

PROCEEDINGS: National Animal Identification  
System Listening Session

PLACE: 1143 Northwest US Highway 41  
Jasper, Florida

DATE and TIME: June 25, 2009; 9:00 a.m.

REPORTED BY: Cynthia F. Leverett  
Florida Court Reporter

ORIGINAL

MODERATOR: Kim Ogle

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Tom Holt  
Dr. Paco Collazo  
Allen Tyre  
Ray Mobley

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1           KIM OGLE: Good morning, everyone, and  
2 welcome. My name is Kim Ogle. And I'm going to  
3 be your moderator this morning. I am from the  
4 Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA,  
5 from the organization called Policy and Program  
6 Development. And this morning, to start things  
7 off, we have a message from the Secretary of  
8 Agriculture, Secretary Vilsack.

9           (Whereupon a recorded message from USDA  
10 Secretary Tom Vilsack was published.)

11          KIM OGLE: We have a few officials with us  
12 this morning that would like to make some  
13 welcoming remarks. The first is Dr. Tom Holt.  
14 He is the state veterinarian for the State of  
15 Florida. He's also the director of the Division  
16 of Animal Health.

17          Dr. Holt.

18          TOM HOLT: Thank you, Kim. I appreciate all  
19 you folks coming this morning. Some of you came  
20 from a ways, I know. And Steven and I got up at  
21 5:00 this morning to come. And others of you  
22 have made more of an effort than that, I know.  
23 So I appreciate your coming. And I appreciate  
24 the USDA hosting this meeting.

25          I've been working with animal disease control

1 and eradication programs for probably thirty-plus  
2 years now. And animal identification is an  
3 important issue. The subject is close to my  
4 heart.

5 As the secretary has mentioned, you know, we  
6 need to work together and come up with some  
7 solutions here. We recognize there are a lot of  
8 problems with some of the things that are being  
9 done and the projections of where we're going.

10 But I think this opportunity to have people  
11 come together and hear different opinions gives  
12 us a chance to kind of work together to kind of  
13 come up with solutions that are practical and  
14 realistic and can be done in the farms and the  
15 markets that we work in.

16 So, again, thank you very much for coming.  
17 And thank you, USDA, for hosting us.

18 KIM OGLE: Thank you, Dr. Holt. Our USDA  
19 presiding official today is Dr. Paco Collazo.  
20 Dr. Collazo is the area veterinarian in charge  
21 for the State of Florida. Dr. Collazo.

22 PACO COLLAZO: Thank you. And good morning  
23 to you all. As Kim said, I'm Dr. Collazo, an  
24 AVIC for the Federal USDA Government in  
25 Gainesville, Florida. And I, too, would like to

1 welcome you to the listening session concerning  
2 the National Animal Identification System. I  
3 want to thank you all for taking valuable time  
4 off your farms, jobs, or your home to attend this  
5 meeting and provide and share your ideas.

6 As Secretary Vilsack said, the point of this  
7 meeting is that we are here to listen to what you  
8 have to say about the program and also get your  
9 points, your issues known.

10 We all play important roles in ensuring our  
11 nation maintains a safe and abundant food supply  
12 both for American people and also people around  
13 the world.

14 We believe the national ID system is very  
15 important tool to help us protect our nation's  
16 livestock from disease in the event of the  
17 disease outbreak. It will give us much more  
18 timely data to inform our decision makers. It  
19 would also speed our response and effort and  
20 enable us to better focus our control on  
21 eradication effort on those animals infected or  
22 exposed to disease. This should translate to a  
23 shorter and cheaper and more effective disease  
24 response program that cause less disruption to  
25 you and your neighbors.

1           If you raise animals to sell, you're able to  
2 resume the movement of your animal through normal  
3 markets more quickly with this system in place.  
4 This could mean spending less on unplanned animal  
5 feed and care costs as you wait for restrictions  
6 to be lifted and savings for you.

7           For those who look to export their animals or  
8 animal product after an outbreak of the disease,  
9 with this system we will be able to better  
10 position and negotiate the reopening of overseas  
11 markets that are so critical to you and our  
12 economy.

13           We realize that many of you are seriously  
14 concerned about NAIS, but let me make clear, with  
15 respect to your opinions, your ideas for moving  
16 is important to pull the program forward. That  
17 is why we're here today.

18           Again, as Secretary Vilsack said, we need a  
19 system in place, whatever that is, that protects  
20 the health of the US livestock, but he has been  
21 very clear in saying that the system needs to  
22 be -- to have the support of the majority of the  
23 producers both big and small.

24           Our goal for this listening session is to  
25 stand back, listen to you, and be ready to

1 capture the creative solutions that we hope will  
2 emerge.

3 We will be tape-recording the sessions today  
4 so that we can be sure we capture all your  
5 concerns and ideas and pass them to the Secretary  
6 of Agriculture. However, if for some reason you  
7 don't get a chance to share everything you wanted  
8 to say, we're seeking your written comments as  
9 well.

10 Your comments can be submitted through the  
11 web site noted in your information sheet  
12 handout. I personally assure you that every  
13 written comment will be read and carefully  
14 considered before we move forward.

15 Our discussion sessions today will focus on  
16 important issues the producers have often raised,  
17 such as implementation costs, impact of small  
18 scale farmers, privacy, confidentiality and  
19 liability.

20 This discussion session will also allow you  
21 to weigh in your concerns regarding premise  
22 registration and animal identification and animal  
23 tracing. But, again, we want to hear your  
24 concerns and ideas for solutions, not only on  
25 this topic, but any aspect of the system that you

1           might think.

2           This is your meeting to tell us what you  
3           feel. We need to know and understand your  
4           perspective of the system. At the end of the day  
5           we want to learn what program options you could  
6           support so that we can pass that information to  
7           Secretary Vilsack. This information will be  
8           critical in helping him to determine how USDA in  
9           partnership with you can forge a more effective  
10          and successful and acceptable system to protect  
11          animal health.

12          Before I close, I want to mention that we  
13          have hosted several of these sessions since April  
14          and heard some common themes based on the  
15          experiences. These are some of the few key  
16          points we wanted to make right away.

17          Number one, registering your farm or ranch  
18          has absolutely no effect on property ownership.  
19          Registering your farm does not create a lien or  
20          any kind of interest for the government or anyone  
21          else. Just registering as -- as you register  
22          your car or your truck for license plate can  
23          place no property interest in that vehicle,  
24          registering your farm or ranch can place no  
25          property interest.

1           Number two, USDA will not expect or require  
2 any property owner to register the property if  
3 that owner doesn't want to move animals in  
4 commerce. For example, if you raise a few  
5 animals for your own consumption or to share with  
6 friends, relatives or neighbors, you are not  
7 expected or required to register your property.  
8 You may choose to do so because it will allow  
9 USDA and its state partners to communicate  
10 valuable information to you in case of a nearby  
11 disease outbreak, but you are not required to  
12 register.

13           Another example is that if you keep horses  
14 for your own riding pleasure, you are not  
15 expected to register your property.

16           USDA will not require anyone to violate their  
17 religious beliefs to participate in NAIS. First,  
18 anyone not moving in commerce will not be  
19 expected to register or required to register  
20 their property. Those who may move animals in  
21 commerce could have their animals tagged as their  
22 own property at a tagging site.

23           And, finally, I want -- there's a real need  
24 for NAIS, to tell you that there's a real need  
25 for NAIS. We have heard the common frequently

1 raised that NAIS is not needed because current  
2 animal disease programs are adequate in the  
3 United States.

4 It is true that USDA program are well  
5 advanced. However, the very success of many of  
6 our major disease programs has now resulted in  
7 fewer animals being enrolled in disease programs,  
8 which equates to fewer and fewer animals ever  
9 being identified. These situations have resulted  
10 in serious gaps in our current information  
11 infrastructure. As a result, it takes  
12 significantly longer to trace animals in disease  
13 situations.

14 For example, during the recent bovine TB  
15 investigations that took an average of a hundred  
16 and eight-six days to complete, farms were placed  
17 on quarantines, businesses were disrupted and man  
18 hours and resources were great.

19 NAIS is a proactive approach, ensuring that  
20 animals are ID'd before disease events. By  
21 supporting rapid traceability, it will help  
22 livestock and minimize production losses and  
23 disruption to the markets.

24 Before we move to hearing your comments, I  
25 just want to say that I'm looking around the room

1 and I think one thing we can all agree on, bottom  
2 line is that it's the desire for Americans and  
3 animals throughout America to remain healthy and  
4 free of disease. I hope the unifying focus will  
5 be the compass that will guide us in our  
6 discussion today and in the future.

7 In that spirit, I would also like to echo  
8 Secretary Vilsack one more time and thank you all  
9 in advance for extending your courtesy and  
10 respect to everyone at this meeting. I and the  
11 Secretary of Agriculture very much look forward  
12 to hearing your thoughts and concerns, solutions  
13 and issues.

14 Thank you so much and have a great day.

15 KIM OGLE: Thank you, Dr. Collazo. I want to  
16 thank the agricultural extension service for  
17 hosting us here today. And Mr. Allen Tyre would  
18 like to have an opportunity to make a few  
19 welcoming remarks. He is the agricultural agent  
20 with the extension service for Hamilton County.  
21 Mr. Tyre.

22 MR. TYRE: I just want to welcome each of you  
23 here today. And if I can assist you in any way  
24 or if you have any questions, don't hesitate to  
25 ask me. The restrooms are to my left. The water

1 is up in the lobby, if you get thirsty during the  
2 session, it's to my right. And I will be at the  
3 back of the room. So if you have any questions,  
4 don't hesitate to ask me.

5 KIM OGLE: Okay. Let's get started here  
6 today. I want to go over a few things about how  
7 the day will run. First of all, I want to remind  
8 you that today is about listening to you.  
9 Listening to your concerns, to your ideas, and,  
10 hopefully, to your suggestions.

11 Let's take a look at the packet that you were  
12 given today when you registered. I want to go  
13 over it a little bit with you so that you're  
14 familiar with what's inside.

15 On the right-hand side of the package is, of  
16 course, a notebook and a pen. And there is a  
17 Power Point presentation with some informational  
18 information on the NAIS system. We can show this  
19 Power Point presentation during lunch, if you're  
20 interested, but we will not be showing this  
21 during the program today. If people are  
22 interested, I can arrange to have that shown  
23 during lunch, if folks are interested. And I'll  
24 take sort of an interest at the noon-time break.

25 On the left-hand side of the package is a

1 letter from Dr. John Clifford, who is the Deputy  
2 Administrator from Veterinary Services; a news  
3 release from Secretary Vilsack, announcing all  
4 the animal ID sessions and their locations; and a  
5 handout listing how to submit your comments with  
6 the online address, the web site address, and the  
7 mailing address, if you would like to continue  
8 sending comments in to the USDA. Also, is a copy  
9 of the agenda. Why don't you take that out and  
10 let's go over that a little bit in detail.

11 After I finish going over a few more  
12 housekeeping and logistics information we'll  
13 begin the opening session.

14 Each of you were given a red ticket this  
15 morning. And in the event that we had a large  
16 crowd, we would've had a lottery for the  
17 speaking. But since we have less than  
18 twenty-five people that want to speak, I'm just  
19 going to call participants by name.

20 I'll call people up five at a time. And you  
21 can have a seat here and wait your turn to  
22 speak. Okay? That's the way we'll do it.

23 After the noon-time break, we'll go into  
24 breakout sessions and have a more intimate  
25 conversation. And I think we'll just break into

1 two breakouts. We have less people than  
2 expected, so we'll just evenly divide into two  
3 groups, maybe half the room here. And one group  
4 will stay in the main auditorium. And the other  
5 group will go down the hall to the first room on  
6 the right. And we'll have facilitated breakout  
7 sessions, where you can continue your concerns  
8 and ideas about the NAIS program. And we'll have  
9 NAIS program experts in there to help field some  
10 of your concerns and perhaps answer a few of your  
11 questions.

