

III-F. Identification & Recordkeeping

Animal Identification

Permanent identification is an important management tool.

- ▶ Use of emerging cattle identification technology, such as electronic ear tags and retinal scans, is encouraged when practical. The cost is declining for electronic identification (EID), also known as radio frequency identification (RFID). As speed, performance, and cost improve -- more segments of the industry will use this technology for birth-to-slaughter animal identification. Restaurant and retail giants McDonald's and Wal-mart are already initiating RFID tracking systems for their products. Pennsylvania beef plants (Smithfield's Mopac in Souderton and Cargill/Excel's Taylor Packing in Wyalusing) have installed RFID readers. Full traceability back through all production segments is the ultimate goal. Check with your BQA coordinator for RFID tag availability.
- ▶ Beyond the food safety and animal health goals of the **National Animal Identification System (NAIS)** -- the driving force for electronic tracking comes down to economics. By "connecting the dots" through the entire beef chain, producers benefit from valuable data to make decisions, improve management, and take advantage of emerging profit opportunities. Tracking cattle is not just a matter of putting an ear tag in a calf. Electronic identification tags cannot do it all. Cooperation is needed among all segments of beef and dairy production, including those involved in the buying, marketing and processing of cattle.
- ▶ Hot or freeze branding is necessary under some management conditions. Hot branding in some states is the only legal proof of ownership. If cattle are branded, it should be accomplished quickly, expertly and with the proper equipment. When brands are used, place them high on the hip and as small as possible to minimize hide damage.



ANIMAL ID INTERNET RESOURCES:

NAIS: <http://www.usaip.info/>

NCBA: <http://www.beefusa.org/AnimalID.aspx>

Premise Identification

Many issues and concerns surround voluntary and mandatory identification programs. While these issues are resolved, states are issuing premise ID numbers and developing satellite mapping to prepare emergency response plans in the event of a disease outbreak. As stated in the strategic plan by the USDA, ***"The goal of the NAIS is to be able to identify all animals and premises that have had contact with a foreign or domestic animal disease of concern (i.e. foot-and-mouth or BSE) within 48 hours after discovery."***

Under the NAIS plan, states have some flexibility in how they manage the system. However, each time an animal is sold, that animal's ID must be associated with the new premise number in a database. This way, regulators or investigators can quickly trace each animal back to its source and identify other animals that may have been exposed.

Within the states of the Mid-Atlantic BQA alliance, there are more than five million cattle and average herd size of about 50 head. In addition to safeguarding food safety and animal health, the goals of the NAIS plan protect beef and dairy producers by limiting the potential for devastating economic losses in the event of a disease outbreak. For more information about Premise ID, contact your state's department of agriculture.

Record keeping for food safety

To ensure consumer confidence and maintain market share, beef and dairy producers must be able to document the safety of their product. Through effective documentation of products and processes used in raising beef and dairy cattle, producers demonstrate tight control over potential risk factors. As a result, consumer confidence is strengthened, regulatory pressures are eased and producers are protected.

Regulatory inspections by FDA, USDA, EPA, or OSHA prove the necessity of keeping good records. Effective documentation that shows appropriate compliance with training, inventory control, use orders, animal identification, withdrawal, and disposal will help avoid liability from a potential residue contamination or other food safety concern.

Record keeping for quality and success

Whether the information is computerized or hand-generated, keeping good records is a critically important management tool for beef quality and business success. Keeping good records helps beef and dairy producers manage variables -- from genetics and health to performance and profitability. For example:



- ▶ With today's narrow profit margins, correct **inventory management** is essential. Inventory and usage records can point out inefficiencies, theft and negligence.
- ▶ Animal health products are costly items. Accurate records can **highlight inefficiencies** on an animal-by-animal basis and **prevent ineffective treatments**. It also tells the veterinarian the treatments administered, so he or she can validate treatment recommendations and adjust treatment regimens, as animals and environmental conditions change.

▶ **Performance, value, quality, and profitability improve** when genetic, health, and performance data follow animals through each segment of production.

▶ **Records and identification are essential for value-added export markets.** For instance, beef sales to Japan will require documentation of cattle birth date to ensure that the beef is from animals harvested at 20 months of age or younger.

The BQA Manual Appendix provides record keeping forms, which can be used as is or as a reference for developing a good record keeping system. Computerized systems make extensive evaluation easy and efficient; however, hand-kept record systems are still very effective. Each system has its own merits. The important thing is to be consistent in keeping records that are: legible, easily retrieved, and maintained for a period of **at least 24 months after shipment of an animal**.

