets and other mandates.

- Animal disease traceability can be viewed as a cross-cutting component to animal health information systems. Disease traceability is integrated into all appropriate segments of the animal disease control infrastructure.
- Currently, the success of traces is monitored individually and according to various disease protocols. A system is being implemented to better measure and track traceability capability.
- Coordination within FDACS involves staff on many levels to ensure effective tracing.
- Coordination between USDA, FDACS, veterinary practitioners, livestock markets, livestock processors, and producers is used to facilitate traces.
- Other state agencies, including the Department of Health and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission are included when warranted.
- Resources of the Florida Department of Agriculture and the Florida Division of Emergency Management are available round-the-clock if warranted.

Assessment of Animal Disease Traceability Capability in Florida as of June 1, 2018:

Databases and files utilized in Florida:

- SCS CoreOne (federal instance) – records shared between state and federal Animal Health Officials. State personnel have access to the federal databases and utilize them regularly.
  - Program disease test records are entered into this database.
  - The database receives movement data through the StateVet.com web-based application.
- USDA SPRS – a national premises database is a critical component. Florida continues to utilize the SPRS and has multiple personnel with access to the system.
- Commerce Transport Imaging System (CTIS) utilized by the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement - state database to record Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspections (OCVIs) passing through Florida Interdiction Stations. This database can be used to flag and screen shipments based on several key criteria.
- OCVI Files – Florida receives OCVI information in multiple forms and has several protocols for handling this data.
  - Paper copies submitted by issuing veterinarians are filed in the state office. These files can be searched chronologically by species and state of destination or state of origin. This includes OCVIs forwarded from other states as scans of paper documents. Since 2017, cattle OCVIs with Official Identification
numbers have been entered into the VSPS system as RetroCVIs. Beginning in 2018, this entry was expanded to include OCVIIs for swine, sheep, and goats, if Official Identification is listed.

- Electronic OCVI (eCVIs) files are accessible through related databases or SCS CoreOne with some limitations. Documents pre-October 2017 are maintained per traceability standards and may be searched by hand. Florida has a policy which requires that providers of eCVIs either maintain data in their database or submit directly under USAHA xml schema to the StateVet.com application. Providers who are not approved under this policy are treated as paper CVIs. While additional providers may become an option in the future, currently approved options include:
  - Veterinary Services Process Streamlining (VSPS) – maintains a database which is searchable. Florida animal health officials have access to the system and provide some user support to veterinarians utilizing the system. This system is part of the ADTIS modernization project and is continuing to evolve.
  - Global Vet Link (GVL) – maintains a private database – Florida does not upload data from this database unless it is part of an investigation.
  - AgView CVIs – This service sends USAHA compliant xml for all CVIs directly to StateVet.com immediately on issuance.
    - This application is extensively utilized by Category I accredited veterinarians for small animals and exotic pets.
    - The CVIs must be reviewed and either declined or approved for movement into SCS CoreOne.
    - Florida protocol is to only upload CVIs with Official Identification information into SCS CoreOne. This is also limited to cattle, swine, sheep, goats, and horses with microchips.
    - Once uploaded into SCS CoreOne, state animal health officials must match premises of origin and destination or create premises which are not already in the system.

Currently, tracing in Florida is accomplished by a combination of hand search and utilization of electronic databases. Several types of tracing are performed throughout the year. The process varies based on the initial information provided and the time frame of the inquiry.

Traces initiated based on an official identification such as backtag or official ear tag are frequently requested for disease surveillance or residue concerns. Backtag information is available at the FDACS Cattle Programs Office or at the livestock market/dealer issuing the backtags. Backtag reports are forwarded by each market to the Cattle Programs Office and are available for epidemiologic investigations. Official ear tags of Florida origin can be traced within the USDA databases for all program activities. If no program activities have occurred since placement of the tag, a bookend approach and contact point of origin based on information from the database is utilized.

Traces initiated based on history of animal movement require a hand search of ICVI records maintained at the FDACS, DAI office. These records are maintained as required in 9CFR86. The CTIS (Agricultural Law Enforcement) database is utilized if there is a time frame for movement of concern. Each CTIS search can be based on species, a time frame and the state of destination/origin. Movement from Approved Livestock Markets in FL, AL and GA may
be under Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) permits issued by inspectors at the markets. These forms are entered into StateVet.com for transmission to databases of the state of destination.

Traces that identify only the premises of origin/destination can require interviews as well as information of herd history available in archived databases or current CoreOne databases. Herd records (when available) are a key factor in the success of these traces. Lack of herd records often necessitates broader investigations.

