



## **Marketing Council Considers ID**

by **Troy Smith**

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DENVER, CO (Feb. 2, 2006) — The NCBA Livestock Marketing Council, consisting primarily of auction market operators, livestock dealers and order buyers, heard a presentation on the newly formed U.S. Animal Identification Organization which will serve as central data repository for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS).

Jim Akers of the University of Kentucky and Southeast Livestock Network offered an update on current identification (ID) technology and explained how it may affect auction markets.

“National ID is coming and sale barn operators might as well figure out how they are going to make it work,” Akers said. “Implementing NAIS will be challenging but it’s doable.”

According to Akers, as change of ownership is tracked for NAIS, responsibility for reporting data will fall to the receiving premises. Auction markets will be responsible for collecting source-premises ID numbers and individual animal ID numbers for cattle sold through their facilities and submitting the

data to the repository. To comply, they will have to equip their facilities with “readers” for scanning the electronic ID ear tags.

Akers said most market operators need not invest in major remodeling of facilities. In his experience, most existing facilities can be adapted so that incoming cattle can be stopped long enough to scan individual tags with handheld readers, or panel-style readers can be installed so that tags are scanned as animals pass by.

Since many producers may not tag their animals before marketing them, tags may be applied upon delivery to an auction market. Therefore, auction markets have the opportunity to provide a tagging service and additional data management services to help their customers add value to their cattle.

Council members also heard from livestock auction insurance representative Jeff Howard who reported a leveling off of insurance rates. Legal counsel Larry Oldfield offered tips for improved business practices and recordkeeping to avoid lawsuits.



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