12 Everything today needs to be said into the  
13 microphone. And we're going to ask you to state  
14 your name and your affiliation. Everything is  
15 being recorded so that it can be taken back to  
16 Washington for Secretary Vilsack and his staff.  
17 This morning we also have a transcriber, so it's  
18 being transcribed as well. In the afternoon  
19 sessions it will be recorded also. So each time  
20 you speak, you'll be reminded to state your name  
21 and your affiliation. That way we'll have some  
22 context around your comments and it will help us  
23 to analyze the comments and present the data to  
24 Secretary Vilsack's office.

25 At noontime we will be providing box

1 lunches. And -- let's see. Mr. Tyre told me  
2 where that lunch time place was going to be.  
3 Where did I put my note? Here it is. Out the  
4 back door here and across a sidewalk there's --  
5 to the next building is where the lunches will be  
6 served. And as I mentioned, the box lunches will  
7 be provided complimentary of the agricultural  
8 extension office.

9 Let's see. What have I forgotten to tell you  
10 here? I think that's it. I think we're ready to  
11 get started.

12 Okay. With that said, I'm going to begin to  
13 call five names at a time. And if those folks  
14 would kindly step down here and take a seat and  
15 be comfortable, you can take your turn at the  
16 microphone and begin making your public  
17 comments.

18 I would also to recognize Ray Mobely, the  
19 director of the extension program. He is with  
20 the FAMU. Would Dr. Mobely like to make any  
21 comments? I don't think you were in the room  
22 when I started, but I'd like to invite you to the  
23 microphone before we start, if you'd like to make  
24 any welcoming remarks.

25 RAY MOBLEY: Good morning. On behalf of

1 Florida A and M University; our president,  
2 Dr. Ammons; the College of Engineering and  
3 Sciences Technology and Agriculture; and the  
4 Cooperative Extension Program at Florida A and M  
5 University, I would like to welcome all of you  
6 here to this listening session. I thank the USDA  
7 for inviting us to be a part of hosting this  
8 activity.

9 I want to thank also the local USDA program I  
10 want to thank the University of Florida  
11 Cooperative Extension Program for its support  
12 that they provided to us in putting this program  
13 together.

14 I especially want to again recognize the  
15 efforts of Mr. Allen Tyre. Without his efforts  
16 to pull this together, we would not have this  
17 level of activity. And, so, I want to especially  
18 thank him for all of the effort that he put into  
19 putting this together.

20 I want to also thank you, our constituents,  
21 for coming out. We join with all of you in  
22 looking for practical solutions to the animal  
23 identification process, as well as other issues  
24 that affect the agricultural industry. And we  
25 just want to make sure that, if you have concerns

1 or issues, we would encourage you to contact us,  
2 as well as any of the folks that are working with  
3 the agricultural area, and seek solutions that  
4 will benefit all of our constituents.

5 Again, thank you. We welcome you.

6 KIM OGLE: Thank you very much. Okay. The  
7 first five speakers will be Tonya Yates, Mark  
8 Harrell, E. J. Bisch, Patricia Blubaugh, and  
9 Maria Minno. And I do apologize if I  
10 mispronounce anyone's name.

11 MARIA MINNO: My name's Maria Minno. I'm a  
12 consumer. I'm a nutritional therapy  
13 practitioner. And I'm also a field biologist and  
14 environmental consultant. Thank you all for  
15 being here.

16 This is truly a significant issue, not just  
17 for farmers, but in the history of this nation,  
18 because today we're discovering whether or not  
19 the US -- the United States will continue to have  
20 small farms or if it will forfeit them completely  
21 in order to give factory farms free rein.

22 I'm here because the government's push for  
23 the National Animal Identification System is  
24 truly frightening to me. It's true that we have  
25 had a series of terrible poisonings from mass

1 produced foods. It's true that these poisonings  
2 are now at a larger scale and affecting more  
3 people than ever. Yet, the National Animal  
4 Identification System, NAIS, is a direct threat  
5 to my health and safety.

6 Because of mercury poisoning, I get very sick  
7 from eating processed foods and foods that have  
8 pesticides on them. I don't think I'd be alive  
9 today if I didn't have a local small farm  
10 community that produces the kind of high quality  
11 foods that have helped my health improved  
12 immensely.

13 If NAIS is enacted without exceptions for  
14 small farms and ranches, our producers will go  
15 out of business and I will no longer have a  
16 choice of eating healthy foods from sustainable  
17 agriculture.

18 I'm asking the USDA to say no to NAIS. I  
19 also want to ask our government to enact true  
20 animal health and safety measures, because we  
21 certainly do need these.

22 NAIS is not a animal health or food safety  
23 measure. It is a complete fraud. It is designed  
24 to make a few corporations very wealthy and to  
25 put all of the rest of the few family farms that

1 are still hanging on out of business.

2 Corporate industrial farms may want to use  
3 NAIS to improve their overseas sales. I have no  
4 objection to them tagging their own animals. Let  
5 them. However, because the tags are known to  
6 cause cancer in the animals they are injected  
7 into, I wouldn't want to eat their meat. I don't  
8 think people from other countries will either  
9 when they find out that the tags cause cancer.

10 I have a friend who did health research work  
11 at the VA Hospital in Gainesville. She said that  
12 soldiers were embedded with these tags. And she,  
13 because she was working with the ill soldiers,  
14 she found that many times, where the tags were  
15 embedded in their neck, they had cancerous  
16 growths as a result. There's also additional  
17 research showing that the tags cause cancer.

18 NAIS is clearly not the answer to animal  
19 health or food safety for food we want to consume  
20 in our own country. And here is the reason that  
21 NAIS targets small farms.

22 It requires small farmers and ranchers to  
23 track each animal individually, while allowing  
24 the confined -- the huge industrial operations to  
25 track all animals under one blanket group ID

1 number. So it will be infinitely easier for the  
2 huge and dangerous -- the places where we really  
3 get our food problems, it will be -- they'll have  
4 no trouble complying with NAIS. But the small  
5 farmers and ranchers, who really produce the  
6 quality foods that we need more of, will be put  
7 out of business. So, whose USDA is this?

8 We need to support our small farms, not try  
9 to put them out of business with laws and  
10 regulations such as NAIS. I recommend you read  
11 Joel Salatin's book, Everything I Want to Do is  
12 Illegal, if you want to hear a funny but true  
13 story of the difficulties of producing really  
14 high quality food in this country.

15 We particularly need to improve the  
16 enforcement of existing laws and inspections of  
17 large slaughterhouses and food processing  
18 facilities, including unannounced spot  
19 inspections. NAIS does not address this. This  
20 is the source of the problems, this and the food  
21 processing industry, and NAIS does not address  
22 this at all.

23 I know -- I heard a story about the USDA  
24 slaughterhouse near Gainesville. Apparently,  
25 they were stealing and switching meat so that the

1 high quality grass-fed meat that they were being  
2 brought was replaced at the slaughterhouse by  
3 conventional low-quality meat.

4 When my friend tried to talk with the  
5 slaughterhouse management, they -- they still  
6 continued the practice. And then when my friend  
7 talked to the USDA, they said: That's not our  
8 job. So, where NAIS has been tried already, it's  
9 been found to be a resounding failure for all of  
10 its stated goals.

11 NAIS is government control and ineptitude  
12 magnified a million fold. Furthermore, it's  
13 reminiscent of the practices of Nazi Germany.  
14 NAIS may make a few large corporations wealthy,  
15 like the tag and reader manufacturers, the  
16 database managers that have lobbied so  
17 effectively for it. But for the rest of us, it  
18 has no redeeming value. So, please stop this  
19 travesty now.

20 Thank you.

21 E. J. BISCH: That was a very good speech,  
22 and I think you covered a quite a number of  
23 points.

24 I'm adamantly opposed to the NAIS, and I  
25 always will be. I do not want any more

1 government intrusion onto my farm whatsoever. I  
2 feel that the cost of my farm to implement this  
3 program is prohibitive. It accomplishes  
4 absolutely nothing to me.

5 I don't raise my sows in confined quarters  
6 where they can't turn around. I don't raise my  
7 cattle on grain and I don't inject them with all  
8 kinds of antibiotics and growth hormones and  
9 things of this nature, which are totally, totally  
10 against any agricultural practices unless you  
11 have a factory farm.

12 I'm opposed to micro chipping. I've seen  
13 this happen already, where micro chipping did  
14 cause cancer in a animal, and it was a horrible  
15 death.

16 The problem isn't with the small farmer. The  
17 problem is with factory farms, where they have  
18 unsanitary and practices that none of us as small  
19 farmers would have anything to do with. It's  
20 unnatural.

21 As far as the registration not causing any  
22 problems, I believe the Amish in Pennsylvania had  
23 a little problem with that, and also a farmer  
24 that was trying to sell some unhomogenized milk  
25 had the US Marshalls and the USDA come visit

1 him.

2 That's about it for me. Thank you very  
3 much. E. J. Bisch.

4 MARK HARRELL: Good morning. My name's Mark  
5 Harrell. I'm also in the livestock business. I  
6 consider myself as a backyard farmer. Also, I  
7 run a livestock market in Webster, Florida, which  
8 is south of Ocala.

9 There's several issues in the livestock  
10 market industry. We have our own association of  
11 livestock markets here in the state of Florida.  
12 I think there's nine or ten livestock markets  
13 still running in the state.

14 You know, the system that they want to put  
15 in, it's just not going to work. It's not going  
16 to work at the markets. You know, you taking and  
17 you wanting to put readers in, you've got to do  
18 the ear tags. I've been to two of these sales  
19 where the tags were implemented into the calves  
20 into the ears. Before the first ten head of  
21 calves that sold, the reader broke. You know,  
22 and I know there's technology, that they're  
23 probably going to get better in doing it. But as  
24 a livestock market, you know, they're telling us  
25 that we're going to have to downsize our lanes,

1       you're going to have to put the readers in, the  
2       panels in.

3               And, you know, another issue. You know, we  
4       load out fifteen, twenty semis a week at our  
5       livestock market. And if I put a hundred head of  
6       calves on that trailer, and I only read ninety-  
7       eight of them, I've got to unload that calf, the  
8       whole load. The thing there is, you've already  
9       stressed that animal by running him to a  
10      livestock market. Now I'm going to run that  
11      thing off of a trailer.

12             Everybody's an animal activist in one form or  
13      the other. And, you know, I don't see  
14      mistreating animals. But when I've got two  
15      hundred of my customers setting in a parking lot  
16      waiting to be unloaded, waiting on my facility to  
17      tag their animals, you know, how many animals  
18      during September, July you going to have pass  
19      away due to the heat?

20             It's just my opinion that -- you know, these  
21      last people talked, well, that's a hard path to  
22      follow. And, you know, it's just -- I don't  
23      think it's good for the industry. You know,  
24      we've got the best program in the world. We can  
25      see that today with any kind of outbreak.

1           We back tag every animal that comes through  
2           our livestock market. You know, and where do  
3           they go from there? They go to the feed lots.  
4           They don't go back to the farm. Our kill cows,  
5           where do they go? They go to Central Packing,  
6           Brown Packing. Them animals, lot of them come  
7           from the farm, that's where they've been all  
8           their life, they're going right there. Why do  
9           all of that? You know where they're coming  
10          from.

11           But it's just something that, you know, it's  
12          just -- it's just not going to work at any of  
13          these -- I don't think it's going to work at any  
14          market. Unless they was to come up with some  
15          kind of fail-safe system that would guarantee a  
16          hundred percent, it's not going to work.

17           Thank you.

18           PATRICIA BLUBAUGH: My name is Patricia  
19          Blubaugh. And I am a nutrition therapist and a  
20          health care worker and a consumer. In the past  
21          five to six years I've been studying nutrition  
22          and talking to people about their nutrition.

23           And my concerns and the reasons why I'm  
24          coming to this meeting is because I've been  
25          actively going out to farms, local farmers, and

1 talking to them and see what their practices are  
2 as far as raising food. The people I'm concerned  
3 with are the people eating the food, myself  
4 included, and to have some healthy food.