In Florida, we are fortunate to have a close working relationship with the veterinarians involved in the food animal industries and can contact them for additional specifics requiring inquiries based on a particular shipment as per ICVI records.

Current Process for Tracing Animals in Florida as of June 1, 2018:

FDACS, DAI is notified of the need to trace animals for a variety of reasons. Most commonly the tracing of animals is related to a disease situation (possible exposure or potential infected animal) or as part of an investigation related to food safety (primarily drug residue concerns). Approximately 100 traces are conducted per year in Florida. Notification is received by email, fax, phone call or, rarely, electronic notification systems. This notification originates from either state or federal animal health officials in another state or from the USDA/APHIS/VS Area Office or FDA Regional Office. Traces of various types are received. The following bullets describe how these traces are carried out based on the initial information provided.

- **Notification = Backtag number for residue concerns or slaughter surveillance suspects (58XX#### format).**
  - A slaughter date will be included in these trace requests.
  - Backtag indicates the Livestock Market or Livestock Dealer who presented the animal for slaughter by the two-letter code.
  - Livestock markets complete a backtag report for each sale day and these reports are forwarded to the Cattle Programs Office.
    - DAI has access to these records as needed.
    - Based on the report, we can identify the name of the consignor of the animal to the market.
  - Livestock dealers are required to maintain records of their purchases and sales for two years. DAI staff can contact these dealers for records as needed.
  - DAI staff contacts the consignor of the backtag in question to confirm that they did sell one or more animals on said date. DAI will gather all pertinent information regarding the specific animal in question and the herd in general.
  - Florida is working with some of the more progressive livestock markets to allow electronic transmission of backtag reports by messaging of compliant xml data directly to federal database.

- **Notification = A range of backtag numbers and animal description or slaughter date with only lot ID:**
  - Lot ID is a slaughter plant reference that will list a source such as the Livestock Market or Dealer.
  - As above, DAI staff can cross-reference animals to multiple consignors but cannot specifically identify the owner of concern.
○ DAI staff can contact all potential consignors and attempt to narrow the inquiry based on added descriptions such as color, gender, or breed of animal.
○ Example: DAI staff have had to investigate 42 potential premises related to a single trace of this type.

- Notification = Official ear tag (58xxxx## or 58xx###)
  ○ Official ear tags are distributed by the USDA to specific venues such as accredited veterinarians and FDACS, who will also distribute tags to producers.
    - Distribution to Accredited Veterinarians is through the USDA Area Office or direct shipment from the USDA warehouse. Database entry may be done by the tag allocation option in SCS CoreOne.
    - State Animal Health personnel distribute NUES9 and NUES8 tags to producers with a valid PIN and this information is entered by state personnel into AINMS.
  ○ Records of Official ID distribution are entered into either the Animal Identification Number Management System (AINMS) or SCS CoreOne.
  ○ Program testing, and vaccination records are entered into SCS CoreOne, which can be searched by a specific ear tag number. Through SCS CoreOne, DAI staff can identify the last recorded test or vaccination and the ownership of the animal at that time. The last event of record may be several years old and may have to be traced based on owner information for subsequent movement activities.
  ○ Florida does not have the space or personnel to distribute RFID tags and so is developing plans to educate producers about options to obtain 840 RFID tags from AINMS Managers who will be responsible for data entry into AINMS.
  ○ Florida will work diligently to encourage adequate AIN Managers and distribution points, such as Approved Livestock Facilities and Accredited Veterinarians.

- Notification = Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (OCVI)
  ○ DAI staff can contact the veterinarian of record if the OCVI is not legible or if believed to have been altered. Veterinarians are obligated to maintain these records for a minimum of two years. Outreach regarding the ADT rule and documentation requirements continues.
  ○ Most OCVIs have legible consignor or consignee information, but often, more additional tracing information is required.
  ○ DAI staff can verify movement through Interdiction Stations using the CTIS Agricultural Law Enforcement database.
  ○ A paper copy submitted by an issuing veterinarian is filed in the Mayo Building and is searchable chronologically. DAI maintains the current year and one year previously.
  ○ Florida continues to encourage Accredited Veterinarians to move to electronic options by demonstrations, one-on-one training, presentations at meetings, and outreach materials.

- Notification = Premises of issue
  ○ DAI will contact owner of premises according to records to aid in the search.
  ○ DAI will utilize information available in USDA databases for general herd history and information.
o When DAI has a time frame of concern, the CTIS Agricultural Law Enforcement database can be used to search for movements through the Interdiction Stations.

o DAI has occasionally gone to the herd of interest and individually checked identifications of each animal on the premises to find animals of concern.