BQA Record Forms To Use and Keep

- ▶ The Mid Atlantic Beef Quality Assurance Program coordinators agree that all beef producers need to keep an abundance of records on everything they do with their cattle.
- ▶ There is no 'silver bullet' system of record keeping for all production units.
- ▶ The BQA Manual Appendix contains examples of record forms that we think might be helpful to you as you keep your cattle records.
- ▶ If you have forms other than these that you have been using, we suggest that you continue to use those that work for you best. However make sure that they are comprehensive.
- ▶ It is important that you record everything necessary so that if you are audited, you have the information available to provide a historical account of what has been done including dates, personnel, drugs used, lot numbers, serial numbers and everything else mentioned in the BQA Guidelines (Section II) and Best Management Practices (Section III).
- ▶ If you have ideas or suggestions on other forms that we should include, please contact your state BQA coordinator.
- ▶ **Remember to keep all records for at least 24 months.**



Critical Management Points

Identify potential quality problems through the use of an appropriate checklist. The checklist will assist in the identification of Critical Management Points (CMP) where problems occur. Limits must be established for preventative measures associated with each CMP. For example, any injection not given in the neck is outside the Critical Limit (CL). Establish rapid corrective actions. Establish a record keeping procedure.

Cow-Calf Checklist

Feed Supply

- 1. All pesticides used on crops fed to cattle are applied according to label directions.
- 2. Pesticides are stored in a room separate from feed supplies and feed additives.
- 3. Records are kept for purchased feed -- indicating source, date, and amount purchased.
- 4. Feed additives are used at recommended usage levels.
- 5. Only feedstuffs manufactured in compliance with the Ruminant Feed Ban are utilized.
- 6. Good manufacturing practices are used for mixing medicated feeds.

Notes: _____

Individual Treatments

- 1. All medications and drugs are used according to label directions.
- 2. When extra-label animal health products are administered, their use and drug withdrawal observance is based on a veterinarian's recommendations.
- 3. All individuals receiving treatment are individually identified.
- 4. Records are kept, including individual identification, date of treatment, product used, amount given, route and location of administration, withdrawal time, tentative diagnosis, and outcome of treatment.
- 5. Should there be any question about withdrawal periods being met, veterinarians will evaluate the treatment history against information provided by the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank or the animal will be subject to pass a residue screening test.

Notes: _____

Livestock Insecticides

- 1. All insecticides are applied on the basis of label dosages and routes of administration.
- 2. All insecticides are stored in a designated area away from the feed supply.
- 3. All insecticides are appropriately labeled.

Notes: _____

Cattle Processing

- _____ 1. All cattle are handled in a manner, which minimizes bruises.
- _____ 2. Extra care is taken to keep injection sites free of manure and dirt.
- _____ 3. Extra care is taken to see that needles are sharp and breaking off is avoided.
- _____ 4. Chemical disinfectants are avoided when using modified live virus products.
- _____ 5. Needle size used is never larger than necessary to adequately perform the injection.
- _____ 6. All injections are given in the neck region (or as specified by the product label).
- _____ 7. Label directions are followed for maximum volume per injection site.
- _____ 8. Methods of administration -- IV (intravenous), IM (intra-muscular), SQ (subcutaneous), or IN (intranasal) -- are followed according to label directions.
- _____ 9. All procedures and products are periodically reviewed by a veterinarian.
- _____ 10. All farm personnel who handle cattle have been informed about proper processing techniques and provided with training to understand cattle behavior and recommended handling techniques.
- _____ 11. Transportation quality assurance guidelines are followed.

Notes: _____

Feeding Practices

- _____ 1. Cows are maintained in moderate condition to nurse a calf and rebreed
- _____ 2. Older cows, young cows, and cows in lesser body condition requiring energy for additional maintenance and growth are maintained in separate feeding group.
- _____ 3. Cattle are provided access only to clean, fresh, uncontaminated drinking water in tanks or other watering devices that are cleaned routinely.

Notes: _____

Facilities

- _____ 1. Loading facilities ensure quick and safe loading and unloading with no bruising.
- _____ 2. Adequate water space is provided.
- _____ 3. Adequate space is provided for all animals to have equal access to feed.
- _____ 4. Clean, appropriate areas are provided for calving.

Notes: _____

Herd Management

- _____ 1. Cows are culled on a regular basis to prevent the marketing of over-fat cows, extremely thin cows, lame cows and cows with advanced physical problems.
- _____ 2. If branding is used, they are placed high on the hip and as small as possible.
- _____ 3. Bulls are removed from the cow herd and pregnancy exams are performed to maintain a 60-day calving interval.
- _____ 4. Health management includes biosecurity evaluation and planning.