5 So, what I see is a lot of farmers growing  
6 small amounts of food or having small livestock  
7 inventories that are trying to raise quality  
8 food, give quality nutrition to their animals,  
9 give quality nutrients to the soil, so the  
10 grasses that grow are full of nutrients, and  
11 thereby having a healthy animal when it comes  
12 down to the fact that the animal will be  
13 slaughtered and eaten, distributed to the people  
14 that want to have that food. There's a growing  
15 number of people that are concerned with that.

16 Like I say, I'm not growing the food myself,  
17 but I'm concerned with the way the food is being  
18 grown. And I'm talking to the people who are  
19 having health difficulties, degenerative, long-  
20 term, chronic health problems. They're own  
21 organs are breaking down, their nervous systems  
22 aren't working correctly, lots of things are  
23 happening, and their digestion is off. And a lot  
24 of that is because of the food quality in the  
25 country. And there are lots of people that are

1       trying to address that.

2               When I listened today to opening remarks from  
3 the USDA people, I hear that they are concerned  
4 with the -- America's marketing and the American  
5 producer. And I am frustrated, because I feel  
6 like the marketing and the producers of the feed  
7 lots and things like that, the people that go  
8 into that system, if they're protecting them,  
9 they're protecting an unhealthy source of food.  
10 And, so, this is the angle I come from.

11              The tracking system that you're advocating  
12 and trying to put into place, the USDA is trying  
13 to put into place, I have understood that it is  
14 harmful financially in implementing it for the  
15 small farmer, the local farmer, the people that  
16 I'm trying to get the food from. So I don't want  
17 to see it in place. I would rather see the USDA  
18 direct its attention to protecting the consumer,  
19 not the producer; to protecting the market that  
20 is providing healthy food. If you're going to  
21 protect the market, then have something  
22 marketable. And having bad food marketable --  
23 having food that's chemicalized and denatured  
24 from the get-go is not something that, as an  
25 American citizen, as a consumer, I want to

1 protect, I want to change that system. And I  
2 would like the USDA to redirect its focus to not  
3 protecting the markets, but protecting the  
4 consumer.

5 And I'm also an artist. So, I make these  
6 little flags and promote them so that people can  
7 identify themselves as people that would like to  
8 support local industries.

9 Thank you very much.

10 TONYA YATES: Hello. My name is Tonya  
11 Yates. And I am a -- I guess you would say a  
12 backyard producer. And I also own a secondary  
13 business. We basically raise the goats, mainly  
14 dairy goats.

15 From my understanding -- well, first of all,  
16 everybody before me said a lot that I can't -- I  
17 mean, I totally agree with. And just to repeat  
18 what they say -- but for me, as a backyard  
19 grower, and for my other business, to implement  
20 the tagging system is just financially not  
21 feasible.

22 And to go further, from my understanding,  
23 having to tag the ears. We raise LaMancha dairy  
24 goats, which are the little -- they don't the  
25 flaps, the ears. So, on my standpoint, I'm going

1 to have to put out even more money to do special  
2 tattooing on the back side, which I feel is even  
3 more evasive with the ink entering into the  
4 system, then getting into the milk. Which, we  
5 use the milk for our secondary business to try to  
6 make naturalized soap products, with the goat's  
7 milk soap and lotion. And then the ink will be  
8 going into the milk, which will be going into the  
9 products, which is just, you know, beating -- you  
10 know, it's not what we're trying to do. We're  
11 trying to make a healthy product. And the ink is  
12 just going to get into it and ruin all the work  
13 that we have done.

14 I think mainly as the backyard producers or  
15 the people that are trying to do more healthy  
16 food, I think it does need to be more towards the  
17 higher producers, the marketers. We do quality,  
18 not quantity. And for us just to do the  
19 quantity -- the quality and not the quantity, we  
20 just don't have the means and the expense -- it's  
21 just too big of an expense for us to do that.

22 And I feel that something needs to be done in  
23 a more financial aspect towards the lower  
24 producers that can afford something more than to  
25 put it out of their pocket.

1 Thank you.

2 KIM OGLE: The next five speakers are Susanne  
3 Seth Hesse, Dennis Stoltzfoos, Gene Lollis, Rufus  
4 Ogden, and James Brown, Angela Minno.

5 ANGELA MINNO: My name's Angela Minno. My  
6 husband and I are starting a small farm. Ever  
7 since we met -- we actually met because we both  
8 had raised chickens. And we have both studied  
9 agriculture together and attended conferences.  
10 And just this past year we've finally been able  
11 to get livestock, build fences, work hard. And  
12 something like NAIS is not going to help us build  
13 our business.

14 Already we have two children. My husband  
15 works off the farm full-time. And I go out with  
16 my children and we work. Every weekend we're  
17 working. Of course, people with animals  
18 understand, it's a lot of work. And financially  
19 we couldn't afford something like this and we  
20 couldn't start a small farm.

21 And we don't want to have a farm where the  
22 animals are confined. We never want to be a big  
23 farm. We want to have a small farm that's  
24 diversified so, if something does happen with  
25 animal illness, we don't want to have all of our

1 eggs in one basket.

2 And we've studied animal nutrition and  
3 management practices that help guard against  
4 disease. I mean, we've definitely -- animals do  
5 get sick, just like people get sick. And we have  
6 had things like fowl pox, and none of our  
7 chickens died, you know, like every -- they all  
8 recovered. And because a healthy chicken -- or a  
9 healthy animal that's not pushed to produce  
10 beyond the means of a living creature has an  
11 immune system, just like all living systems do.  
12 And that's what we're supporting.

13 And I think that the USDA, instead of sort of  
14 implementing this thing, which it doesn't really  
15 make sense that they're not going to be -- it's  
16 not going to be mandatory. Because if they don't  
17 have mandatory participation, it's not going to  
18 work, because they won't be able to keep track of  
19 every animal.

20 I think that they should consider things like  
21 different kinds of management, breeding animals  
22 instead of having uniform cuts, breeding them for  
23 disease resistance, things like that, managing  
24 the land nutrition.

25 There's been -- you know, since the 1800's

1       there's been people talking about feeding animals  
2       in a way that prevents them from getting sick,  
3       you can actually -- people have cured brucellosis  
4       with Selenium and different minerals and stuff  
5       back in the 1940's. And there's -- the  
6       literature is out there, the knowledge is out  
7       there. I think that we really need to look at  
8       our production practices and what, you know, what  
9       is out there.

10             And before I was a farmer I was a consumer.  
11       And I didn't want to eat meat that was, you know,  
12       produced from hogs stacked, you know, several  
13       high in manure. Like I didn't want to support  
14       that, I think there's a lot of consumers out  
15       there that don't want to support agriculture like  
16       that.

17             I think the USDA needs to sort of look at  
18       what people really want, as far as the  
19       environment, their health, the health of the  
20       animals and the economy too. Because shutting  
21       down these local farmers is going to do the worse  
22       possible thing for the economy. And I think,  
23       instead of bailout packages, we need more cottage  
24       industry and more small people being able to make  
25       an honest living off of hard work and their own

1 land, which is what America was built on.

2 Thank you.

3 SUSANNE SETUH HESSE: Hi. My name is Susanne  
4 Setuh Hesse. And I have been a consumer of what  
5 I consider the best quality food that I can get  
6 for many years. I am very grateful to  
7 organizations like the Weston A. Price Foundation  
8 that are disseminating more information about the  
9 best quality foods that we need to rebuild the  
10 health of this nation.

11 I work with cancer survivors, that's my  
12 primary work, as a therapist. And rebuilding  
13 their immune systems after the trauma they  
14 undergo in cancer therapy is critically built  
15 upon them being able to get organic foods, raw  
16 milk, grass-fed animals or eggs. All of those  
17 things create a huge quality difference in the  
18 rebuilding of health.

19 For us to be promoting agribusiness, large  
20 factory farms with this type of program is like  
21 setting up the banking crisis that we've just  
22 experienced again. We are only supporting the  
23 big things that don't care about us individuals,  
24 and that is not the way for us to rebuild this  
25 country's health. It's also not the way for us

1 to export things like our meats or any other  
2 products. Europe does not want environmentally  
3 engineered -- or, you know, products like that.  
4 They've already told us they don't want it. So  
5 they're not going to trust the animals that have  
6 been fed those type of engineered foods. And  
7 they are not going to trust farms that are  
8 producing huge quantities of meat that are  
9 unhealthy, and they can see they're unhealthy  
10 because they're the animals that get these  
11 illnesses.

12 If we have monoculture farms, you see the  
13 crops get lost. If we have monoculture animal  
14 husbandry, the same thing is going to happen. We  
15 need diversity on the farms and the ability to  
16 build healthy stock. And that's the same thing  
17 that we're trying to do with our population.  
18 Things like obesity and all these other problems  
19 will not be solved by this type of program.

20 And we really need to look at, if we want  
21 foreign markets, people now are afraid to get  
22 things from Canada, from China, because of the  
23 way that they are producing their foods. We need  
24 to not be making the same mistakes they're  
25 making.

1           In Europe, they're supporting small farms  
2           that are environmental and sustainable  
3           agriculture. And that is the only way that we're  
4           going to stand out to show that we have quality  
5           products again being produced in this country.

6           Thank you.

7           DENNIS STOLTZFOOS: Good morning. My name's  
8           Dennis Stoltzfoos. I appreciate the comments  
9           that were made so far. I'm not going to try to  
10          cover them all again. I'll try to bring up a  
11          couple concerns and issues that I have.

12          The main concern that I have with NAIS is the  
13          government intrusion into my life. We had an  
14          incident with the Department of Agriculture and  
15          the State of Florida, USDA got involved.  
16          Everything was cleared up. But I cannot tell you  
17          how scary it is to have four or five white  
18          vehicles with yellow tags pull in your lane and  
19          invade your farm. I don't need more of it. I  
20          don't want more of it. I'd rather shut down the  
21          USDA and let everything go back to free market  
22          than ever see those white vehicles come in my  
23          lane again or any kind of other government  
24          intrusion. NAIS is government intrusion into my  
25          life, and I don't want it. That's one of my

1 concerns.

2 What are some of the solutions? Do we all  
3 agree that we have a problem out there? People  
4 have been getting sick from E. coli 0157,  
5 wisteria and different things. What are the  
6 solutions?

7 My wife and I run a small farm where we  
8 gross, the last three years, over two hundred  
9 thousand. And we have three small children.  
10 We're organic. We're not certified, but we're  
11 chemical free completely and entirely, one  
12 hundred percent. We're very concerned about the  
13 planet and the next generation.

14 My oldest daughter is with us today and two  
15 apprentices, city kids that have come out to  
16 learn farming and to see a future. What future  
17 is there in the government intruding and trying  
18 to shut down the small farmer?

19 Let's let freedom rein. Let's let the  
20 customer inspect our farms, come to the farm, get  
21 to know us, build a relationship with the farmer  
22 and want our products. Let's go back to the free  
23 market of a hundred years ago, when we had  
24 healthy food, when chemicals were nonexistent and  
25 people came out to the farm and knew where their

1 food actually came from.

2 I'm also a consumer. We don't produce all  
3 our own food on our farm. The food that we don't  
4 produce, we try very hard to buy from known and  
5 trusted sources, from other farmers that we know  
6 and we trust. We visit their farms. We either  
7 go pick it up ourselves or have been to these  
8 farms and we know their practices. We know what  
9 they're doing on their farms. We know their  
10 animals are treated humanely. We know that we  
11 are not eating some GMO vegetable, but we're  
12 eating good, old-fashioned, non-hybrid, heirloom  
13 real food, not some genetically altered danger.  
14 I don't want that for me. I don't want it for my  
15 family. I don't want it for future generations.

