

ADVANCING ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY ROAD MAP

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

A Three-Year Plan

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fundamental problem with animal disease traceability in Georgia is that we do not have a sufficient number of animals, particularly cattle, identified to allow us to quickly trace animals in the event of a disease incident or other situation where we need to trace the movement of animals. In addition, not all of the data from interstate certificates of veterinary inspection (ICVIs) and individual animal identification information are currently captured in an electronic form. By having these components better developed we will be able to trace animals in a more timely manner.

The key elements in this plan are increasing the number of cattle, sheep and goats that have individual animal identification, capturing this data in a database, ensuring that all livestock markets have RFID readers, and assisting livestock markets in upgrading their facilities to facilitate the tagging of cattle less than 18 months of age.

Previous efforts to advance animal disease traceability include encouraging producers to obtain a premises identification number. More recently, we have worked with most of the livestock markets in the state to place eartags in all cattle going through the chute while at the market.

This plan will be consistent with USDA's new framework for animal disease traceability. It will focus on cattle, sheep and goats. Traceability in the poultry and swine industries in the state is currently sufficient.

There should be no issues with supporting animal health information needs with other States/Tribes/Territories and USDA nationally. We would provide requested information to these entities as requested.

As of January 2019, the Georgia Department of Agriculture implemented a rule requiring licensure by livestock auction markets and dealers.

Timeline proposed for this plan:

- **FY 2019:**
 - Continue entering official ID data (individual animal ID numbers, ICVIs, etc.) into the SCS/CoreOne. Utilize StateVet.com or purchase another software program.
 - Continue to assist market personnel with tagging efforts at approved livestock markets.
 - Provide funding for livestock field inspectors.
 - Provide funding for program manager and ADT veterinarian.
 - Provide funding for data entry personnel.
 - Promote the use of 840 EID in livestock markets, exhibition animals, disease investigations and herd work.
 - Eliminate the use of orange metal OCV tags and distribute orange EID OCV tags.
 - Encourage and support infrastructure for reading EIDs at approved livestock markets and other locations.

- Provide training to accredited veterinarians, livestock market and Animal Health official personnel in the use of EID reading equipment and data reporting.
- Provide funding for maintenance or additional upgrades of livestock market facilities.
- Cooperate with USDA to provide compliance with ADT rule.
- Obtain premise IDs and allocate 840 EID tags to markets, exhibition animals, producers, and veterinarians.
- Support the timeline for phasing out visual-only ID, including metal NUES tags & promote the use of official EID.
- Eliminate use of 7001 pdf for animal importation.
- Stop supplying paper CVIs to accredited veterinarians, thereby promoting the use of eCVIs.
- Expand GDA electronic capability. Provide funding to increase electronic capabilities for data capture, transmission, storage and retrieval. Obtain necessary software, hardware and equipment.
- Promote the use of electronic test charts and CVIs. Continue entering all official ID into SCS/CoreOne (market tagging, test records and CVI).
- Affect rule change to require official ID (NUES, (or preferably) EID) for all Georgia exhibition livestock as per ADT.

- **FY 2020:**

- Continue data entry into SCS/CoreOne database. Utilize StateVet.com or another software product.
- Promote the use of 840 EID in livestock markets, disease investigations and herd work.
- Support the timeline for phasing out visual-only ID, including metal NUES tags & promote the use of official EID.
- Provide continuing education to accredited veterinarians, livestock market and Animal Health official personnel in the use of EID reading equipment and data reporting.
- Provide funding for maintenance or additional upgrades of livestock market facilities.
- Promote the obtaining of premise IDs and use of 840 EID tags to markets, producers and veterinarians and exhibitors.
- Continue to assist market personnel with tagging efforts at approved livestock markets. Provide funding for livestock field inspectors
- Provide funding for livestock field inspectors.
- Provide funding for veterinarian program manager and ADT veterinarian.
- Provide funding for data entry personnel.
- Cooperate with USDA to provide compliance with ADT rule.
- Affect rule changes to align Georgia Interstate Animal Health Movement requirements with ADT.