- Notification = Animal name (equine)
  o Owners and trainers commonly provide much of the information regarding movement of horses.
  o DAI uses many available resources:
    - Equibase
    - Racetrack records and contacts with race stewards
    - Registry offices
    - Show and race result websites
  o Official lab test information
    - EIA reports
    - Equine Piroplasmosis
    - Import testing information

Florida plans to continue to encourage veterinarians to adopt electronic CVIs as multiple options are available to them. FDACS will continue training food animal veterinarians and their staff in the utilization of VSPS. GlobalVetLink (GVL) certificates are used by some veterinarians but have been used to a much greater extent in horses than in cattle. The Equine Extended CVI is a new option from GVL which will provide another layer of traceability for the equine sector. Other private companies may also add this to their services. Several veterinarians are utilizing AgView as a mobile application for issuing ICVIs electronically. Some Florida veterinarians are also working to electronically submit program disease test records for direct entry into federal SCS CoreOne.

2.3 Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths:

- Traceability is included as an integral component of animal disease control
- Florida Cattle Identification Rule (requires Official ID of adult cattle)
- Increasing utilization of electronic record-keeping systems
- Staff are capable users of available technology
- Staff are proficient users of all currently deployed database systems
- Strong FDACS, Division of Animal Industry (DAI), with staff of 114 persons
- FDACS, DAI Field Staff
- FDACS Diagnostic Disease Laboratories
- Florida Emergency Management System (ESF 17 Component for Agriculture)
- Florida Agricultural Interdiction System. Mandatory road stops at 23 locations with monitoring of health certification and animal identification.
- Food animal veterinarians who work closely with state officials and industry
- Open and Productive Dialogue with Industry
- Effective Communications and Outreach Strategies
Weaknesses:
- Paper-based, labor intensive, tracking systems
- Data entry inconsistencies complicate data searchability and make premises validation very labor intensive
- Fewer personnel for data management
- Shrinking State and Federal budgets
- Florida “Sunshine Law” which allows public access to state held information. In order to protect producer’s privacy, the Division of Animal Industry does not plan to become a manager of individual animal identification numbers or trade information. Florida will continue to rely on USDA to house animal ID data.
- Variations in regulations between states continues to cause confusion for veterinarians and producers
- Exemptions to Cattle Identification Rules and the allowances for official identification after animals enter commerce have made enforcement difficult and compliance issues are labor intensive
- Lack of traceability of animals consigned to Recognized Slaughter Facilities
- Acceptance of Backtags as Official ID for slaughter channel animals seriously complicates our ability to accomplish Animal Disease Traceability
  - Large numbers of slaughter animals are left at Approved Livestock Facilities for weeks without application of or correlation of Official Identification to Backtag
  - Slaughter establishments frequently divert cattle to feeding operations without documenting Official Identification or applying if needed

2.4 Opportunities and Threats

Continued efforts to implement both the USDA Animal Traceability Rule and the Florida Cattle Identification Rule will move traceability forward in coming years. A comprehensive state emergency management plan includes provisions to support agricultural officials in responding to animal disease challenges.

The challenge and threat of animal disease increases incrementally as the movement of humans, livestock and animal products domestically and internationally increases. Florida has 21 international ports. Increasing trade of animals and animal products, and a suitable climate for foreign animal diseases and pests, makes Florida more vulnerable to the introduction of devastating diseases of livestock and poultry.

2.5 Inventory of existing infrastructure and suitability assessment

The Division of Animal Industry has the capability to implement animal disease traceability as part of an overarching plan to protect the consumers and producers of livestock from devastation caused by animal disease. Connectivity to the full Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, as well as other agencies, broadens the scope of potential assistance. Access to USDA resources remains a critical factor in the eventual success of such programs.
III. VISION AND MISSION CONTEXT FOR ADVANCING TRACEABILITY

3.1 Vision Statement

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry’s vision statement is:
To be the most effective and innovative animal health authority in the United States.
The Division of Animal Industry is the lead state agency serving to protect the health and welfare of Florida’s livestock and poultry, support the productivity and marketability of Florida’s animal industries, and enhance the availability and safety of our food supply. Traceability plays an integral part in disease prevention, surveillance, and control and, thus, is an essential component of our Division’s responsibilities to safeguard both animal and public health.

3.2 Mission Statement

The mission of the Division of Animal Industry is to safeguard Florida agriculture and the public through animal disease control and emergency response.
The mission of the Division of Animal Industry is to prevent, control, and eradicate infectious and communicable diseases of livestock and domestic animals by working with partners and stakeholders to ensure compliance with state animal health programs and regulations. The mission includes emergency support in responding to man-made or natural disasters affecting animals. Identification and traceability play a key role in successfully carrying out this mission.