16 And the small farming we promote promotes the  
17 safety and the relationship promotes the safety.  
18 You know, there's nothing better than known and  
19 trusted. You know, if you know your farmer, you  
20 know where their food comes from, hey, how hard  
21 is trace back? Pick up the phone: Hey, your  
22 lettuce was moldy this week. We couldn't use  
23 it. Could we have a replacement? Oh, sure, no  
24 problem. We'll check out what happened with the  
25 refrigeration, or whatever.

1           And, you know, nobody gets sick at our  
2 house. If you eat a common-sense diet today,  
3 your immune system will function, be healthy and  
4 you will not get sick. So, that's part of the  
5 solution.

6           Another concern I have with this system is  
7 just follow the money. Where's the funding  
8 coming from? Where's the push for NAIS? It's  
9 from one place. The RFID tag manufacturers and  
10 all the people that are going to stand to benefit  
11 from this system.

12          Folks, we have enough of that in the US  
13 already. Let's get back to real sanity. And,  
14 you know, if you just check the money trail on  
15 this thing, you can go right back to where it  
16 comes from.

17          Another solution to the real situation, the  
18 outbreaks that we have today. Okay. Why don't  
19 we take an outbreak and make it a learning  
20 situation? Okay. Let's have total transparency  
21 why it happened, where it happened, how to keep  
22 it from happening again. Let's have government  
23 open transparency and learn from each situation,  
24 whether it be lettuce, Mad Cow, you name it.

25          The RFID tags have proven to be a disaster.

1 I know the companies that manufacture them do not  
2 want to believe that they cause cancer. They  
3 do. There's other problems involved. The man  
4 with the sales barn, I could not imagine the  
5 nightmare that those cattle -- those cattle are  
6 already stressed, we don't need more.

7 One final comment. Some of you know about  
8 Mad Cow. A lot of the details around Mad Cow  
9 have been hidden. You have to dig and do some  
10 real research to find out the truth.

11 There was finally a very large ranch in the  
12 west that said: Okay, we want to export, we want  
13 to grab some of these Japanese markets, and they  
14 are concerned about Mad Cow. So what we're going  
15 to do is we're going to test every single animal  
16 on our farm for Mad Cow. Guess who stood in  
17 opposition and would not let them test their  
18 animals?

19 THE AUDIENCE: USDA.

20 DENNIS STOLTZFOOS: Thank you.

21 RUFUS OGDEN: My name is Rufus Ogden. I'm  
22 not going to beat a good horse to death. Most  
23 everything that I wanted to say has already been  
24 said. But I was under the impression that we  
25 might could ask a question if we were up here, or

1 is that --

2 KIM OGLE: In the afternoon.

3 RUFUS OGDEN: Well, I won't get to ask my  
4 question, then. I understand that using the 840  
5 tag is supposed to be a voluntary situation with  
6 each producer. It's come to my attention that  
7 the USDA has forced some people in the cattle  
8 business in Nebraska to use these tags. And I'm  
9 strictly against forcing anybody to do anything.

10 GENE LOLLIS: My name's Gene Lollis. I'm  
11 from Lake Placid, Florida. I'm a cattle  
12 manager.

13 I'm not sure where we've come today. I'm  
14 going to have to say this. We all know we live  
15 in a different world today. It's an awful shame,  
16 awful shame we're going to sit here and divide a  
17 little more.

18 We've been identifying animals since animal  
19 agriculture has begun, whether you do that as a  
20 family farm, a small farm, or whatever. I might  
21 step back and add that this is my personal  
22 comments, because I'm here wearing two hats.

23 With knowing that, we ID these animals so we  
24 can pick those and choose those that produce  
25 better quality meat and, as somebody already

1 mentioned, healthier animals.

2 We ID our cattle for trace-back purposes on  
3 our ranch just for what some of you have already  
4 said, because we are cognizant of our consumer,  
5 because we know they won't buy our product if we  
6 don't produce a good one for them. That's my  
7 general comments.

8 I'm also the Committee Chairman of the Animal  
9 Health Committee for the Florida Cattleman's  
10 Association. And with that, that is a grassroots  
11 organization of producers from anywhere from  
12 thirty head to as high a number as fifteen  
13 thousand head, I would say, or larger. It's an  
14 association, as mentioned, grassroots, people  
15 just like you and I in here today.

16 Through committee of the cattleman's are four  
17 points that we'd like to put out, is that we know  
18 we need to have some form of trace-back  
19 capability for disease control. And with that,  
20 trace-back of identification should only be used  
21 for trace-back, and any and all information  
22 should be confidential to those producers.

23 We also would suggest and say that that --  
24 that it does not interfere with the speed of  
25 commerce. As a gentleman said earlier, I know

1 quite well what it takes to load a hundred head  
2 of cattle on a trailer, and you don't take them  
3 off.

4 The other is that it should not cause any  
5 financial burden on the producer themselves.  
6 With that, I'm not going to stand up here say any  
7 more.

8 Thank you.

9 KIM OGLE: The next five speakers are Norma  
10 Tillman, Mancus Humphries, Raven Smith, Jeff  
11 Register, and Linda Hart. Okay. Scott Eubanks.  
12 Peggy Young, Cathy Raymond, John Kissee.

13 CATHY RAYMOND: Good morning. My name is  
14 Cathy Raymond. And I am a consumer of high  
15 quality, good, farm food. And I also work with a  
16 couple of nonprofits that are really, really  
17 advocating moving back into these practices,  
18 where you have sustainable farm families creating  
19 food for their families and communities. That's  
20 the Weston A. Price Foundation; the Farm-to-  
21 Consumer Legal Defense Fund, who is suing the  
22 USDA right now on NAIS; and the Farm-to-Consumer  
23 Foundation. I do not represent those people. I  
24 represent myself as a consumer right now.

25 I'd like to ask a question. Dr. Collazo,

1       who's your farmer? Do you know who your farmer  
2       is? No, probably not.

3               I didn't know who my farmer was either until  
4       five years ago, when I found out about raw milk.  
5       And I called a gentleman named Dennis  
6       Stoltzfoos. And I said: You know, I'd like to  
7       get in touch with some raw milk. And through  
8       Dennis I discovered these wonderful foods. And  
9       Dennis is right here. And I'm really glad to be  
10      standing in the same room with him, supporting  
11      him in the ways I can.

12             The way I'd like to support him is to  
13      deregulate the farm practices. The way I'd like  
14      to support him is making sure those trucks don't  
15      come up the driveway and disrupt my food supply  
16      and disrupt his family life. These farms are  
17      their homes. We need to respect that.

18             The way I'd like to support him is to have  
19      more and more farmers come with him, join with  
20      him, and do more of this.

21             So, when you can answer the question, who's  
22      your farmer, then we are on the road to  
23      discovering a solution to this problem that has  
24      nothing to do with fancy tags on cattle, has  
25      nothing to do with all that, but is focused

1 clearly on the heart of the matter.

2 This is about face-to-face ability, not  
3 traceability. I know my farmer's face. And you  
4 know what? It's more likely I'm going to call  
5 him up and say: Oh, my gosh, that beef last  
6 night was so darn good. You're taking it up a  
7 notch. What are you feeding those cattle now?  
8 It's not about: Eew, what was in my beef? You  
9 know, that's where I used to be five years ago.  
10 And I understand that. And I understand the fear  
11 and I understand the reasons why you would want  
12 to trace that food. But I say there's another  
13 way. And that's the way we need to go. That's  
14 the way we need to put our energies and our focus  
15 and our love and our money. We need to back that  
16 system. All right. So, that's an important  
17 question.

18 I want to make sure I -- Dennis was funny, he  
19 just took my -- you know, I was going to mimic a  
20 phone call recall, you know, to Dennis, and say:  
21 This is how I talk to my farmer, I don't need a  
22 traceable tag.

23 My dog died recently. And I do want to bring  
24 that up. My dog died of a tumor. And I  
25 believe -- I didn't do an autopsy on him. I do

1 believe it had something to do with that tracing  
2 tag. And that was an awful death. And I think  
3 it shortened his life.

4 I would like for us to say: Let's treat our  
5 animals more humanely. And in all of this, any  
6 practice we do, make sure -- I mean, my goodness,  
7 if my farmer had to tag his animals, I would no  
8 longer want to eat that food. I mean, how  
9 could -- he's using all of the best practices  
10 right now to make sure those animals are  
11 healthy. Why on earth would he put a tag in that  
12 could cause cancer?

13 You know, right now I got my cell phone. And  
14 my cell phone has got twenty different  
15 disclaimers about tumors induced by EMF waves. I  
16 don't want to be down the path on NAIS or  
17 something like this and get those disclaimers  
18 with my beef. I just -- that's not the way I  
19 want to go.

20 So, in the ways I can, I want to stand behind  
21 my farmer. I want to support the growth of  
22 this. And I would appreciate all of your work to  
23 make these foods available to more people. I  
24 want my grandchildren to be able to go buy foods  
25 of this nature.

1           I think that my farmer would go out of  
2 business if he had to buy a tag for each animal,  
3 buy reading systems. And the stress on his  
4 family for any kind of infraction, I mean, the  
5 fines are horrific.

6           So, I thank you very much for allowing me to  
7 make my comments. And let's just hold our  
8 farmers in our hearts today, because we all have  
9 to eat and we all want the best product we  
10 possibly can for ourselves and our family and for  
11 our enrichment, to go out and do good things in  
12 this world.

13           Thank you.

14           JOHN KISSEE: My name is John Kisse. And  
15 I'm with Livestock Marketing Association. But I  
16 also in that role act as the executive secretary  
17 for the Florida Markets Association, for the  
18 Georgia Markets Association, and also for North  
19 and South Carolina.

20           The southeast is blessed with livestock  
21 producers. Many of these are small, some of them  
22 are large, but they all have one thing in  
23 common. We have so many consumers speaking  
24 today. And I can assure you that every producer  
25 out there wants to produce wholesome food and

1 realize that that's the bottom line product.

2 As far as ID goes, I would like to mention,  
3 this program was started about six years ago.  
4 And it was started prior to a BSE outbreak.  
5 Prior to that, industry had come together, many  
6 different parts of it, working on a program that  
7 they could implement themselves. Not the  
8 government, but the industry could. One BSE  
9 cow caused the government to jump in and try to  
10 push something before everything was in place,  
11 trying to push rope, if you would.

12 We currently have a system in place. And it  
13 was mentioned that it took a hundred and eighty-  
14 six days to trace back a TB outbreak recently.  
15 We deal with outbreaks every day of maybe a  
16 reactor to TB, it may be a drug residue. When  
17 they come to our livestock markets, it's usually  
18 not a a hundred and eighty-six days. It's  
19 usually found within a few days.

20 If you ask that market -- just like you're  
21 talking about knowing your local farmer, when you  
22 ask that market: Where did these cattle come  
23 from? He looks at his records, his papers from  
24 the drive-ins, and he can tell you exactly where  
25 that animal came from, and the trace-back

1 generally can be done within a few hours, not a  
2 few days.

3 I'd also like to point out that this program  
4 has evolved as it's come along, as many things  
5 with government do. Instead of being an animal  
6 trace-back program, all of a sudden now, then,  
7 it's homeland security, all of a sudden it's  
8 international trade. And we're looking to other  
9 countries saying: Well, we have to do this  
10 because Canada does; or: We have to do this  
11 because Australia has done it.

12 Well, if you'll look at it, we're still the  
13 world's leader, as far as beef exports and beef  
14 product and the quality of our product. But you  
15 might also notice that Canada has about ten  
16 percent of the animals we have in the US. So  
17 it's a little bit different. And as far as  
18 Australia, the way they market their livestock is  
19 by load lots, kind of like we did fifty years ago  
20 at the old terminal stockyards.

21 Also, we're not likely -- swine industry or  
22 the poultry industry, which are so vertically  
23 integrated that they can move by load lots,  
24 which, again, is a distinct problem compared to  
25 individually identifying animals.