- **FY 2021:**

- Continue data entry into SCS/CoreOne database. Utilize StateVet.com or another software program.
- Expand GDA electronic capability. Provide funding to increase electronic capabilities for data capture, transmission, storage and retrieval. Obtain necessary software, hardware and equipment.
- Promote the use of electronic test charts and CVIs. Continue entering all official ID into SCS/CoreOne (market tagging, test records and CVI).
- Continue to assist market personnel with tagging efforts at approved livestock markets.
- Provide funding for livestock field inspectors.
- Provide funding for veterinarian program manager and ADT veterinarian.
- Provide funding for data entry personnel.
- Enter all official ID into SCS/CoreOne (market tagging, test records and CVI).
- Increase use of 840 EID in livestock markets, livestock exhibitions, disease investigations and herd work.
- After obtaining premise IDs, allocate NUES tags and 840 EID tags to markets, producers, accredited veterinarians and exhibitors.
- Promote the obtaining of premise IDs and use of 840 EID tags to markets, producers and veterinarians and exhibitors.
- Provide funding for maintenance or additional upgrades of livestock market facilities.
- Provide continuing education to accredited veterinarians, livestock market and Animal Health official personnel in the use of EID reading equipment and data reporting, as well the phase out process for metal NUES tags.

II. CURRENT TRACEABILITY SITUATION

- 2.1** Dr. Robert Cobb, State Veterinarian, Georgia Department of Agriculture and Dr. Michael Whicker, Acting AVIC, USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services.

Although various State/Tribe/Territory governmental agencies are tasked with animal disease traceability efforts, identifying the specific agencies/units involved in implementing this road map is essential to planning success. This also includes identifying constituents that advancing the proposed plan will impact and/or require collaboration.

- **Who are the primary constituents?**
Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Health

- **Who are the external constituents?**
Georgia Agribusiness Council, Georgia Cattlemen’s Association, Georgia Extension (4-H), Georgia Farm Bureau, Georgia Livestock Marketing Association, University of Georgia, FFA, GA Milk producers, GA Pork producers and USDA APHIS Veterinary Services.
- **What does statewide, tribal-wide, territory-wide mean?**
Statewide includes all the State of Georgia, no tribal or territory.
- **How is traceability data used internally, externally?**
Traceability is used for tracing animal disease and for education of producers and veterinarians.
- **What values guide the animal disease traceability system?**
Consistent and reliable animal ID data collection and reporting guide our ability to rapidly and accurately perform animal disease tracing.
- **What is the make-up of the animal disease traceability advisory group? How and how often are they engaged?**
Georgia Agribusiness Council, Georgia Cattlemen’s Association, Georgia Extension (4-H), Georgia Farm Bureau, Georgia Livestock Marketing Association, University of Georgia, FFA, GA Milk producers, GA Pork producers and USDA APHIS Veterinary Services. It is expected that the group will meet twice per year.

2.2 Where are we now?

In assessing the existing situation, this section is intended to link inventory of existing infrastructure with a broader range of considerations.

Currently, when we receive notification from a laboratory that we have a positive test result for a disease of interest, the State Veterinarian’s office initiates a trace and assigns it to the appropriate animal regulatory program. Our office personnel perform queries of our Traceability data. Based on the data obtained, field personnel will visit the market or other premises where the animal was tested and examine the paper (or electronic) records to determine where the animal was most recently located.

The animal disease traceability program in Georgia, and therefore this road map, will focus on cattle, transitional swine, sheep, goats, and horses. We feel that our ability to trace poultry, which is Georgia’s largest animal

agriculture sector, is sufficient. The poultry industry in Georgia maintains data that includes the location of all poultry operations in the state. The poultry industry works closely with GDA to provide GPS data for premise identification. We have tested the system and have been able to demonstrate that we can use this system to trace both commercial and backyard poultry. We also feel that the current system for traceability of commercial swine in Georgia is sufficient. Breeding swine are officially ID and tested at approved markets with tags similar to cattle. These swine are quarantined to premise of the purchaser until official test results are obtained. This enables better traceability. Animals that go to non-breeding swine sales are always consigned to slaughter and do not return home.