IV. TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS

These goals and objectives are intended to be progressive for the coming years and are not specific to any single year.

4.1 Strategic Goals
- To develop and implement a state-wide infrastructure for advancing animal disease traceability compatible with State, Tribal and USDA standards.
- The overarching goal is the development of a comprehensive national system of animal disease traceability.

4.2 Objectives
Florida will continue to move forward with Animal Disease Traceability through enforcement of current regulations, producer outreach and education, and working with industry. We will continue to collaborate with industry stakeholders and federal partners to enhance traceability.
- Enhance tag distribution and record-keeping system(s)
- Provide producers with information on options for obtaining 840 RFID devices
- Target, develop, and implement outreach messaging regarding data quality and processing for animal health information forms
- Develop state policy in support of federal rule(s) pertaining to traceability
• Monitor ICVI usage and data quality
• Capture available animal movement data into appropriate systems
• Improve retrieval capabilities of available traceability information
• Establish compatible standards for sharing data with States/Tribes/Territories and USDA when needed
• Integrate surveillance and traceability data

4.3 Animal disease traceability performance measures

Traceability Performance Standards
1. Notify State/Tribe were reference animals were officially identified.
2. Identify traceability unit in which reference animals were identified.
3. Notify State/Tribe from which reference animals were shipped.
4. Identify traceability unit from which reference animals were shipped.

Performance Measures
a) Time required to report to the State/Tribe of official tagging/identifying of an animal in question that has moved interstate.
b) Time required for the State/Tribe of first officially tagging/identifying of an animal in question that has moved interstate to provide record of the official tag distribution.
c) Time required to report to the State/Tribe from which the animal has moved interstate
d) Time required for the State/Tribe from which the animal has moved interstate to provide the location and contact information from which the animal was moved interstate.

Measures of Baseline Traceability
Livestock Market Identification Evaluation and Analysis
Evaluation of Traces Conducted

4.4 Data Requirements
Animal disease traceability data are acquired through various program work. Storage, retrieval and utilization will continue to be by a multi-faceted approach. Efforts will continue to make data searchable in the most efficient manner possible. Electronic means are being merged with paper-based systems. Valuable traceability data are currently collected and provided via paper formats and these are sorted and filed by date, species, origin and destination. Existing information will be integrated into any developing animal disease traceability information system. Increasing human resources will be critical in advancing data entry and data management.

• Florida will continue to utilize the SPRS for determining location identification.
• The current Florida Cattle Identification Rule accepts official animal identification as prescribed by the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).
• Discussions related to allowing only electronic identification devices as official ID have been occurring with other states and with some industry stakeholders within Florida. Florida outreach to producers will include materials to share options for obtaining 840 RFID devices.
• Florida will expand the utilization of official animal identification devices beyond the current system and on a voluntary basis with producers and practitioners.
• USDA has announced plans to discontinue support of NUES tags. With this will come increasing responsibility to help producers advance their technological skills.
• Tag distribution will be a collaborative effort.
• VS Memo 578.12 will serve as a guideline for tag distribution. Florida utilizes official forms for data collection related to tag distribution.
• Utilization of NUES and electronic tags has increased dramatically with the implementation of state and federal requirements for official identification.
• Record-keeping is a core component to all official tag systems. Tags will be assigned to an official premises/premises owner or to AIN Managers. AIN Managers must enter all tag distributions into the AINMs database. Veterinarians utilizing Official devices must submit all Official documents in compliance with 9CFR86 so that the data will be entered into the appropriate database.
• Florida recognizes the need for, and supports, all efforts to move towards more efficient storage and retrieval of animal disease traceability information.
• Data will be shared with other States, Tribes, Territories, and USDA through USDA and other databases. Current protocol will extend to traceability programs.
• In addition to ICVis, Florida Form DACS-09158 may be issued by state personnel to permit the movement of cattle to Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi from specifically approved Livestock Markets through state to state agreements.
• USDA Form, VS 1-27 is a permit for movement of restricted animals which can include interstate movement. When forwarded to Florida Animal Health officials, this information is entered into SCSCoreOne.
• Group/lot official numbers will be handled as prescribed by USDA, VS.
• Florida utilizes the USDA numbering system and does not have a system to assign state identification numbers to livestock or premise.

4.5 Information Technology Plan

Florida recognizes the need for, and supports, efforts to move towards more efficient storage and retrieval of animal disease traceability information. Current efforts include adoption of a process to include electronic search capabilities with paper storage of Official Certificates of Veterinary Inspection.

FDACS will initiate CVI data management through CVICentral.com to facilitate information sharing with other states and the federal CoreOne database.

