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May 31, 2006

Judith McGeary
Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance
8308 Sassman Road
Austin, TX 78747

Ref.: National standard for livestock identification

Dear Ms. McGeary,

I am the Director of Marketing of Electronic Identification Devices, Ltd., a company that markets one of the leading brands of electronic identification systems for animals. Per your request, I am sending you my comments on the proposed NAIS electronic ID program for livestock.

We do strongly favor a national standard for identification of the above animal species. I am writing to express serious concern about the proposal to implement ISO 11784/85 compliant transponders.

Problems with the NAIS process

- (1) The USDA claims the USAIP is "technology neutral," yet it has stated it will implement the USAIP, which is very explicit about the technology to be used (it stipulates ISO 11784 and ISO 11785 for RFID).
- (2) The USDA claims it is open to industry input, yet it has stated in writing that the technology choice is cast in stone and not subject to review.
- (3) At some point in the future, not as yet stated, the USAIP will become obligatory for all producers.

Our company has been intimately involved with the development of the ISO 11784 and ISO 11785 standards and we are in a position to sell ISO 11784/85 compliant product. However, it would be a serious and costly mistake for the USDA to advocate this technology, which is entirely unsuited to open-loop traceback systems. There is a substantial body of documentary evidence that the standard by its design cannot provide unique identification. Unique animal identification is absolutely necessary if traceback is the goal, particularly today, when malicious introduction of disease (bioterrorism) is a concern.

We have approached members of the USAIP and the USDA, offering to provide these documents for their review and to put our expertise at their disposal (I have been involved in numerous standardization processes, including ISO and AIM in the United States). Our offers have been rebuffed. We believe the USDA is choosing to overlook problems with

Trovan can provide multi-system readers capable of reading a number of different extant technologies: Trovan UNIQUE, Destron Home-Again, AVID encrypted and non-encrypted (FECAVA) and FDX-B. Since retrofitting extant readers to read additional systems is not particularly cost-effective, Trovan recommends the purchase of a reader that has been purpose-built for the task.

What solution for the United States?

We believe that a national microchip standard should be a reader-based standard, as is the de facto practice in the EU, Japan and Australia today. That reader-based standard should accommodate the current U.S. installed base: the HomeAgain/AVID Eurochip 125 kHz transponder, the Trovan 128 kHz transponder and the AVID encrypted transponder. The well-documented patent problems and code-uniqueness concerns of the FDX-B protocol preclude it as a serious candidate for open-loop applications that require trace-back and code uniqueness. If in the future other protocols or technologies are developed that can ensure code uniqueness, these may be accommodated in the U.S. reader-based standard as the need arises.

It would also be appropriate for your organization to contact the responsible USDA officials on this very serious matter. They owe the industry and the public at large a full accounting for their decisions. I stand by our company's offer to provide the documentary evidence and a full demonstration of our claims with respect to the ISO 11784 and ISO 11785 standards.

Sincerely,
Electronic Identification Devices, Ltd.



Barbara Masin

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