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New USDA Animal Identification System; OHS Partnership Continues

USDA Implements a New Numbering System to Identify Nation's Livestock

On 10 November 2004, the Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) amended the regulations to recognize additional numbering systems for the identification of animals in interstate commerce and State/Federal/industry cooperative disease control and eradication programs. Additionally, it amended the regulations to authorize the use of a numbering system to identify premises where animals are managed or held, and to prohibit the removal of official identification devices, including those recognized as official on livestock imported from other countries¹.

APHIS will recognize a new 15-character animal identification number, a 13-character group/lot identification number,

and a 7-character premises identification number. At present, animal producers can choose to implement this new official 'one number—one animal' numbering system on a voluntary basis.

APHIS will authorize this new national numbering system to identify premises where animals are located. This numbering system will be a key part of the national animal identification system that the USDA is implementing on a voluntary basis, and will replace the separate identification numbers or methods many producers use for official animal health programs, interstate commerce purposes, and industry programs such as breed registries.

Under the new numbering system, individual or groups of animals could be identified by the same number in multiple programs, instead of by different numbers for different programs. Regardless of the numbering system used, animals must be offi-

cially identified and APHIS is amending the regulations to prohibit the removal of official identification devices.

NIOSH and ASSE Renew Collaboration

On 17 December 2004, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) extended their collaborative partnership, first established in October 2003 to improve safety and health conditions in US workplaces, for three more years². NIOSH and ASSE agree to "provide outreach, communication, and professional development opportunities, and to facilitate the transfer and use of effective workplace injury prevention measures²."

NIOSH and ASSE pledge to produce and disseminate information on worker health and safety at conferences and through other forms of media. In addition, the groups plan to work to advance research on worker health and safety and to promote the application of research findings to improving the safety of the workplace.

NIOSH, a component of the CDC, conducts research and makes recommendations to prevent work-related injuries and illnesses. Members of ASSE, the largest safety organization, manage, supervise, research and consult on safety, health, transportation and environmental issues in all industries, government, labor and education.

References

1. USDA APHIS. Interim rule and request for comments. Livestock identification; use of alternative numbering systems. *Federal Register* **69(215)**, 64644–64651 (8 November 2004).
2. NIOSH. NIOSH Update: NIOSH, ASSE Extend Collaborative Partnership to Improve Workplace Safety, Health. (17 December 2004). <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/updates/upd-12-17-04.html>.