FDACS will continue efforts to encourage the utilization of eCVIs by food animal veterinarians. It is important that USDA provide vital enhancements to the VSPS system and help-desk support as a truly viable alternative in the rapidly growing market. Providing this no-charge option to veterinarians can be an important component of a traceability plan.

4.6 Resource requirements

Animal disease traceability data are acquired through various program work. Storage, retrieval, and utilization will continue to be by a multifaceted approach. Efforts will continue to make data searchable in the most efficient manner possible. Electronic means are being merged with paper-based systems. Valuable traceability data are currently collected and provided via paper formats and these are sorted and filed by date, species, and destination.
This system will be integrated into any developing animal disease traceability information system. The shortage of human resources restricts progress of data management.

- Current FDACS staff has specific expertise to implement traceability.
- Additional data management staff and subscription to web-based integration tools, such as StateVet.com or CVICentral, may be necessary to record, process, and track large volumes of animal movement data.
- Automated data capture equipment is available in limited supply currently. Additional equipment will help to facilitate further adoption by veterinary practitioners and producers.
- FDACS has a Continuity of Operations Plan in place. This statewide plan is updated and tested annually as part of the state government’s emergency operations plan.

4.7 Organizational needs

4.7.1 Executive Support

Florida’s State Veterinarian and Director of the Division of Animal Industry is fully supportive of the development of an animal disease traceability system. Other officials, including Florida’s Commissioner of Agriculture, are briefed orally and provided documentation on program status and progress. The Division Director and Commissioner are involved in meetings and discussions with affected industry.

4.7.2 Coordination and Oversight

Internal program oversight is under the direction of Florida’s State Veterinarian and Director of the Division of Animal Industry.

External program oversight and guidance is primarily through the Florida Animal Disease Traceability Working Group. A description of the Florida Animal Disease Traceability Working Group:

The Florida Animal Disease Traceability Working Group was appointed as a subcommittee of the Florida Animal Industry Technical Council (AITC). The AITC is an official advisory board created under sec 70.38, Florida Statutes, to advise and make recommendations to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on issues concerning the protection of the animal and livestock interests of Florida. The Traceability Working Group includes a tribal representative, producers, veterinary practitioners, livestock market owners, a meat packer, and representatives from Florida Farm Bureau and the Florida Cattlemen’s Association.

This group meets according to need and meetings can be held as necessary to respond to program announcements. Information is shared via written correspondence and conference calls are scheduled as needed. Meetings of this AITC subcommittee are open to all interested parties in addition to the committee members. These meetings are announced in the Florida Administrative Register as official meetings. Additional feedback is gained through working with all industry groups and stakeholders to implement traceability.
4.7.3 Policy

Florida has broad freedom of information legislation known as the “Sunshine Law.” The information which is required to register any premises is basic and not normally considered proprietary. Most producers would prefer that individual animal identification and destination data be considered proprietary information. In order to protect a producer’s privacy, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry, does not plan to become a manager of individual animal identification numbers or trade information.

Florida Statutes, Chapter 119.07 - Inspection and copying of records; photographing public records; fees; exemptions.

119.07 (1)(a) Every person who has custody of a public record shall permit the record to be inspected and copied by any person desiring to do so, at any reasonable time, under reasonable conditions, and under supervision by the custodian of the public records.

The Traceability Working Group and industry may discuss the possibility of seeking legislative action to exempt livestock producer information from this law.

4.7.4 Staffing

Existing FDACS and USDA, APHIS, VS staff are currently utilized for implementing animal disease traceability. Division of Animal Industry staff at all levels supports traceability as a core component of the Division’s overall mission. Traceability is included as part of many activities of the Division. In addition, key staff members are identified as traceability program managers. Additional FDACS and USDA staff would be needed to increase the scale of operations to include more data capture and data management and an increase in services provided.

4.7.5 Budget Requirements

A mandatory traceability program will require additional resources. Considerable federal funding and support at the industry and state levels will be needed to implement such a program.

Annual budgets can be established only after a program is further defined. Since 2009, Florida has spent an average of $248,832 annually on animal disease traceability with 60% of this coming from Federal Cooperative Agreement funding.

The FDACS, Division of Animal Industry, is funded primarily through general revenue dollars with no funding designated specifically for traceability. Only programs that are supported by fee-generated revenue are guaranteed to be funded. Cost-sharing is achieved via the use of general revenue monies. Existing funding will be utilized in support of traceability programs to the extent that funds are available. Much of the current work that is carried out for disease prevention and control involves traceability activities.
4.7.6 Outreach

Florida's Outreach Plan includes accredited Veterinarians, Livestock Producers, Livestock Market Owners, and individuals from all industry sectors.