1           Also, this program, as I said, was started  
2           about six years ago. And in that time, with all  
3           the push there's been, I think the recent  
4           statistics show about thirty-five percent of  
5           premises in the US are registered. If the  
6           producers haven't bought in, if industry hasn't  
7           bought in, there must be a problem with the  
8           system.

9           The current technology that is in place is  
10          not workable, and it's certainly not workable at  
11          the speed of commerce. When you look at eighty  
12          percent, ninety percent effectiveness, which some  
13          would more say it would probably be more like  
14          fifty or sixty percent, what good is that type of  
15          a program?

16          If you have five hundred head at a sale and  
17          you have fifty percent, then three hundred of  
18          those animals aren't identified. What have you  
19          really gained?

20          There was a recent cost benefit study,  
21          although the government likes to call it benefit  
22          cost study, that was done. And that showed that,  
23          for a market to refit to be able to scan these  
24          animals, would cost about eight thousand  
25          dollars.

1 Well, I talked to one of my markets in North  
2 Carolina who had just bought a market, was  
3 refitting it himself. He was going to put in a  
4 hydraulic squeeze chute, which every animal would  
5 have to go through a chute. The squeeze chute  
6 itself was twelve to fourteen thousand dollars  
7 used. So I think there's cost benefit problems  
8 there.

9 As a matter of fact, three or four years ago  
10 we had some markets out in California -- which,  
11 they were jumping on the band wagon. If this is  
12 coming, we want to be the first, we want to get  
13 in. They spent forty to fifty thousand dollars.  
14 And since then I think the technology has changed  
15 three or four times, and everything they have is  
16 obsolete.

17 For these numerous reasons, LMA and most of  
18 us state associations would like to say: This  
19 program needs to be voluntary. If a producer or  
20 a large producer has a benefit from the tags,  
21 they'll use it. If they want to capture a  
22 foreign market, they'll use the current programs  
23 and health programs and other issues out there in  
24 order to be able to market that. But we don't  
25 need to push something that no one is trusting,

1 no one is buying into, especially here in the  
2 southeast. If you look at the Brucellosis  
3 program, it took over sixty years, and there's  
4 still Brucellosis in the west. That's a  
5 government program that changed about every, I  
6 don't know, three or four years, they would have  
7 a new idea of something to do. And that program  
8 is still in existence.

9 So the government doesn't always have the  
10 answer. Sometimes the government needs to get  
11 out of the way and let the industry handle it the  
12 best way that they see fit.

13 Thank you.

14 JEFF REGISTER: Hello. My name is Jeff  
15 Register. I am by trade a CPA. And for the last  
16 two years we've been working on starting our own  
17 small farm, doing meat chickens and grass-fed  
18 beef, pastured eggs too.

19 I've worked in a lot of industries. I have  
20 seen a lot of different government regulation. I  
21 was an auditor for five years. Please forgive  
22 me. For the last ten years I've been on the  
23 other side of the fence and I have seen what the  
24 auditors do to people. And these are just the  
25 financial auditors, not the government ones.

1           Some of the things that I have noticed in my  
2 career as a CPA about government regulation is  
3 that it is primarily an instrument to erect  
4 artificial barriers to competition which support  
5 the already entrenched and large producers. It  
6 has nothing to do with the stated purpose of the  
7 program. It is merely a defense mechanism to  
8 squelch competition.

9           Vilsack said in his introduction up there  
10 that he is most interested in our international  
11 trading partners. I'm not an international  
12 trading partner. Leave me alone.

13           The other thing that I noticed in the  
14 Power Point slide presentation, I was reading  
15 through that, said that there is no infringement  
16 on personal property rights. That's an outright  
17 lie. Somebody's got to pay for it. That comes  
18 through my taxes or through direct fees levied  
19 against me or by equipment purchase requirements  
20 or whatever. That infringes on my ability to use  
21 that personal property of mine in the way that I  
22 see fit. And, instead, I have to use it in the  
23 way that some government bureaucrat has decided  
24 that I need to spend my money and my resources,  
25 not to mention my limited time.

1 I still have a day job, because, due to  
2 government regulations, we're not allowed to sell  
3 to restaurants, we're not allowed to sell to  
4 grocery stores, we're not allowed to sell after  
5 we've processed the animal. We have to do  
6 everything through private treaty or under a pet  
7 food label. These things are just wrong.

8 It is immoral for the government to stand in  
9 the way of private citizens using their private  
10 property for private purposes in private  
11 contracts with other citizens of this nation.

12 This has already been mentioned a couple of  
13 times by other people, but I'd just like to  
14 reiterate. As an auditor, as someone who deals  
15 with the American Institute of CPA's, the SEC,  
16 and other government bureaucracies, government  
17 bureaucracy grows. It is the only thing that  
18 government bureaucracies do well. They grow,  
19 they expand, they creep one regulation at a time,  
20 one committee meeting at a time, more  
21 restrictions, more control.

22 So, whatever the intent may be at the  
23 beginning of this program, the end result is  
24 unpredictable, except that it will be far larger  
25 in scope and more invasive than anything that is

1 contemplated when it is first proposed to the  
2 public.

3 Finally, this is a unconstitutional expansion  
4 of government powers. They don't have the  
5 right -- they may have the power, Congress may  
6 allow it, but it's not constitutional. The only  
7 constitutional end of this program is to  
8 terminate it.

9 The do-gooders and busy bodies who want to  
10 tell me what I have to do with my property in  
11 order to keep some society safe somewhere aren't  
12 involved in my personal life in a meaningful  
13 way. They control it, they manipulate it, but  
14 they're not there to see what they're doing.  
15 They're not there to see the impact and the  
16 trouble and the extra cost and burden that they  
17 place.

18 However, as the Power Point presentation  
19 said, the purpose of this meeting is not to  
20 determine whether or not it ought to go forward,  
21 but how it should go forward. So the conclusion  
22 is already foregone. This is just a courtesy to  
23 us to allow us to air our frustrations.

24 But in the interest of proposing a solution,  
25 if you are bound and determined to do this, only

1       apply it to the CAFO institutions, which are  
2       producing unhealthy, unsanitary, unclean food in  
3       the first place that we're trying to force off on  
4       our international trading partners.

5             And I'd just like to close with a quote from  
6       John Adams. The moment the idea is admitted into  
7       society that property is not as sacred as the  
8       laws of God and that there is not a force of law  
9       in public justice to protect it, anarchy and  
10       tyranny commence. If thou shalt not covet and  
11       thou shalt not steal were not commandments of  
12       Heaven, then they must be made inviolable  
13       precepts in every society before it can be  
14       civilized or made free. That's from John Adams  
15       in the defense of the American Constitution from  
16       1787.

17            Thank you.

18            PEGGY YOUNG: Hard act to follow is all I'll  
19       say. And when you first said come up here and  
20       make yourself comfortable and you'll talk in the  
21       microphone, those two don't belong in the same  
22       sentence for me.

23            In the middle of the night this is what I was  
24       thinking. Globalization is a great thing if it  
25       means -- oh, Peggy Young. And I'm a small

1 farmer, and have been for thirty some years. I  
2 also drive a school bus.

3 Globalization is a great thing if it means  
4 being aware that we are all living on a small  
5 island in space together and must respect the  
6 earth and each other. But globalization of our  
7 food supply? I think I'd rather eat locally  
8 grown food.

9 We spend a lot of time riding around the back  
10 roads of this country. And it used to be you  
11 would see a lot of places where people had a few  
12 cows, some goats, some sheep, some chickens, a  
13 garden. Almost everywhere you went through the  
14 country side you would see this. But of late  
15 it's a great concern to me that you see so many  
16 places that it's not. There are houses in the  
17 country, but they're not growing any food. And I  
18 don't know about you guys, but this scares me.

19 And I think that NAIS is going to make it  
20 even more difficult for the few small farmers we  
21 have to keep going.

22 And, you know, most of what I want to express  
23 has already been said. There are farmers, I  
24 understand, who have been -- had their premises  
25 registered without even knowing it and against

1           their will. And when they try to get off -- opt  
2           out of these things, you know, it doesn't really  
3           happen. So this may be more insidious than all  
4           of us realize.

5           Growing our own food, I think, is something  
6           that's always made this country strong. I mean,  
7           look, we had Victory Gardens and so forth. Do  
8           we -- do we really want to let this go in the  
9           name of fear or greed for those, who already have  
10          a lot, to have more?

11          Thank you.

12          LINDA HART: Good morning. I'm Linda Hart.  
13          I'm a small poultry producer from South Florida.  
14          A lot of good comments have already been made  
15          today. And I'm not really going to reiterate  
16          those. I'm speaking more from my personal  
17          perspective today.

18          As I said, I'm a small poultry producer from  
19          South Florida. My farm is four acres. I'm on a  
20          USDA exemption, where I produce less than twenty  
21          thousand birds a year. It took me about six  
22          months to get through all the regulations to be  
23          able to produce poultry in Florida.

24          I produce -- my exemption restricts me on  
25          less than twenty thousand birds a year. A

1 hundred percent of those birds are sold in  
2 Florida. Probably ninety-five percent of them  
3 are sold within a thirty-five-mile radius of  
4 where I live. My name, all my information is on  
5 that poultry. So I really don't see a need for  
6 any further tracking.

7 If someone calls me up and says we have a  
8 problem with your chicken, I can track it all the  
9 way back to the hatchery that I ordered the birds  
10 from. No problem. I can do that in just a  
11 matter of minutes.

12 If I send out bad chickens, somebody gets a  
13 bad chicken, I'll be out of business overnight  
14 before the USDA even has to track me down. They  
15 know where I live.

16 I'm opposed to NAIS because of the time, the  
17 expense, and I think it's unfair to small  
18 farmers. I also think that, with the excess cost  
19 of putting farmers out of business, it would  
20 further damage our economy. But I do think that  
21 NAIS does have application in feed lots and in  
22 import/export business. And that's fine. I  
23 mean, I understand that when you move cattle  
24 overseas and you move them large places and you  
25 have large groups of them in feed lots, you do

1        need to track them. But I don't think it is  
2        applicable for small farmers at all.

3            Thank you.

4            KIM OGLE: Okay. The next five speakers are  
5        Willonese Tillman Adams. Emmie Cornelius, Jack  
6        Cowan, Henry -- I can't read the handwriting --  
7        Ganette, Gene Walls, Gene Starr. And that's it  
8        for the speakers. I'm going to go back to other  
9        folks that passed, and I'm going to call the  
10       other names.

11           James Brown, Norma Tillman, Marcus Humphries,  
12        Raven Smith, Scott Eubanks. You're raising your  
13        hand. Did you ask to speak? Why don't you come  
14        forward.

15           Does anybody else want to speak that I didn't  
16        call your name? Why don't you come forward.

17           GENE STARR: I'm Gene Starr. I live in  
18        Hamilton County. And I'd just like to welcome  
19        everybody into our county and appreciate you  
20        coming and making your comments.

21           The only thing I need to say is our county is  
22        controlled pretty good with our ag extension  
23        agents and our 4-H. And if we need any advice, we  
24        have the proper place to go and they do a good  
25        job and they keep us informed, because we have

1 meetings quite regular.

2 And I just want to comment, our leaders in  
3 our county keeping us abreast of what's going on  
4 around the country.

5 Thank you.

6 PETE KENNEDY: My name is Pete Kennedy. I  
7 represent the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense  
8 Fund. The mission of the fund is protect the  
9 constitutional right of the nation's family  
10 farms, to provide processed and unprocessed farm  
11 foods directly to consumers.

12 In September, 2008, the Legal Defense Fund  
13 filed a lawsuit, which is still ongoing, against  
14 USDA and the Michigan Department of Agriculture  
15 to stop the implementation of NAIS in Michigan  
16 and nationwide.

17 We took this step because NAIS is a  
18 unnecessary expansive program that will drive  
19 farmers out of business and ultimately harm our  
20 food supply. NAIS will not improve animal  
21 health. The problems with animal disease are  
22 mainly caused by confinement operations and  
23 imports.