Exhibition swine are required to be officially identified when tested for brucellosis and PRV. Electronic ID is strongly encouraged and provided upon request.

2.3 Strengths and Weaknesses

- **What are the strengths of the organization in terms of technology, human resources, personnel capabilities, etc.?**

Strengths include the presence of a well-trained animal regulatory program and field force. Established protocols are routinely followed. GDA has employed two full-time personnel that enter data related to ADT. StateVet.com, SCS CoreOne, and Excel spreadsheets are used as the primary means of data collection, reporting and storage. Due to extensive outreach (i.e. - creation of the GA Food Animal Conference, LMA, GA cattlemen and GA swine producer meetings) with livestock markets, producers, exhibitors and veterinarians, strong working relationships have been developed to improve the Georgia's Traceability program.

- **What are the weaknesses in terms of “lack of” technology, human resources, personnel capabilities, etc.?**

The primary weakness is the lack a centralized database for data capture and storage, as well as limited use of EID. A secondary weakness is the lack of a standardized official EID technology. Although we have improved upon our digital capabilities, further progress is required. Areas for improvement are:

- increased use of digital collection/reporting by increasing widespread adoption of EID
- availability of compatible cost-effective data systems for improved efficiency of data transmission, storage and retrieval

- improved ADT compliance of livestock markets, producers and veterinarians

2.4 Opportunities and Threats

The basis for this component is the assumption that improving the capacity to trace animal disease will create opportunities for those involved that would not be available should traceability not be optimized. At the administrative level, implementation of standards for improving efficiencies of information collection, storage, sharing, and security would be an opportunity. Every State/Tribe/Territory is subject to catastrophic events, such as tornados, wildfires, drought, winter storms, animal/zoonotic disease, flooding, hurricanes and other natural or man-made events.

Does this plan create an opportunity in ability to respond?

In the event that a foreign animal disease or other disease of concern enters Georgia, or if there is a natural disaster that affects livestock or poultry in Georgia, having animal identification and an established traceability system will allow us to respond to these events much quicker than if such a system was not in place. The ability to utilize electronic data would provide for a more efficient emergency response.

2.5 Inventory of existing infrastructure and suitability assessment

This section is intended to provide a more detailed and technical assessment of existing infrastructure than the “Who we are” section. An outcome of this section is to support the requirements analysis for funding prioritization and justification.

- **Human resources**
 - Existing: two full-time data entry/administrative positions, one livestock/poultry program manager (ADT coordinator), supply and inventory specialist, two veterinarians
 - All resources listed above have a limited amount of time devoted to ADT based on other priorities and functions assigned to the positions.
- **Space availability**
 - Current office space will be used.
- **Connectivity resources, both in office and in the field**

Standard connectivity is present in the office. Field forces are equipped with smart phones and computers with wireless connectivity capability, although connectivity is dependent upon location.

- **Access to USDA animal disease traceability and animal health information resources**

Data entry and epidemiology personnel have access at this time, which meets present needs.

- **Organization of all existing paper record systems used to access animal disease traceability or animal health information**

CVI's, calf-hood vaccination and test records are currently received and stored in scanned or paper files. Vaccination and test records are recorded digitally in a database. Overall, this method of data storage and retrieval is not as efficient as it could be when conducting trace activities.

- **Computerized data management capability, including present storage size, speed, security, etc.**

We currently have IT support to maintain our GDA smart phones and computers. We utilize SCS CoreOne & StateVet.com for data entry and storage. Regarding storage, GDA utilizes department managed server space in addition to large volume external hard drives. Speed and security are managed by the GDA IT division.

- **Automated data capture capability**

GDA has acquired wand readers and handheld units through Cooperative agreement funds. In addition, all field personnel are equipped with a smart phone application for Bluetooth EID data capture.