Outreach will be needed to explain USDA plans for rule implementation and state actions to help producers meet traceability requirements. Producer education and outreach to all will be critical to help the industry transition to electronic official identification and electronic data management.

Efforts will focus on outreach to make producers aware of the major initiative to enhance traceability. Emphasis will be placed on continuing to maintain a premises registration database. This work will have to be greatly expanded to allow official tag distribution and data capture for interstate movements. Additional emphasis will be placed on planning to enable livestock producers and the state to meet traceability requirements for implementation of federal regulations.

Specific outreach will continue to private veterinarians serving regulated species. Outreach to and through USDA Accredited Veterinarians will foster understanding of traceability by veterinarians and equip them to be animal identification resources for their customers. Program managers will be involved in training practitioners and their technicians in utilization of the VSPS. This will include the training and incentives to have data entry of ICVI information performed through eCVI data entry for shipments with inclusion of official identification.

Outreach will include training of FDACS Agricultural Law Enforcement personnel at the FDACS Interdiction Stations to capture entry and export data. Improvements to the technology available at Interdiction Stations will improve the percentage of information captured.

Information will need to be provided to producers on identification methods that will meet the requirements for official ID. Tags will have to be provided that have been manufactured and recorded through an approved Official Animal Identification Number (AIN) Manager to ensure data capture of correlated producer premises identification number and assigned tag numbers.

Livestock market owners are included on the ADT Working Group and markets will continue to be included in outreach efforts.

General outreach will continue, to the extent possible, with allowances for reductions in state (FDACS) budgets and Federal Cooperative Agreement budgets. Priorities will include maintenance of premises identification infrastructure, premises renewals, and providing timely and accurate information to all stakeholders.

Outreach will include initiatives to encourage producers who have previously registered their premises to update their premises records as needed. FDACS will continue to engage producers and industry stakeholders to seek feedback for improving traceability.
4.7.6.1 Accredited Veterinarians

The Florida Traceability Coordinating Group includes accredited veterinarians. FDACS is fortunate to have a close working relationship with the veterinarians involved in the food animal industries of Florida.

Outreach to accredited veterinarians is ongoing. FDACS cohosts an annual Food Animal Veterinary Conference and this is an excellent venue for exchange of information. DAI staff maintains the ability to contact all food animal practitioners through working with the industry to facilitate this conference. Traceability information is routinely shared as part of this conference program.

Florida’s food animal practitioners support the adoption of the USAHA XML data standards, a national format for all certificates of veterinary inspection. Uniform standards have improved the exchange of data.

Florida plans to continue working with food animal veterinarians and to provide training to them and their staff in the utilization of VSPS for electronic certificates of veterinary inspection (eCVIs). Other eCVI options, such as GVL and AgView certificates, are also currently used by some Florida veterinarians. Florida has a policy specific to approval of new providers of eCVIs and will add to the approved list as companies meet these requirements for compliance with USAHA xml schema and upload directly to our database choices.

Official identification devices (NUES tags) provided by USDA, and distributed by FDACS, will be available to producers through December 31, 2019. With the transition to 840 RFID devices, Florida will not be distributing these devices but will work to facilitate the availability from AIN Managers for all producers.

4.7.6.2 Livestock Markets

The Florida Traceability Coordinating Group includes livestock market owners. DAI staff meets annually with the Florida Association of Livestock Markets where each of Florida’s markets is represented. Traceability issues being addressed by livestock market owners are of concern to all throughout the industry and efforts are being made to address these concerns. Market owners also serve as a conduit to producers who may not personally participate in traceability implementation discussions.

Market records are accessible for animal disease investigations. Under Florida Administrative Code 5C-5 and the Code of Federal Regulations, livestock markets must allow animal health officials access to animal movement records. Florida Livestock Market owners are cooperative regarding requests for records from animal health officials.

Florida Livestock Markets serve a sector of producers who rely on the market for information pertaining to animal movement, etc. This sector includes producers who are less likely to participate in industry discussion/dialogue or receive information through trade journals. Specific outreach at livestock markets will target this producer group.

All ten (10) USDA Approved livestock markets in Florida are also Approved Tagging Sites. This allows them to apply Official Identification for their customers.
4.7.6.3 Outreach to Industry as a Whole

General outreach will continue to the extent possible through media and participation in producer meetings. Animal Industry staff is involved with all types of producer groups of all types from various food animal, equine and poultry species. Staff is also in contact throughout the year with participants in numerous livestock shows, exhibitions and sales. These venues offer excellent outreach opportunities to a wide range of livestock owners.

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is a major outreach partner in that information can be shared through their Cooperative Extension offices in every county. Outreach and education efforts also include the constituents of the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.