Notes: _____

Weaning Management

- _____ 1. Calves are individually identified and the new owner is provided with documented date of birth, weaning date and a certificate outlining vaccinations and appropriate treatments (including date given and the products and serial numbers used).
- _____ 2. Calves are weaned 45 days prior to shipping.
- _____ 3. All vaccinations and treatments for grubs, lice, and internal parasites are given 21 to 60 days prior to shipping and according to manufacturer's recommendation.
- _____ 4. Calves are vaccinated for the following infectious diseases as recommended: IBR, PI3, BVD, BRSV, Clostridium species (7-way), Pasteurella hemolytica, and H. somnus.
- _____ 5. Calves are dehorned and castrated far enough in advance that cattle are *well healed prior to shipping date*.
- _____ 6. Calves are treated for grubs, lice and internal parasites.

Notes: _____

Replacement Selection

- _____ 1. Cowherd replacements are selected with the goal of meeting carcass quality targets as well as cowherd needs.
- _____ 2. Temperament is a replacement animal consideration.
- _____ 3. Expected progeny differences (EPDs) are used in bull selection.
- _____ 4. Herd sires are selected with emphasis on balanced growth and positive carcass traits (EPDs).

Notes: _____



Critical Management Points

Identify potential quality problems through the use of an appropriate checklist. The checklist will assist in the identification of Critical Management Points (CMP) where problems occur. Limits must be established for preventative measures associated with each CMP. For example, any injection not given in the neck is outside the Critical Limit (CL). Establish rapid corrective actions. Establish a record keeping procedure.

Feedlot Checklist

Feed Supply

- _____ 1. All pesticides used on crops fed to cattle are applied according to label directions.
- _____ 2. Pesticides are stored in a room separate from feed supplies and feed additives.
- _____ 3. Records are kept for purchased feed -- indicating source, date, and amount purchased.
- _____ 4. Feed additives are used at recommended usage levels.
- _____ 5. Only feedstuffs manufactured in compliance with the Ruminant Feed Ban are utilized.
- _____ 6. Good manufacturing practices are used for mixing medicated feeds.
- _____ 7. All feeds are checked at regular intervals for color, temperature, odor, moisture and foreign matter.
- _____ 8. Suppliers of fat or oil pre-test for contaminants.
- _____ 9. An accurate inventory record of all feeds is maintained for 24 months after date of cattle shipment.

Notes: _____

Individual Treatments

- _____ 1. All medications and drugs are used according to label directions.
- _____ 2. When extra-label animal health products are administered, their use and drug withdrawal observance is based on a veterinarian's recommendations.
- _____ 3. All individuals receiving treatment are individually identified.
- _____ 4. Records are kept, including individual identification, date of treatment, product used, amount given, route and location of administration, withdrawal time, tentative diagnosis, and outcome of treatment.
- _____ 5. Should there be any question about withdrawal periods being met, veterinarians will evaluate the treatment history against information provided by the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank or the animal will be subject to pass a residue screening test.

Notes: _____

Livestock Insecticides

- _____ 1. All insecticides are applied on the basis of label dosages and routes of administration.
- _____ 2. All insecticides are stored in a designated area away from the feed supply.
- _____ 3. All insecticides are appropriately labeled.

Notes: _____

Cattle Processing

- _____ 1. All cattle are handled in a manner, which minimizes bruises.
- _____ 2. Extra care is taken to keep injection sites free of manure and dirt.
- _____ 3. Extra care is taken to see that needles are sharp and breaking off is avoided.
- _____ 4. Chemical disinfectants are avoided when using modified live virus products.
- _____ 5. Needle size used is never larger than necessary to adequately perform the injection.
- _____ 6. All injections are given in the neck region (or as specified by the product label).
- _____ 7. Label directions are followed for maximum volume per injection site.
- _____ 8. Methods of administration -- IV (intravenous), IM (intra-muscular), SQ (subcutaneous), or IN (intranasal) -- are followed according to label directions.
- _____ 9. All procedures and products are periodically reviewed by a veterinarian.
- _____ 10. All farm personnel who handle cattle have been informed about proper processing techniques and provided with training to understand cattle behavior and recommended handling techniques.
- _____ 11. Transportation quality assurance guidelines are followed.

Notes: _____

Feeding Practices

- _____ 1. Bunks are managed to ensure feedlot cattle finish a feeding just as the next feeding arrives and accumulation of stale feed is avoided.
- _____ 2. Feedlot cattle ration changes are made gradually.
- _____ 3. All feed additives, including low-level antibiotics when used, are used according to label directions, and label withdrawal times for meat are observed.
- _____ 4. Cattle are provided access only to clean, fresh, uncontaminated drinking water in tanks or other watering devices that are cleaned routinely.

Notes: _____

Facilities

- _____ 1. Loading facilities ensure quick and safe loading and unloading with no bruising.
- _____ 2. Cattle housed outdoors have access to mounds or bedding packs.
- _____ 3. Adequate bunk and water space are provided for the number of animals in each pen.
- _____ 4. Lot space or total confinement building space is adequate for the type of surface.

