

# **Animal owners, consumers, and taxpayers: Protect your right to farm and the food supply!**

The USDA has proposed a rule to require all farms and ranches where animals are raised to be registered in a federal database under the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) for existing disease control programs. The draft rule covers programs for cattle, sheep, goats, and swine. **It also sets the stage for the entire NAIS program to be mandated for everyone.**

It is critical that the USDA and Congress hear from the hundreds of thousands of people who will be adversely affected by the NAIS program. **This includes animal owners, consumers who care about local and sustainable foods, taxpayers who object to wasteful government programs, and advocates for a safer food system.**

## **STEP 1: Submit comments to USDA online or by mail**

The comments must be received by USDA by March 16, 2009. You can submit comments online at:

<http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2007-0096>

Click on the yellow balloon under “add comments”

Or mail two copies of your comments to: Docket No. APHIS-2007-0096, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Be sure to clearly state that your comments refer to Docket No. APHIS-2007-0096.

## **STEP 2: Write your Congressman and Senators**

Send a copy of your comments to your Congressman and Senators. You can find who represents you, and their contact information, at [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org)

## **BACKGROUND**

If the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) is made mandatory, anyone who owns even **one horse, chicken, cow, pig, sheep, goat,** or any other livestock or exotic, will have to:

- ♦ Register their premises with the state and federal government;
- ♦ Identify each animal, in most cases with electronic identification;
- ♦ Report “events” to a government-accessible database within 24 hours, including every dead or missing animal, private sales, and regional shows.

## **NAIS will:**

- ♦ violate individuals' constitutional rights, including freedom of religion & right to privacy;
- ♦ reduce the availability of local, organic, and grass-fed foods;
- ♦ interfere with the enjoyment of our horses and other pets;
- ♦ raise the cost of food, because tagging and tracking costs will be passed on to consumers;
- ♦ create a massive government bureaucracy.

## **NAIS will NOT:**

- ♦ make food safer since most food-borne illnesses, such as e coli and salmonella, are due to food processing and handling practices, not live animals;
- ♦ protect us against bioterrorism. The proposed microchips and radio tags are easily reprogrammed. Large databases are easy targets for terrorists or other criminals.

USDA's proposed rule would make the **first step of NAIS mandatory** for thousands of people in every state. Anyone who participates in federal disease control program for cattle, sheep, goats or swine will have their premises registered. **The NAIS Premises Identification Number (PIN) will become the only form of premises identification acceptable for USDA animal health purposes, with no opt-out provision.**

The proposed rule would also limit official Animal Identification Numbers to the NAIS-compliant 840-numbering system, laying the groundwork for future regulations that would limit people's options on the types of tags they could use.

**The proposed rule is not final yet.** You can help stop it by visiting the Federal Registry and making a comment. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2007-0096> and click on the yellow balloon under "add comments." And send a copy of your comments to your elected officials, urging them to stop NAIS.

The grassroots movement has already successfully stalled USDA's plans for NAIS, which originally called for the entire program – premises registration, animal identification, and tracking – to be mandatory by January 2009. The proposed rule is an opportunity to get thousands of objections in the formal record, and have an even greater impact. It is imperative that people speak up to protect our right to farm and our food supply!

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Go to [www.FarmAndRanchFreedom.org](http://www.FarmAndRanchFreedom.org)  
or contact Judith McGeary, 512-243-9404 or [Judith@FarmAndRanchFreedom.org](mailto:Judith@FarmAndRanchFreedom.org)