The Florida Traceability Coordinating Group includes industry representatives who are key contacts with producer groups. Livestock market owners represent the needs of their customers who may not personally participate in meetings of the Traceability Group. These market customers will include producers of all sizes and interests.

Meetings of the Animal Disease Traceability Working Group are advertised in trade journals and the Florida Administrative Register. The meetings are open to the public and all interested parties are invited to participate.

4.8 Monitoring and Reporting of Interstate Movement Activity

Florida's record-keeping of interstate movements is greatly enhanced by our system of Agricultural Interdiction Stations which closely monitor interstate commerce.

The FDACS Monthly and Annual Reports show:

- Number of Interstate Certificates of Veterinary Inspection and other interstate movement documents for movement into Florida:
  - Requires the tedious process of capturing from each provider as well as scans and paper documents.
  - Human resource limitations have hampered consistent collection of this data.
- Numbers of animals by species and class for intrastate movements as warranted:
  - Requires the tedious process of capturing from each provider as well as scans and paper documents.
  - Human resource limitations have hampered consistent collection of this data
- Volume and distribution of official identification devices is monitored and recorded in a USDA database (AINMs).
- Data for all program disease work shows the numbers of traces initiated and the numbers of successful traces.

V. TRACEABILITY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Ranking Priorities for Advancement of Traceability

1. Advance the electronic sharing of data among federal and state animal health officials, veterinarians and industry; including sharing basic animal disease traceability data with the federal animal health events repository (AHER).
a. Maintain Current Animal Disease Traceability infrastructure
b. Further refine tracing capabilities and procedures
c. Enhance current traceability capability
d. Optimize the acquisition and search capability of Animal Disease Traceability data.

2. Use of electronic ID tags for animals requiring individual identification in order to make the transmission of data more efficient:
   a. Continue premises identification and registration.
   b. Continue industry outreach and involvement through all possible means.
   c. Increase the utilization of Official Identification in Florida livestock.
   d. Prepare livestock producers, markets, and shippers to meet future interstate movement requirements and to better ensure traceability.

3. Enhance the ability to track animals from birth to slaughter through a system that allows tracking data points to be connected; and
   a. Continue industry outreach and involvement through all possible means.
   b. Increase the utilization of Official Identification in Florida livestock.
   c. Prepare livestock producers, markets, and shippers to meet future interstate movement requirements and to better ensure traceability.

4. Elevate the discussion with state and industry to work towards a system where animal health certificates are electronically transmitted from private veterinarians to state animal health officials:
   a. Outreach to accredited veterinarians.
   b. Support to providers and veterinarians to fulfill state and federal goals and policy
   c. Continue to work on implementation of USAHA xml schema compliance

5.2 Implementation Objectives to Accomplish Priority Goals

Five core components of Florida’s Traceability program are identified:

Animal Disease Traceability Working Group
   AITC Sub-Committee for Animal Disease Traceability
   Conduit to share information with producers throughout the industry
   Seeks input from all industry segments
   Meetings are open to the public

Premises Registration
   Continue Premises Registration
   Maintain and Update SPRS Data
   Register additional premises through all means available

Implementation of the Florida Cattle Identification Rule
   Producer Education to facilitate compliance
   Enforcement of the Rule

Increase Search capability for existing records
   Encourage utilization of electronic data collection and storage
   Continue entry of paper/scanned CVIs with Official identification into RetroCVI module of VSPS
Consider subscription to system(s) to make CVI files searchable electronically

Increase Individual Animal Identification in Florida Livestock
Ensure that records are maintained for all tags distributed
Network with owners of captured individual animal movement data
Encourage the utilization of electronic identification devices for official identification
Increase outreach to share information related to obtaining 840 RFID devices

Current Traceability Capability:

Florida has documented effective response in foreign or program animal disease traceability. Examples of past challenges include: Equine Herpes, Contagious Equine Metritis, Equine Piroplasmosis, Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) in sport cattle, Bovine TB in a large dairy herd, and traces of market cattle reactors. Time required for response to traces depends on level of priority for each case. Florida has proven its ability to respond rapidly when circumstances warrant. Efforts are more focused on completeness and attention to detail than on speed. Florida uses EMRS (Emergency Management Response System) for trace events which shows the date opened and the date closed out for each case. Time of traces can be measured with this data.

The FDACS Annual Report records foreign animal disease traces for all program disease work. This data shows the numbers of traces initiated and the numbers of successful traces. These cases are entered into EMRS.

Efforts have been made to establish baseline data on livestock transported into and out of the state to characterize numbers of shipments, numbers of animals, use of ICVI, and type of identification. This basic information will help document the state’s level of traceability.