III. VISION AND MISSION CONTEXT FOR ADVANCING TRACEABILITY

3.1 Vision Statement

The vision of the Georgia Department of Agriculture is to continue to be a globally recognized leader in agricultural excellence through a commitment to safety, quality, growth and innovation.

3.2 Mission Statement

The mission of the Georgia Department of Agriculture is to protect consumers, promote agriculture both locally and globally, and assist our customers using education, technology and a professional workforce.

IV. TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Strategic goal(s)

The strategic goal of this program is official identification of eligible species and data collection/storage/retrieval to improve traceability. Cattle, swine, sheep and goats will be the species of focus with an emphasis on cattle.

We will evaluate our progress and then improve and refine our processes.

4.2 Programmatic goals (objectives)

The programmatic goals are as follows (they will be the same for the three years of this road map, possibly growing each year):

- Upgrade cattle-working facilities at livestock markets to facilitate the use of electronic tag application and data collection. An upgrade such as an EID panel reader can improve the data integrity, worker/animal safety, maintain speed of commerce and reduce animal stress.
- Continue outreach messaging with veterinarians, producers, livestock markets, exhibitors
- Shift the distribution of tags directly from tag manufacturers to requestors (e.g. veterinarians, producers, livestock markets, exhibitors).
- Ensure CVIs are accurately completed and submitted on time.
- Promote the use of eCVIs in order to provide data to states, tribes, and USDA in a timely fashion.
- Improve electronic data collection, transmission, storage and retrieval methods to meet the demand required for efficient use of the growing volume of data.
- Continue to research newly improved data collection and database solutions.

4.3 Animal disease traceability performance measures

Traceability performance standards are established to:

- Notify a State/Tribe where an animal was officially identified and shipped from

- Provide a response to a State/Tribe in a timely regarding an animal that moved interstate: where did the animal move from (location and contact information); where is the official tag distribution record for the identified animal

The ability to meet these goals will be dependent upon the transition from primarily paper CVIs to electronic CVIs and an efficient database to maintain/query the digital records.

4.4 Data requirements

Location identification will be through Premises ID numbers issued by the Georgia Department of Agriculture or USDA-APHIS-VS using the USDA allocator. Official USDA approved ID tags (NUES and AIN tags) and registration tattoos and brands when accompanied by official registry paperwork will be accepted. With premises ID, producers/exhibitors and official tagging sites can apply for official ID tags issued by GDA, either NUES tags (while still available) or RFID 840 tags. Approximately 75,000 official tags are expected to be distributed or purchased per year. GDA upon request will provide tags to producers (or other requestors) who have a premises ID. Producers will need to purchase taggers directly from the manufacturer of their choosing.

The AIN management system will be used for EID tag allocation. SCS CoreOne tag allocator will be utilized for NUES tags. Producers who request official identification tags will be notified that the tags are to be used for their animals only and are not to be given out to other people, such as their neighbors. A requestor (i.e. producer, veterinarian, etc.) contacts the Georgia Department of Agriculture for tags. Utilizing an official premise ID, an allocation record will be generated within the appropriate database (AIN or SCS CoreOne) and the tags will be shipped directly to the requestor. Proper records should be kept for 5 years.

Producers interested in a commuter herd agreement are required to apply and obtain an official commuter herd agreement. This agreement will be signed by all state animal health officials involved.

Georgia approved tagging sites may utilize the approved Georgia interstate movement document. This document is accepted by the following states: AL, FL, KY, MS, NC, SC, and TN.

Upon another state's request, the data will be furnished to the requesting state by phone, fax or e-mail during business hours (the data may be shared outside of business hours on an emergency basis). In addition,

participating states may share information utilizing StateVet.com movement records.

Groups and lots are not utilized routinely in Georgia. Most eligible animals are sold individually by the head or by the pound. We will rely on producers to keep this information (for example, pen numbers).