Notes: _____

Cattle Selection and Management

- _____ 1. Fed cattle are marketed at desirable targets for carcass weight and quality and yield grades.
- _____ 2. Health management includes biosecurity evaluation and planning.

Notes: _____

Critical Management Points

Identify potential quality problems through the use of an appropriate checklist. The checklist will assist in the identification of Critical Management Points (CMP) where problems occur. Limits must be established for preventative measures associated with each CMP. For example, any injection not given in the neck is outside the Critical Limit (CL). Establish rapid corrective actions. Establish a record keeping procedure.

Dairy Herd Checklist

Feed Supply

- _____ 1. All pesticides used on crops fed to cattle are applied according to label directions.
- _____ 2. Pesticides are stored in a room separate from feed supplies and feed additives.
- _____ 3. Records are kept for purchased feed -- indicating source, date, and amount purchased.
- _____ 4. Feed additives are used at recommended usage levels.
- _____ 5. Only feedstuffs manufactured in compliance with the Ruminant Feed Ban are utilized.
- _____ 6. All feeds are checked at regular intervals for color, temperature, odor, moisture and foreign matter.
- _____ 7. Suppliers of fat or oil pre-test for contaminants.
- _____ 8. An accurate inventory record of all feeds is maintained for 24 months after date of cattle shipment.

Notes: _____

Individual Treatments

- _____ 1. All medications and drugs are used according to label directions.
- _____ 2. When extra-label animal health products are administered, their use and drug withdrawal observance is based on a veterinarian's recommendations.
- _____ 3. All individuals receiving treatment are individually identified.
- _____ 4. Records are kept, including individual identification, date of treatment, product used, amount given, route and location of administration, withdrawal time, tentative diagnosis, and outcome of treatment.
- _____ 5. Should there be any question about withdrawal periods being met, veterinarians will evaluate the treatment history against information provided by the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank or the animal will be subject to pass a residue screening test.

Notes: _____

Livestock Insecticides

- _____ 1. All insecticides are applied on the basis of label dosages and routes of administration.
- _____ 2. All insecticides are stored in a designated area away from the feed supply.
- _____ 3. All insecticides are appropriately labeled.

Notes: _____

Cattle Processing

- _____ 1. All cattle are handled in a manner, which minimizes bruises.
- _____ 2. Extra care is taken to keep injection sites free of manure and dirt.
- _____ 3. Extra care is taken to see that needles are sharp and breaking off is avoided.
- _____ 4. Chemical disinfectants are avoided when using modified live virus products.
- _____ 5. Needle size used is never larger than necessary to adequately perform the injection.
- _____ 6. All injections are given in the neck region (or as specified by the product label).
- _____ 7. Label directions are followed for maximum volume per injection site.
- _____ 8. Methods of administration -- IV (intravenous), IM (intra-muscular), SQ (subcutaneous), or IN (intranasal) -- are followed according to label directions.
- _____ 9. All procedures and products are periodically reviewed by a veterinarian.
- _____ 10. All farm personnel who handle cattle have been informed about proper processing techniques and provided with training to understand cattle behavior and recommended handling techniques.
- _____ 11. Transportation quality assurance guidelines are followed.

Notes: _____

Feeding Practices

- _____ 1. Cows and heifers are maintained in moderate body condition score for health and reproductive performance.
- _____ 2. Replacement heifers are appropriately grouped for feeding according to size and age.
- _____ 3. Pre-fresh and post-fresh cows are maintained separate from far-off dry and lactating cows, fed a transition ration, and monitored for excessive body condition score loss.
- _____ 4. Feeding is managed to avoid the accumulation of stale feed.
- _____ 5. Ration changes are made gradually.
- _____ 6. Cattle are provided access only to clean, fresh, uncontaminated drinking water in tanks or other watering devices that are cleaned routinely.

Notes: _____

Facilities

- _____ 1. Loading facilities ensure quick and safe loading and unloading with no bruising.
- _____ 2. Facilities are maintained for cow comfort and hygiene.
- _____ 3. Adequate water space is provided, and water pressure is sufficient to handle milk equipment wash down and cow rehydration post-milking at the same time.
- _____ 4. Adequate space is provided for all animals to have equal access to feed, and freestall facilities offer alternative routes to feeding areas.
- _____ 5. Uncrowded, clean facilities are provided for calving, and they are sanitized between uses.

Notes: _____

Herd Management

- _____ 1. Cows are observed regularly for body condition score, mastitis and early signs of lameness and are treated or culled in a timely manner to prevent the marketing of over-fat cows, extremely thin cows, lame cows and cows with physical problems.
- _____ 2. Cows that are to be culled are given dry-off time before marketing.
- _____ 3. Health management includes biosecurity evaluation and planning.

Notes: _____