Under Cooperative Agreements, Florida has established a distribution methodology and record capture system for official NUES “bright” tags. Participation by producers and veterinarians has increased significantly since Official Identification for movement is required. Distribution of these tags at no cost to the producer requires substantial resources for tag distribution and record-keeping. The Plan to Achieve Electronic Identification in Cattle and Bison provides a time line for the transition to exclusively electronic devices. Florida will support the process to accomplish this plan. This will require extensive outreach and education. It will be critical to encourage a significant increase in AIN Managers to make these devices readily available. Additionally, infrastructure needs are sizable for the capture of data points related to these devices.

Florida has taken measures to better enable producers to meet requirements for official identification and to better ensure traceability. Tracing will be initially from point of origin, and cooperative efforts with USDA will continue to improve tracing at the point of slaughter. The ultimate goal is to document each animal’s movement by recording and capturing animal and premises data. Florida will establish a monitoring program to gauge compliance under federal ID and certification requirements.

Measurable Outcomes:

For animals imported into Florida, the Division of Animal Industry will notify the state/tribe in which a reference animal was identified of that animal’s interstate movement into Florida.
A goal will be to make such notifications within one business day after the receipt of the data and the reference animal in 90% of all cases.

Records of animals that are first officially identified (tagged) in Florida are maintained in federal and private databases. Florida will be dependent on the AIN manager and the database query to provide adequate records of official identification. A goal will be that Florida will be able to forward the records within 5 business days of the receipt of the data in 75% of all cases.

As the receiving state, Florida will notify the state/tribe from which the reference animal was shipped within 7 business days.

When Florida is the shipping state, Florida will be dependent on the AIN manager or CoreOne to provide records to associate with the traceability unit where the animal movement was initiated. A goal for Florida will be that, in 75% of all cases, Florida will be able to forward the record within 5 business days after receipt of the record from the AIN.

Acquisition and search capability of Animal Disease Traceability data

Florida has increased efforts to enhance electronic accessibility of traceability data associated with program disease work. Florida continues to support standardized traceability data entry of animal movement data into an electronically searchable format using the USAHA xml schema. Florida hopes to work with USDA to develop or modernize automated systems which specifically address animal disease traceability. Florida’s processes for handling animal disease traceability data have been described previously in this Road Map. Florida will monitor compliance with federal requirements.

Implementation of outreach and producer education

Outreach will be needed to explain USDA’s plans for rule implementation and state actions to help producers meet traceability requirements.

Efforts will focus on outreach to make producers aware of the requirements for Official Identification. Emphasis will be placed on continuing to maintain a premises registration database. Additional emphasis will be placed on outreach and education to enable livestock producers to meet traceability requirements for implementation of state and federal regulations. State personnel will explain the shift to a state/tribal-based system and the need for development of a plan to enhance traceability and potentially respond to new regulations that are enacted.

Specific outreach will continue to private veterinarians serving the cattle sector. Outreach to and through USDA Accredited Veterinarians will foster understanding of traceability by veterinarians and equip them to be animal identification resources for their customers. This outreach will focus on encouraging electronic submission of program disease test records and utilization of eCVIs. Accredited Veterinarians will also be encouraged to become AIN Managers thus providing their clients ready access to 840 RFID devices through the transition and to be in compliance in 2023.
Outreach will include training of FDACS Agricultural Law Enforcement personnel at the FDACS Interdiction Stations to capture entry and export data. Improvements to the technology available at Interdiction Stations will improve the percentage of information captured.

Information is being provided to producers about identification methods which meet the requirements for Official ID. Tags have been manufactured and recorded through an approved AIN manager to ensure data capture of correlated producer premises identification numbers and assigned tag numbers. Resources will be maintained to help producers find options for obtaining 840 RFID devices.

Livestock market owners are represented on the ADT Working Group and are included in outreach efforts. Two livestock markets have been pro-active and are installing electronic reading capabilities within their facilities as well as developing processes to integrate data sharing efficiencies into market processes. Florida will encourage additional markets to move forward with infrastructure development to facilitate capture and sharing of data required under state and federal regulations.

General outreach will continue to the extent possible with allowances for changes in state (FDACS) budgets and Federal Cooperative Agreement funding. Priorities will include maintenance of premises identification infrastructure, premises renewals, and providing timely and accurate information to all stakeholders. Florida will work with industry stakeholders and accredited veterinarians to maximize data-sharing opportunities while protecting confidential information.

Outreach will include initiatives to encourage producers who have previously registered their premises to update their premises’ records as needed. FDACS will continue to engage producers and industry stakeholders to seek feedback for improving traceability.