4.5 Information technology plan

- State funds are used to purchase computers for office use, but Federal funds will be needed to support the other components.
- Continue to provide electronic alternatives to veterinarians in an effort to reduce paper records.
- Continue to research and evaluate alternative and new database solutions.

4.6 Resource requirements

- RFID readers (panel/wands/PDAs) are needed for all 22 livestock markets
- Livestock markets will need to upgrade to accommodate RFID panel readers and safer animal handling facilities.
- Livestock markets will need to upgrade their facilities to facilitate tagging of cattle less than 18 months of age.
- Continued cooperative agreement Traceability funding for the purchase of EID technology

4.7 Organizational needs

GDA Animal Industry Division includes livestock/poultry field forces (LPFF). LPFF assists the Animal Health Division with ADT management and implementation. Due to recent federal changes within the ADT framework, it is necessary to identify and hire an ADT program manager and for a field Veterinary Medical Officer to develop expertise in ADT.

Other programs within Animal Industry, such as equine health or companion animal field forces can be leveraged if necessary. These programs routinely work together on various animal health needs.

4.7.1 Executive support

Commissioner Black has indicated that he is in support of animal disease traceability. The Chief Operating Officer of the Georgia Department of

Agriculture holds regular monthly meetings at which time he will be briefed on the progress of animal disease traceability in Georgia.

4.7.2 Coordination and oversight procedures

Dr. Robert Cobb, State Veterinarian, is primarily responsible for advancing animal disease traceability. ADT coordination and oversight procedures are implemented by the ADT Program Coordinator within the Animal Health section. In addition, outreach to industry and input from producers, livestock markets, veterinarians and exhibitors provide feedback for development of Georgia's ADT program.

The animal disease traceability advisory group will meet twice per year and consists of the following: Georgia Agribusiness Council, Georgia Cattlemen's Association, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Georgia Extension (4-H), Georgia Farm Bureau, Georgia Livestock Marketing Association, University of Georgia, FFA, GA Milk Producers, GA Pork Producers and USDA-APHIS- Veterinary Services.

Multi-State meetings are held to discuss traceability issues and to coordinate regional interstate movement agreements.

4.7.3 Policy

The Southeast Livestock Network, LMA and SAHA are working in parallel and may develop a policy decision for our regional efforts.

4.7.4 Staffing

We manage Georgia as a cooperative state with State and Federal personnel and will continue to do so. Personnel needed to implement the plan include a hired ADT program manager, current field staff, current data entry personnel and additional field and data entry staff. Further training of personnel in information technology will be essential to the goals of Georgia's ADT Road Map.

4.7.5 Budget requirements

Funding for animal disease traceability is through the Georgia Department of Agriculture general budget as well as the Federal cooperative agreements. GDA Animal Industry Division does not receive any specifically allocated funds for ADT. Changes to the federal ADT framework have necessitated budget increases while the amount of cooperative agreement funding GDA receives has decreased over time.

4.7.6 Outreach

Successful implementation of any plan to advance animal disease traceability cannot be achieved without outreach to constituents primarily affected by the plan.

4.7.6.1. Accredited veterinarians

Accredited veterinarians will be informed about the new framework and the three-year plan for implementation through a variety of settings. This would include written communications through the Georgia Veterinary Medical Association (their newsletter, website, etc.), the GDA website, the GDA's Farmer's Market Bulletin, mailings from GDA directly to veterinarians, during the accreditation core orientation and one-on-one accreditation visits, and at state or national meetings.

Continuing education to improve data quality relative to animal health information systems being used and to encourage the submission of official forms in a timely manner will be provided by State and Federal field VMOs. They will be making personal visits to all mixed and large animal/food animal practitioners in their sections. These personal visits will also be used to encourage the use of eICVIs (though their use is not mandatory).

The Georgia Food Animal Conference was initiated by the Georgia Department of Agriculture in March of 2015 to provide continuing education and opportunities for discussion of current animal health issues and interaction between GDA and Georgia food animal veterinarians.

