

## Animal Identification – Safeguarding Animal Health

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship is in the process of registering premises for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The NAIS is a national animal health program intended to identify all livestock and equine animals in the United States and to track their movements from one premises to another. It is being developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and State animal health agencies, in cooperation with industry, to allow for 48-hour traceback and traceforward capabilities of identified diseased or exposed animals. This system consists of three parts – premises identification, animal identification, and tracking of animal movements – and IDALS is concentrating on premises registration, the cornerstone for the NAIS program. If we do not have complete compliance with premises registration, accurate tracking and traceback of animals will be impossible.

IDALS is in the early stages of a push to increase awareness of the Premises Registration program and also increase the number of registered premises within the state. Currently, over 2700 producers have applied for a Premises Identification Number and more than 2400 have been assigned their PIN. The Department is working diligently to get all of the applications processed and are receiving new registration forms daily. Identification cards are being sent out for every registered premises. The card contains the premises information and identification number, which is printed on the card and encoded on both a bar code and magnetic strip. This card will allow the premises owner to pass on the Premises Identification Number, for animal movement tracking, in a variety of ways.

Premises registration is voluntary at this point, and done at no cost to the applicant. USDA has set 2008 as a target date for making registrations mandatory. IDALS is encouraging all producers and livestock related non-producers to get their premises registered now, and avoid any potential delays in the future. You can get a form by calling Steve White at (toll free) 888.778.7675, you can also download it from <http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/premiseID.htm>, or pick one up at your local FSA office, Soil Conservation office, or County Extension office. With everyone's help, we can continue to make Iowa's animal agriculture system safer and stronger.

**Premise Registration**