24 Instead of spending so much money on an  
25 unnecessary program that imposes burdensome costs

1 on farmers, why doesn't USDA spend this money  
2 putting more inspectors on our borders and at our  
3 ports to make sure that diseased animals and  
4 unhealthy food don't make it into this country.

5 Why do small farms need to have animal  
6 identification for each animal while vertically  
7 integrated confinement operations only need one  
8 group ID for thousands of animals?

9 If a chicken is missing from a backyard  
10 flock, the farmer will have to go through the ID  
11 numbers of the other chickens in the flock. A  
12 vertically integrated poultry operation with tens  
13 of thousands of birds living in unsanitary  
14 conditions would not have the same requirement.

15 NAIS will do nothing for food safety. To  
16 improve food safety, USDA needs to start  
17 inspecting the slaughterhouse, not just the  
18 slaughterhouse's food safety plan.

19 The NAIS requirements are onerous and  
20 intrusive. Registering one's property, tagging  
21 animals, using electronic ID, reporting animal  
22 movements all require money, time, and labor.  
23 Implementation of NAIS will face many small  
24 farmers with the choice of either violating the  
25 law or going out of business. Simply put, NAIS

1 will make criminals out of law-abiding citizens.

2 NAIS is designed for agribusiness and  
3 technology companies. Farmers and ranchers who  
4 are knowledgeable about NAIS are overwhelmingly  
5 opposed to it. For this reason, NAIS has been  
6 implemented through cooperative agreements  
7 between USDA and states and through grants to  
8 states and industry groups, not through the  
9 process of representative government.

10 NAIS is about globalization and harmonizing  
11 our standards with international standards. If  
12 there is interest in harmonizing our standards  
13 with international standards, let it be done  
14 voluntarily through private industry, not through  
15 government coercion.

16 Instead of promoting food interdependence,  
17 why doesn't this country work to achieve food  
18 independence by becoming self-sufficient enough  
19 in food production so we no longer have to rely  
20 on free trade and import food that we ourselves  
21 are capable of producing.

22 The key to food security, food safety and  
23 animal health in this country is in the growth of  
24 the number of small farms. We need small farms  
25 repopulating the countryside throughout America.

1           Getting rid of the National Animal Identification  
2           System can give this a chance to happen.

3           Thank you.

4           WADE GRIGSBY: I'm Wade Grigsby. I'm also  
5           here representing two sides. I'm the President  
6           of the Florida Cattleman's Association. So I  
7           would invite all of y'all that have cattle to  
8           please join us. It's not expensive and we have a  
9           great lobbying effort.

10           It would surprise you to know that we too are  
11           opposed to the ID system as is stated. However,  
12           if we could -- if we could remedy a few things  
13           and resolve some issues, there is some real  
14           benefits to ID'ing. You know, you can't manage  
15           what you can't measure. You can't measure  
16           something if you don't know what it is.

17           And you guys that are on the small farms,  
18           please understand that you know all your  
19           animals. I've run a ranch for fifteen years, and  
20           there's pasture I didn't get to but once a  
21           month. And I was the only one that got there  
22           that month.

23           Okay. When you have large numbers of  
24           animals -- and we take care of them. Believe me,  
25           those animals live better and more -- they're

1 happier than any cattle that you've ever seen in  
2 a pen of any kind or small pasture.

3 So, you know, there's a lot of different  
4 focuses here. But I think we're all fighting the  
5 same battle in different ways. But I will say  
6 that, you know, one of the big issues is the  
7 intrusion into our way of life. And I totally  
8 agree.

9 However, if we had some guarantee that FOIA  
10 wouldn't be imposed on even a public database, it  
11 would make a huge difference. I mean, that's the  
12 freedom of information. So, you know, if it's a  
13 public database, we have determined that it will  
14 have to be subject to FOIA, which is what we're  
15 all opposed to. So, if we can do that, that  
16 would help a lot.

17 I think the other side -- I also, from a  
18 personal standpoint, I had the pleasure to serve  
19 on the National Animal -- I have to get all this  
20 put into -- it's a typical government name. It's  
21 the National Animal Surveillance Steering  
22 Committee for Emerging and Foreign Animal  
23 Diseases.

24 I was the only beef person on there. And  
25 there was every kind of animal represented on

1       this. It's still active. It meets in Fort  
2 Collins, or it used to, now it's all going to be  
3 by phone, conference calls, because there's not  
4 enough money to move. But I will tell you that  
5 is a dedicated group of mostly government  
6 employees who are not just veterinarians, they're  
7 all graduate level veterinarians, most of them in  
8 immunology.

9           But I will tell you that their whole purpose  
10 in life is to save and protect the livestock of  
11 this country. And they believe it, they eat it,  
12 they sleep it. And they think they're doing the  
13 right thing, and I think they are too. But their  
14 big problem is, if there is an issue -- here's  
15 one of the scenarios they ran by me.

16           Foot-and-mouth. Okay. If we have a  
17 foot-and-mouth outbreak in this country, they  
18 don't even know how many cattle are within the  
19 designated containment area that they'll have.  
20 Now, they know how big an area they have to get  
21 into to try and contain it, but they don't even  
22 know how many cattle are in that area and  
23 surrounding it to move vaccine over there to try  
24 and get animals vaccinated.

25           I mean, those are just little simple things

1 that -- we talk about it's going to help us  
2 improve our means of marketing. If we have a  
3 foot-and-mouth without an ID system, if it  
4 happens in Florida, you can bet your fanny  
5 nothing's going across the Suwannee River. It  
6 ain't going to go across the Suwannee River for a  
7 while.

8 If we have an ID system and we can contain  
9 it, they'll contain a small area. And once  
10 that's done, commerce on the rest of the state  
11 will move again. And that's where -- we haven't  
12 had to experience that. But go ask Canada's  
13 cattle people what they think about an issue like  
14 BSE. They're going out of business. They're  
15 basically gone. Now, I don't know if they'll  
16 survive or not.

17 And we're all in commerce. Even if you  
18 barter with your neighbor, it's still commerce.  
19 And I think that if you have a animal that gets  
20 sick and it's all about -- it's about herd safety  
21 and health. It's not about individual animal.  
22 And we're talking the national herd. So, you  
23 know, with that, I think that there's some  
24 purposes within here that certainly work.

25 There's an issue that hasn't even been

1 discussed yet that is a critical issue. That's  
2 called bioterrorism. And without it, they'd  
3 cripple us. Can you imagine if they flew across  
4 this country and dumped foot-and-mouth across  
5 from east to west, and then just kept right on  
6 going? I mean, our entire animal industry would  
7 be shut down. What a way to cripple an economy.  
8 What a way to get us behind the eight ball if  
9 there is other intentions, further intentions  
10 behind them.

11 So there's a lot of ramifications to this.  
12 And homeland security is involved in this.  
13 They're actually monitoring our ports and our  
14 entranceways. So there's a lot of different  
15 things.

16 But I think both the Florida cattleman and  
17 the national cattleman, the biggest concern still  
18 would be the confidentiality. So, thank y'all.

19 JACK COWAN: Good morning, my name is Jack  
20 Cowan. I'm originally from Okeechobee, Florida.  
21 And my family's been in the cattle business for a  
22 number of generations now. And I think I -- I  
23 guess I'll be the first person to admit it, at  
24 least, but, according to USDA and the current  
25 administration and previous administrations, my

1 family runs what is considered a large farm, or  
2 however you want to classify it according to the  
3 farm bill.

4 But I would assure you and I'd like to assure  
5 the administration, and I'd welcome them to come  
6 visit us and find out that, even though it's  
7 classified as a large farm, it is indeed a family  
8 farm. My family provides all the management,  
9 decision-making and much of the labor that goes  
10 into it.

11 Most of my concerns this morning have already  
12 been voiced by Mr. Grigsby and Mr. Lollis. And I  
13 appreciate it. They both come from an  
14 organization that I am a member of. And I hope  
15 that USDA will heed the advice given to it by  
16 such grassroots organization as the Florida  
17 Cattleman's Association and all the members that  
18 they represent across the state, and also  
19 National Cattleman's Beef Association and the  
20 members that it represents across the nation.

21 My primary concern, I guess, that remains,  
22 would be -- the financial aspect would be my  
23 concern. I'm not sure that USDA has adequately  
24 accounted for all of the costs that will go into  
25 it. But I can appreciate some of the benefits

1       that we will receive from it.

2             The last pen of cattle we sold, we received  
3       twenty dollars per head premium for having source  
4       and age verification. And we did that without a  
5       mandatory national animal ID system, we did that  
6       just as progressive cattlemen trying to make a  
7       living.

8             And I'd like also for the USDA to consider --  
9       they noted in the presentation and from their  
10      cost benefit analysis that the cost would be very  
11      small, only maybe half a percent. But they  
12      should probably investigate into the margins that  
13      cattle operations and other livestock operations  
14      are operating on.

15            If you consider the capital investments made  
16      by ranches in Florida and other states, where  
17      land prices have been driven extremely high by  
18      development and other pressures, you'll notice  
19      that cattlemen have an incredibly large  
20      investment. And the revenue that they generate  
21      is a very small percent compared to that  
22      investment. And, so, when you consider five  
23      dollar per head implementation cost for the  
24      system, that could mean a lot more to the person  
25      that is trying to make a living off of six

1           hundred or a thousand head of cattle in the  
2           state.

3           So I would like for the finances to be  
4           considered along with the confidentiality measure  
5           that Mr. Grigsby mentioned, because that's always  
6           been important to our industry. But we've also  
7           always been open to the responsibility that we  
8           have.

9           For several generations we've been marking  
10          our cattle. And that was -- you know,  
11          traditionally that was with a brand. And we've  
12          actually -- you know, some states have very good  
13          traceability simply using the brand. If you go  
14          to New Mexico or Colorado, you can trace back  
15          cattle incredibly well just using a brand without  
16          having to use any kind of mandatory electronic  
17          system.

18          So I think there's lots of considerations you  
19          need to go through. And I think that the USDA  
20          should heed the advice of grassroots organization  
21          that represents thousands of cattlemen before  
22          they implement any systems that become -- could  
23          become mandatory in states such as Michigan or  
24          other states that want to make a voluntary system  
25          into a mandatory system.

1 Thank you.

2 GENE WALLS: My name is Gene Walls. And I  
3 come before you today as a consumer. Just to  
4 give you a little background about myself. I do  
5 have a bachelors degree and a masters degree in  
6 industrial engineering, which is all about  
7 improving productivity, quality control, managing  
8 personnel. I worked in -- I also received  
9 certification as a quality engineer when I was  
10 working in industry.

11 I have since left industry to do other  
12 things. In the meantime, I -- I also have  
13 rheumatoid arthritis. And, so, I have a very  
14 sincere concern about health, where my meats come  
15 from, because I actually had to go vegetarian for  
16 a few years in order to help get my system back  
17 in check.

18 And I really don't eat out at restaurants. I  
19 get my food directly from farmers. It's  
20 important to me to know the source or to know who  
21 my source, my supplier, is getting the meat  
22 from. I may not know the farmer directly, but I  
23 know the person who is getting my food for me. I  
24 only go to the grocery store to buy toilet paper,  
25 some juices on occasion, just very minor things

1       that I can't otherwise make myself or obtain  
2       myself locally.

3             I did study ayurveda, which is all about  
4       working with your body, working in sync with your  
5       immune system, working in sync with the  
6       environment, your local environment within your  
7       family, what's going on with your own body system  
8       and the systems around you. I am a licensed  
9       massage therapist in Florida. So I very much  
10      have a very much a concern for my own health, as  
11      well as the health and well-being of others.

12            Some things I want to address regarding the  
13      National Animal Identification System. The  
14      opening statement from one of the members when  
15      the session began really struck me. He said the  
16      objective is to have our animals remain healthy  
17      and free of disease. And if that's the bottom  
18      line, then that's where we need to hold and toe  
19      the line.

