

DECLARATION OF BRAD CLARK

UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY I, Brad Clark, make the following Declaration:

My name is Brad Clark. I reside with my family at 4220 Farrell Road, Dexter, MI 48130. As a boy I helped my father farm, and I have enjoyed raising my children on our small farm in the country outside Dexter. Up until the Spring of 2006, we had maintained a small herd of about 15 beef cattle in our cow-calf operation. Our customers were neighbors and friends who preferred the taste of our beef, and who relied on our practices of raising the animals humanely, fed mostly by grazing and in the winter on hay, with only necessary medication for illness. We used no hormones or other medicines for growth.

My principal employment is as an electrician, so our beef operation was done part-time. This kept us very busy, although our farming operation typically did not break even. It was a lifestyle which I value, and it was important in the raising of our children, as it was to me when growing up.

Due to State of Michigan requirements of the tuberculosis prevention program, our cattle were required to have TB ear tags, and we easily complied with these easily applied tags. However, in February, 2006 I was surprised and concerned to receive notice from the State of Michigan that without my knowledge, my home and farm had been assigned a Premises Identification Number and that extensive reporting, and identification of all my animals would have to be done by tagging with Radio Frequency Identification Devices (RFID) which I had to purchase and attach in a precise spot on the animal's left ear. The premises ID number was a national number, in a prescribed 15-digit alphanumeric number designed by USDA. A copy of the letter describing all of this is attached. It was all very official, and there was no question that I had no choice. It was mandatory for my cattle.

After checking everything that this whole program might require, I reluctantly decided that part-time farming was going to get way too complicated and expensive, not to mention difficult and dangerous. I understood that the RFID chip had to be permanently attached to the animal's ear, and although I could buy the tags for \$2.00 each (who knows, how much more in the future?), I would also need to purchase an applicator to install it, or I would have to hire a vet to do it. So, this is automatically more complication and expense. I had a bull in my herd, and my experience with him with simple TB tags, convinced me that I would be no match for his 1800 lbs. which didn't want me sticking something in a precise location on his ear. Getting an animal like that to hold still is almost impossible, and unlike the TB tags, the RFID tags need precise placement. Part-time farming, no matter how enjoyable, can't raise the risk that I become injured or disabled, or worse yet, that one of my family be injured as a result of these requirements. And then, I would have had to check the tags on all my cattle every day and report and replace lost tags right away. These kind of tags get rubbed off on trees and otherwise get lost all the time. And finally, I would keep all the records, and make reports of all movements to the State. With a full-time job and all the chores on the farm, additional and potentially dangerous work, expense and time were all too much.

Consequently, during the Spring of 2006 I sold the herd to avoid this hassle, and since then we are down to a couple of animals for our family's personal use, since these few animals don't have to have the RFID tags.

The final result is we no longer have a herd, and neighbors who relied on us as a source of good beef had to turn elsewhere. I no longer buy winter hay from other local farmers, and a life-long way of life for me and my family has dwindled nearly to nothing, directly as a result of the government deciding to complicate my life and increase my costs as a farmer.

SIGNED: Bradley D. Clark
Brad Clark

5-31-08
Date

Before me this 31st day of May, 2008 did appear Brad Clark, personally known to me and duly sworn, who acknowledged and signed in my presence the foregoing Declaration as his free and voluntary act.

Notary Public, Washtenaw County, Michigan
My Commission Expires: March 30, 2012

Stephen T. Bemis
Stephen T. Bemis


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JENNIFER M. THANHOLM
DIRECTOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LANSING

VICTOR IRWIN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 24, 2006

CLARK BRAD D. MARY
4220 FARRELL RD
DEXTER MI 48130

Premises Identification Number: 005W53F

Dear Clark Brad D. Mary:

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) has set the date of March 1, 2007, by which all cattle must be identified with Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) electronic ear tags prior to movement from a premises. After that date, animals will not be allowed to move with official metal ear tags or official registered breed tattoos as their identification. This recent change is in support of Michigan's Bovine Tuberculosis Eradication Program. The use of RFID tags decreases the time and money required to trace animal movement within Michigan.

Michigan will be using the new Animal Identification Number (AIN) system which allows each animal to be identified with a lifetime number. The format for the AIN is 15 numeric characters, the first three being a country code which, for the United States, is 840. **EXAMPLE: 840123456789012**. As animals are bought and sold during their lifetime, the tag is never changed unless lost, and then the animal will be relagged at its current premises.

Before any tag orders can be placed, producers need a National Premises Identification Number. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will assign one permanent number to each premises (location) involved in animal agriculture. The staff in MDA's Animal Industry Division (AID) have entered all TB tested herds into the USDA Premises Locator. Your new Premises Identification Number is printed at the top of this letter. Premises Identification Numbers contain seven alphanumeric characters. **EXAMPLE: A123R69**.

MDA staff will assist producers in placing tag orders. The price of tags is about \$2.00 each, depending on the manufacturer.

Ordering Electronic Ear Tags.


Additional Information.

Lansing Tag Line—(866) 870-5136
Atlanta Regional Office—(888) 656-8626
E-mail: MDA-bovine-td@michigan.gov

<http://www.michigan.gov/mda>

If you have any questions, please call me at (517) 241-4339.

Sincerely,



Kevin Kirk
Special Assistant to the Director
Animal Industry Division

CONSTITUTION HALL, P.O. BOX 30017, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48207
WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/STATEOFFICIALS

Michigan Department of Agriculture's letter to Brad Clark