With official USDA premises ID, official ID tags may be dispensed to accredited veterinarians who will be applying them for small producers (those with 100 animals or less) so that these small producers will not need to order the tags for themselves. Larger producers would need to order the tags directly from GDA or a manufacturer of their choosing.

4.7.6.2 Livestock markets

Continuing education efforts will be conducted primarily while GDA livestock inspectors are working at the livestock markets and while federal employees are conducting quarterly inspections of the markets. The State and Federal employees will be able to answer questions and if the market has concerns or problems that the field employees cannot answer, they will refer them to the GDA Office or the Georgia Area Office. In addition, market visits will be conducted by GDA State Veterinarian or ADT Coordinator as needed.

All eligible Georgia livestock markets are approved official tagging sites. Traceability information from livestock markets is obtained by field personnel at the request of the State Veterinarian. Upon request, GDA ADT Coordinator will query all available electronic records and associated databases. Information obtained will be forwarded to the District field office and assigned to the appropriate field personnel. They will then coordinate with the livestock market to obtain buyer/seller information. This information is routed back to the ADT Coordinator and State Veterinarian for action.

4.7.6.3. Industry as a whole

Industry (specifically cattle, swine and small ruminants) will be informed about the implementation plan through the Georgia Cattlemen's Association, the Georgia Agribusiness Council, Georgia Extension, 4-H, the Georgia Farm Monitor, Georgia Farm Bureau, the Livestock Market Association, the University of Georgia, FFA, Georgia Milk Goat Association, Georgia Meat Goat Association, Georgia Wool Growers, Georgia Milk Producers, GA Pork Producers, and through GDA publications (website, Farmer's Market Bulletin). GDA has formed technical advisory groups in cooperation with industry in order to facilitate information sharing.

Information is disseminated through a GDA bi-weekly newsletter, GDA website and multiple social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter etc.).

We will ask these organizations to advise their members about updates associated with Georgia's Animal Disease Traceability Road Map plan and will also offer to give presentations about the plan at their meetings.

Under-represented and under-served communities will be reached through Extension at Georgia's 1890's University, Fort Valley State University. This may include producer meetings, field days and communication with the professors and extension agents. We will also provide outreach at TAG (Team Agriculture Georgia) workshops around the state.

4.8. Monitoring and reporting interstate movement activity

All CVIs (move-in and move-out) and approved Alternate Movement Documents are counted and reviewed for data capture and ADT compliance. In addition, the number of animals, by species, are counted and recorded in order to provide data for quarterly/annual reports.

Official identification devices (back tags, NUES and AIN) are managed and distributed using allocation systems within AIMS and SCS CoreOne. USDA allocated premise identification is required prior to distribution of official identification devices. Allocation records are queried quarterly/annually for data reporting.

GDA is continuing to transition to digital collection, storage and reporting to increase efficiency and provide time to focus on compliance. We will report the data as requested.

V. TRACEABILITY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Ranking of priorities for advancement

- The highest priority is to maximize the use of electronic data collection, storage and retrieval. New data (i.e. individual ID numbers, ICVIs, etc.) will be entered utilizing SCS CoreOne and Statevet.com.
- Tagging efforts will continue at livestock markets. All markets are approved Official Tagging Sites and are responsible for application of official identification of all eligible species.
- In addition, we plan to ensure that RFID readers (wands or panel readers) are available for use at all livestock markets.
- We will continue to cooperate closely with USDA to promote and enforce compliance of the ADT rule through outreach and utilization of personnel.
- The markets that sell cattle less than 18 months of age do not have adequate facilities to tag this group of cattle. In the event that this age group of cattle is included in the ADT rule, we will need to make sure that these markets have appropriate facilities to tag these cattle.

5.2 Implementation of objectives

Accepting that each year's cooperative agreement work plan will likely be a collection of objectives, this section is intended to identify each of the objectives prioritized in V.5.1. and correspondingly listed in IV.4.7.5. and describe how each project will be conducted or approached. Objectives should be listed and ranked as priorities for each of the planned three years, aligning with the three-year budget plan.