20            There is no tracing within lots. The large  
21      confined animal -- confinement operations are  
22      able to just trace their animals from birth to  
23      death by one lot number. The animals are not  
24      individualized. What is lost in that, and I've  
25      seen it firsthand, particularly like with

1 chickens, what do you do about the animals who  
2 die before they get to slaughter? And, tell me,  
3 there is plenty of that that happens. Did the  
4 animal die because it just got weak, it was  
5 attacked by other animals, something was wrong  
6 with its immune system, it came down with a  
7 disease that the other animals had not been --  
8 the symptoms had not shown up in the other  
9 animals before slaughter? Who knows. That  
10 animal's not traced, it's not recorded, it's  
11 lost.

12 And I imagine the same thing happens pretty  
13 much in the -- would happen with the beef, would  
14 happen with pork. If all I have to do is just  
15 track my lot of animals, I don't have to worry  
16 about particular animals within that lot.

17 The other concern -- I know NAIS has often  
18 said that it's for food safety, which is  
19 totally -- everyone knows it's bologna, it's  
20 bogus, it's not true.

21 Tracing stops at the slaughterhouse. If I  
22 get a hamburger patty, I do not know what cow it  
23 came from. I may not even know -- if I know what  
24 slaughterhouse it came from, I will do very well  
25 to figure out what lot it came from and what

1 animals were included in that lot. Was there a  
2 mixture of animals? Who knows. And we've  
3 already experienced that.

4 As far as database integrity and maintaining  
5 the integrity of databases. We know that  
6 Australia has faced a nightmare with their  
7 system. And that -- I'm not sure if they're  
8 tracking any other animals besides beef. How do  
9 you keep track of millions of animals, making  
10 sure that the reports are correct, that the  
11 information is entered in a timely manner? That  
12 means we're going to have to have watchdogs all  
13 over the place just to make sure that the  
14 information going into the system is correct and  
15 to make sure that the information in the system  
16 remains correct.

17 And I have -- I co-opped with Martin Marietta  
18 and Union Carbide in Oakridge, Tennessee. And  
19 one of the projects -- a couple of projects I  
20 worked on had a deal with setting up databases.  
21 And it's not easy keeping the integrity in a  
22 system, and particularly a system as large as  
23 we're talking about. It's a monstrous project.

24 And we're not talking about just one computer  
25 system, which makes it even more of a magnificent

1           undertaking. We're talking about fifty different  
2           states, different counties, different ways of  
3           doing things. And we're going to try to get all  
4           of that harmonized together into one system?

5           Now, one suggestion I have heard and I've  
6           seen it happen, I believe, in Michigan is letting  
7           our state veterinarians and our regular  
8           veterinarians who come and take care of the  
9           cattle also be responsible for making sure that  
10          the animals are tagged and that the information  
11          in the system is correct.

12          Well, that's fine and dandy. But, I'm sorry,  
13          veterinarians were not trained to go and take  
14          care of electronic data. They are trained to  
15          take care of animals. And if the bottom line is  
16          for animals to remain healthy and free of  
17          disease, our veterinarians need to be able to  
18          look at the animals, not to see if they have a  
19          tag on them still, but to see what they're health  
20          is. What are their irises looking like? What's  
21          going on with their -- with their system? Do  
22          they have the proper ridges in their back? Is  
23          their bone structure forming properly? How are  
24          their ears bent? What's their fur looking like?  
25          What's going on with their tongues? What's

1           happening with their teeth?

2           They don't even have time to do that now in  
3 most cases, but it would be nice if they had the  
4 opportunity to do so. But if we're going to make  
5 our veterinarians partially responsible for  
6 keeping the database accurate, they are not ever  
7 going to have the time to be able to help our  
8 farmers to really keep our animals healthy and  
9 keep breeding and producing healthier and  
10 healthier animals.

11           And, finally, someone mentioned that this is  
12 about herd safety, not about individual animals.  
13 And I have two points to make about that. One,  
14 we know, even among people, that there's  
15 different susceptibilities to disease. I could  
16 be in a classroom of thirty students, the flu  
17 hits, not everybody in that class gets the flu.  
18 What's the difference?

19           We aren't really sure what the difference  
20 is. But we know it has something probably to do  
21 with the immune system of that person. Maybe  
22 they've been exposed to it before and developed  
23 immunity, so that next time it comes around  
24 they're able to fight it off right off the bat  
25 and no one catches that they actually had

1 symptoms. Or maybe they weren't even sitting  
2 close enough to the kids that did get sick to  
3 even -- to even contract any of the microbes to  
4 become sick.

5 So, what we've got with this, especially  
6 tracing lots or anything, there's a presumption  
7 that if there's one animal in the herd that's  
8 sick, the whole herd must have been affected.

9 And I say that's the case because, if you  
10 look and see what happens with herds that have  
11 been identified having bovine TB, bovine  
12 tuberculosis, in one of their animals, they don't  
13 just take the animal out, they want to go ahead  
14 and slaughter the whole herd. But within that  
15 herd could very well be the very animals that we  
16 need to preserve who have developed an immunity  
17 to bovine TB or who are healthy enough to be able  
18 to stave it off. But by slaughtering the whole  
19 herd, we've lost that genetic information.

20 And in a lot of the cases we have farmers,  
21 these small farmers who take pride in breeding  
22 their animals. And they've been breeding these  
23 animals, generation in the animal, generation to  
24 generation and getting better and stronger  
25 animals, while the weaker ones are dying off.

1           And the weaker ones are susceptible. But the  
2           practice is, if you find one animal, let's just  
3           slaughter the whole herd, oh, my gosh, so it  
4           doesn't spread to somebody else, to somebody  
5           else's herd.

6           That's like -- well, here's another example.  
7           We were also talking about identifying premises,  
8           giving premises ID to everything and any place  
9           where the animals are going. So, basically, you  
10          want to take your animal to a 4-H fair. That  
11          fair probably has a premises ID, because you've  
12          got to report that my animal went to this  
13          premises for this however many days and I brought  
14          it back home.

15          So, say they discover that one of the animals  
16          at that fair has a disease. That whole fair  
17          ground is one premises. There's nothing to say  
18          where the proximity of the different animals  
19          were. Were any of the animals close enough to  
20          have come in contact with the animal that was  
21          discovered with disease? You don't know. It  
22          doesn't track that.

23          So what are they going to try to do, try to  
24          quarantine every animal that was there? That's  
25          like, if I go to the mall and find out two days

1 later that someone, for God's sake, God forbid,  
2 had Ebola even. I could have been at the far end  
3 of the mall, had nothing to do with the store  
4 that this person might have gone to, but you're  
5 going to what, try to quarantine everyone who  
6 visited the mall that day? That's exactly what  
7 this system is like.

8 There's no rhyme and reason to it. It just  
9 puts our resources and our attention in the areas  
10 where it's not going to help and it distracts us  
11 from the areas where we could really make a  
12 difference.

13 So, I guess, in closing, I would just like to  
14 say that in order to have quality, you've got to  
15 build it into the process. You can't -- and we  
16 are told as industrial engineers, you cannot  
17 inspect quality in. The only thing you can do is  
18 inspect bad quality out.

19 And what we've got are small farmers who are  
20 working on a quality process. Let's work on  
21 improving the process. We know we have problems  
22 with confinement operations. Why don't we put  
23 energy into seeing if we can make these  
24 confinement operations produce better quality and  
25 healthier animals. Don't penalize the small

1 farmers who are already working on a process that  
2 works.

3 Thank you.

4 SCOTT EUBANKS: Good morning. I'm Scott  
5 Eubanks. I'm representing the Florida Farm  
6 Bureau. And also my family, we have a cow-calf  
7 operation in Alachua County.

8 I'm just going to read what the Farm Bureau's  
9 policy -- we're a grassroots organization that  
10 represents over a hundred and thirty thousand  
11 people in the state of Florida. And this is from  
12 our policy book.

13 We support a voluntary national animal ID  
14 program. In the event of a mandatory animal ID,  
15 we support increased federal funding for phase  
16 implementation. We also support the strategic  
17 approach of the ongoing National Animal  
18 Identification System Cooperative Agreement  
19 administered by the state veterinary allowing  
20 free market development of the system in a  
21 private industry/government partnership. Now,  
22 that's from the Farm Bureau.

23 Now, on a personal note. We have about six  
24 hundred momma cows. And in our process we  
25 maintain ownership. So, pretty much we raise

1           them here in Florida, we send them to Texas.  
2           They're in a feed lot there for about six months,  
3           and then they're slaughtered in the plants out  
4           there, and then we sell the caucus.

5           So we know what our cattle are doing. We  
6           know our food is safe. And this helps us know  
7           that we are providing a good product and it also  
8           allows us to select better cattle for -- to make  
9           sure, you know, it's safe, affordable food for  
10          the consumer. So, you know, we're not huge, but  
11          we're not small either.

12          And, you know, there was a question asked to  
13          the doctor up here, who his farmer is. I'm his  
14          farmer. And I'm proud of what we do. And that's  
15          just kind of my soap box there.

16          So, thank you.

17          KIM OGLE: Okay. I have one last speaker  
18          here. Tarri Street. And I'm going to ask one  
19          more time, is there anybody else that would like  
20          to speak that I do not have their name up here or  
21          anyone that I called that chose to pass that  
22          would like to change their mind?

23          TARRI STREET: My name is Tarri Street.  
24          First, I wasn't going to speak. I was hoping one  
25          of the men in the family would speak. But as I

1 sat here and listened, I really was burdened to  
2 come and speak.

3 I'll mention things that I've not heard here  
4 yet today, probably would not be said at all,  
5 even, because they're my experiences.

6 We started farming. We are a farmer, small  
7 farm. We have chickens and turkeys, meat birds,  
8 egg birds, milk cows, beef cows and sheep.

9 We try to make -- raise quality food on the  
10 farm, stay away from the immunizations, stay away  
11 from the antibiotics, stay away from all the  
12 chemicals on the ground. We spend a lot of money  
13 a year putting minerals on the ground so that we  
14 have all the trace minerals too, because our  
15 interest and our goal is in health.

16 And all of what we got into this for was my  
17 health was so bad, the doctors had given me two  
18 years left to live. I could not eat a  
19 store-bought chicken without being up all night  
20 long, sick on my stomach, too sick, couldn't  
21 handle it.

22 All the testing, everything, it was: Let's  
23 see if you can raise your own animal. See if you  
24 are allergic to the meat or allergic to the  
25 antibiotics. And it ended up being I was

1 allergic to the antibiotics. The antibiotics  
2 that are given to these chickens, the antibiotics  
3 and the hormones and the immunizations given to  
4 the animals, that's what was affecting me. I  
5 could not tolerate it. I still cannot tolerate  
6 it. That has been twenty years ago that I was  
7 given two years left to live. What we did was  
8 come off of store-bought meat all together.

9 My husband and I, when I was still very sick,  
10 after we had discovered that it was not so much  
11 the meat or the milk, but it was what was going  
12 into the animal that was bothering me, we decided  
13 in the living room that there had to be other  
14 people out there that were just as sick on this  
15 food as I was. And those are the people we  
16 started reaching out to. And those are the  
17 people that the Lord really sent our way to begin  
18 with.

19 In our journey of trying to raise farm fresh,  
20 healthy food, free of the chemicals, the  
21 immunizations and the hormones, we started down a  
22 path that the county extension said would be  
23 impossible to go down. Because they were the  
24 first one to tell me that the government was  
25 against us and the government was in business to

1 shut down all small businesses all across the  
2 US. That was the first time that I had heard  
3 that. And that was probably nine years ago.

4 The second time I dealt with it was with a  
5 state inspector. We were trying to get a  
6 facility on our farm where we could just wash  
7 eggs and sell eggs for human consumption on our  
8 farm. We didn't want to do more than a hundred  
9 eggs a day or a hundred and twenty eggs a day.  
10 Any more than that while we were home schooling  
11 young children was too much for us.

12 And in doing that, that state inspector, he  
13 was the second one -- this was a state inspector  
14 telling me: You really don't want to get  
15 involved in this, because our goal is to shut  
16 down every small business across the United  
17 States. That's been just a few years.

18 Then NAIS come along. I still wonder and  
19 question, still, is that their goal, to shut down  
20 every small business? Is the government just  
21 coming in and encroaching on -- I mean, we were  
22 told by the state inspector, even a pharmacy that  
23 sells drugs was going to be shut down if it was a  
24 small pharmacy, because the goal was you had to  
25 be a huge conglomeration to stay in business, you

1           could not be a small person.

2           I've met people in all these last five, six  
3 years, because it's a pet peeve with me, it  
4 aggravates me, who could think of ways -- they  
5 have health problems. They could think of ways  
6 to make money, but regulations keeps them and  
7 prevents them from making money.

8           To be told that you cannot raise a second  
9 litter of puppies a year on your own property  
10 without having a state-inspected built facility  
11 to have that second litter of pups. Most young  
12 people can't afford to do anything like that, but  
13 they can afford to raise two litters of pups in a  
14 year, get five hundred dollars a puppy, and they  
15 can make an honest living and stay off of  
16 welfare. That's all they're trying to do is stay  
17 off of welfare. But governmental regulations are  
18 preventing them from making regulations -- I  
19 mean, preventing them from making their own  
20 income coming in that will allow them to live on  
21 their home and their land and produce the  
22 income.

23           They might not want to live in a big house.  
24 They just might want a small house. They might  
25 just have a small lot and not a big one. And

1        what they come up with to do on that piece of --  
2        that small piece will keep them off of welfare.  
3        It will keep our government and our taxes, my  
4        taxes from having to be paid to those people.

5                So, what I wanted to say is, our government  
6        is supposed to be of the people, for the people,  
7        not against us. It's not supposed to be against  
8        us.

9                And when they come in on my farm, they're  
10       supposed to come in and tell me and help me  
11       figure out what that law is. The pages are  
12       really long and a lot of rules and regulations on  
13       what I have to do just to wash a hundred eggs a  
14       day.

15               They should, in my eyes, be able to come in  
16       and not scold me because my water was not a  
17       hundred and twenty degrees when they turned on my  
18       hot water, the instant they turned it on, and  
19       shut me down because it's not a hundred and  
20       twenty degrees.

21               They ought to be able to work with me, help  
22       me to see that I've not got something the way  
23       they want it and help me to get it that way, but  
24       they don't. The government doesn't help me.  
25       They're not for me. They're against me when they

1        come in on my farm and try and help me do  
2        anything that I want to do that will help my  
3        children or my sons. Our sons left the farm  
4        because of governmental regulations. They said  
5        you can't make a living because of governmental  
6        regulations.

7                It should not be that way. The government  
8        should be for me. They should be for each one of  
9        you in this room. They should be for each one  
10       out there that's an adult that's trying to make a  
11       living in this country, not selling drugs, not  
12       selling illegal items, but selling anything that  
13       they can create, whether it's a puppy, an egg, or  
14       raw milk.

15               The regulations are not set to help me. I've  
16       been told by Tallahassee, I can give my raw milk  
17       to any neighbor I want to give it to. But if I  
18       collect one penny for it, I'm breaking the law.  
19       It's a biohazardous material. It can kill people  
20       for them to drink that milk.

21               To me, if my milk is going to kill somebody  
22       by collecting one penny, it ought to kill  
23       somebody by not collecting a penny. But that's  
24       not the way they tell me.

25               The same thing with an egg. An egg is a

1        biohazardous material. It's in a shell. But if  
2        I collect a penny, I'm breaking the law. Give it  
3        to anybody I want. They're not concerned with  
4        people's health, or they wouldn't allow me to  
5        give that egg away free.

6                The other thing, when we had the state  
7        inspector out to check our property for washing  
8        an egg, he spent two hours out there with me. He  
9        went through the building I wanted to turn into a  
10       washing facility for eggs, went through  
11       everything, all the paperwork. We filled out all  
12       the paperwork. He told me everything I had to  
13       do.

14               At the end of two hours of all this paperwork  
15       on my building -- paint the walls with something  
16       I can wash; keep my linoleum clean; put in three  
17       sinks, one to wash the egg, one to rinse the egg,  
18       one to bleach the egg; put in a wash sink to wash  
19       my hands; put in a sink in a bathroom, put a  
20       toilet in; put in a mop sink. All these sinks  
21       had to be in there just for me to wash a hundred  
22       eggs a day.

23               When he was all done, at the end of two  
24       hours, I asked him: Do you want to go out and  
25       check my hen house? Because we have a portable

1        hen house. It houses a hundred and thirty birds  
2        in there. It's an eight-by-sixteen floor with  
3        roosts in it. They're free all day long. Do you  
4        want to go out and check my hen house out in the  
5        pastures? That inspector looked at me, and he  
6        irritated me so much, he really irritated me,  
7        because he told me: I will never check your  
8        property. I will never go inside a hen house. I  
9        will never check a chicken on this land. All I'm  
10       interested in is that the cleanliness of that  
11       building is clean and that refrigerator is kept  
12       at forty degrees. That's not about health,  
13       people. That's about that seven hundred dollars  
14       a month -- I mean, a year that they wanted from  
15       me to wash a hundred eggs a day. It's not the  
16       health of people.

17                If it was about the health of people, they'd  
18       be concerned about the health of my animal. A  
19       sick chicken can lay an egg every day and pass a  
20       disease just as easily in a forty-degree  
21       temperature refrigerator as a healthy chicken.  
22       It doesn't matter. That refrigerator's not going  
23       to make my chicken healthy.

24                The only thing that's going to make my  
25       chicken healthy is me out there watching my flock

1 of birds or my herd of cows or my flock of sheep,  
2 or looking at my grasses.

3 It's up to each farmer to be responsible for  
4 the health of their animals. It's up to each  
5 farmer to be responsible that the cleanliness of  
6 their eggs are clean, not that they're bleached.

7 I went to a dairy farm a few weeks ago for a  
8 state tour of a dairy, where the county extension  
9 office people were there. I went into the  
10 facility where they milk the cows. And they had  
11 just finished milking, the cows were gone. They  
12 had the guy in there cleaning this facility.

13 There was manure a quarter-inch thick on  
14 every one of them pipes. The claws were covered  
15 in manure. In order for that guy to hook those  
16 claws onto the udder of that cow, he had to grab  
17 ahold of the claws with manure on them.

18 In my facility, there better not be one speck  
19 of manure on my claws when I hook them up on my  
20 cows, they better be clean. The floor better be  
21 clean. If one cow potties, I've got a bucket  
22 right there to catch it in. And if it misses,  
23 I've got a hose right there to hose it off  
24 immediately. So it's clean under there, but it  
25 wasn't the case at that dairy.

1           He had a pump bucket, a three-gallon pump  
2 bucket, spraying all the railing, spraying the  
3 claws with this chemical, because government says  
4 it's got to be sprayed with the chemical. He  
5 sprayed the manure with the chemical. Then he  
6 took a scratcher pad, six inches by four inch  
7 scratcher pad, and he scrubbed every inch of that  
8 railing. And when he was through about four feet  
9 of railing, he took that same manure scratcher  
10 pad and went and scrubbed all the claws with it.  
11 He did not rinse it out. He went and scrubbed  
12 the claws.

13           When he was all finished cleaning this  
14 facility and was all done and dry, I went back  
15 and I looked at it again. He had dry manure on  
16 those claws. People, that would never happen in  
17 my facility.

18           A small farmer's more concerned about having  
19 it clean than a large person is. He obeyed the  
20 law. He put the chemical on the manure. That's  
21 the law, you got to spray it down with the  
22 chemical.

23           I'm not interested in the chemicals. The  
24 chemicals are harmful to me. The bleach is  
25 extremely toxic to my body. I couldn't spray my

1 eggs with it. I don't allow it on my house. You  
2 cannot use that with me, but yet that's what you  
3 got to spray everything with.

4 If USDA wants to come in and help me, I'm  
5 open for them to come in and help me to produce  
6 healthy food. I'm not open for them to come in  
7 and tell me to use chemicals on my land, on my  
8 meat, on my milking equipment, on anything on my  
9 farm. That's not an option with me.

10 I don't see a purpose in tagging these  
11 animals. We've bought sheep with tags. We've  
12 put sheep in -- tags in our sheeps' ears so that  
13 I can tell, when it comes time to breeding, I  
14 know who's been bred to who and I can go and take  
15 and put a different ram with them the next year.  
16 But those tags don't stay in those ears. They  
17 catch them on a fence, they catch them on  
18 something, catch them on a tree branch, and  
19 they're ripped out, and I've got a few sheep with  
20 their ears ripped out.

21 I have a Great Pyrenees dog, supposed to be  
22 out on my property protecting my animals. But  
23 let one of my cows give birth to a calf and, all  
24 of a sudden, that dog is in there to protect my  
25 calf from its momma. And that cow's going to get

1 that tag ripped out of its ear if I don't lock  
2 that dog up before the day's over with, because  
3 that calf is now the Great Pyrenees' property to  
4 be protecting.

5 Tags are useless, a useless method of tagging  
6 an animal on a property, because they're not  
7 going to stay in.

8 A chip, just as it's been mentioned so many  
9 times, cancer. You don't put anything foreign in  
10 my body. You just don't. You might put a  
11 foreign object in a healthy body and it might  
12 survive for an amount of time. But if you put a  
13 foreign item in my body, and my body's going to  
14 react to it and it's going to make me sick and  
15 I'm going to have a problem with it. Same thing  
16 with some of my animals. I don't want to mess  
17 with it. I don't want to go through the trouble  
18 or the hassle of tagging. I just don't want to  
19 do anything.

20 Again, I just want to leave that county  
21 extension office people, state inspectors have  
22 all told me so many years now: USDA is about  
23 only putting all small businesses out of  
24 business. They want farm food from out of the  
25 country. They've told me over and over they want

1 my farm to be used for tourism, not for producing  
2 food, but for tourism.

3 Question: If you all want to come in, you  
4 want to come in and help me on my farm as a  
5 government for the people, of the people, you can  
6 help me. But don't hurt me. And I don't want  
7 you hurting any of these other people that are  
8 trying to make an honest living and produce  
9 healthy food for the people.

10 Thank you.

11 KIM OGLE: I'd like to thank everyone who  
12 spoke this morning. We're finished a little  
13 early, and I understand the lunches are ready.  
14 So why don't we break for lunch early. The  
15 lunches are available in the next building over.  
16 If you walk down this main hallway, there's a  
17 door. Go out the door, and there's a sidewalk  
18 that connects the buildings, and have lunch with  
19 everyone and come back in an hour. So about  
20 12:15, 12:30. Forty-five minutes. Okay. So,  
21 12:00. Come back at 12:00 and we'll start the  
22 breakout sessions. Just report back to this main  
23 room, and then we'll divide up that way.

24 Okay. Thank you very much. We'll see you at  
25 12:00.

1 (Whereupon at approximately 11:15 a.m. the  
2 meeting was adjourned for lunch.)

3 (No further proceedings were stenographically  
4 reported.)

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA )

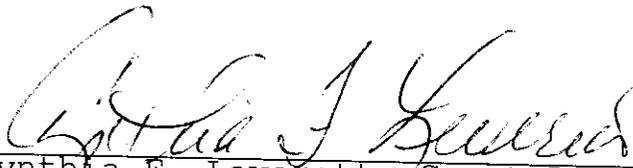
COUNTY OF DIXIE )

I, Cynthia F. Leverett, Court Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the proceedings herein, and that the foregoing transcript, numbered pages 1 through 96, inclusive, is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

I further certify that I am not a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

The foregoing certificate of this transcript does not apply to any reproduction of said transcript by any means unless under the direct control and/or direction of the certifying court reporter.

WITNESS hand and seal this 18th day of July, 2009.

  
Cynthia F. Leverett, Court Reporter