

COW HERD APPRAISAL PERFORMANCE SOFTWARE

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Protecting
beef producers
and consumers
through identification
and source verification

Calf AID project researches best method, process for beef industry

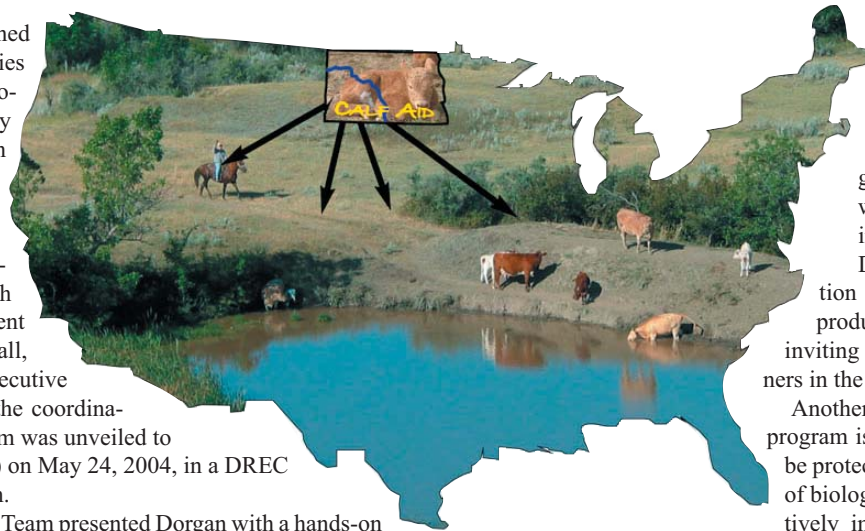
Beef producers have joined forces with supporting agencies to participate in Calf AID, a program designed to electronically ear tag and process calves in North Dakota this year. Calf AID is an expansion of Smart-Cows™, a program developed by the Dickinson Research Extension Center and the North Dakota Beef Cattle Improvement Association. Dr. Kris Ringwall, director of the DREC and executive secretary of the NDBCIA, is the coordinator of the program. The program was unveiled to Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND) on May 24, 2004, in a DREC pasture northwest of Dickinson.

The DREC First Responder Team presented Dorgan with a hands-on view of the equipment and process needed to electronically tag calves. Dorgan viewed the process and visited with officials regarding electronic identification and other issues important to the beef business.

The Calf AID program is a coalition of active production strategies combined with research to identify systems that will work for the beef industry. "At the Center, our goal is to design a system that collects the data, preserves the authenticity of the data and provides for producer confidentiality. For electronic identification to work, these criteria need to be met."

Ringwall said the Calf AID program will also provide producers source verification for beef animals, which will be useful for potential consumer marketing and protection. "We are not sure what works the best, low frequency or high frequency electronic IDs," he said. "We want to work with producers to help them gather the data but also to design a system that will provide a return for investments."

Another benefit of the research into electronic identification is a re-



sponse from the USDA to move toward a national cattle identification program. The DREC and NDBCIA coalition has a goal of gathering data for producers which will assist with meaningful management decisions. Data, performance, reproduction and sales, are important to producers and that is why we are inviting producers to become partners in the Calf AID program.

Another outcome of the Calf AID program is the ability for producers to be protected from potential outbreaks of biological disease that could negatively impact the current beef cow herd and compromise the beef offered to consumers.

"Calf AID provides first line defense through a first responder unit utilizing technology and mobile laboratories and supporting tools to respond to suspected bioterrorism or communicable livestock disease outbreaks, all within 48 hours as requested by the USDA," Ringwall said.

In addition to the DREC First Responder Team and the NDBCIA, the Calf AID consortium includes Dickinson State University, North Dakota Stockman's Association, the Hettinger Research Extension Center Discovery Team, North Dakota State Veterinarian and Vet Corps, North Dakota Livestock Marketing Organizations and North Dakota State University.

Calf AID is a collaborative effort between beef producers, scientists and research entities to unite efforts to identify calves, to provide new wealth to producers, to insulate the industry from potential large scale outbreaks of infectious diseases and to verify food safety which can instill consumer confidence.

Calf AID goal is to work 10,000 head

The North Dakota Beef Cattle Improvement Association has set a goal to electronically tag 10,000 calves this year as part of Calf AID, a new program for producers that will provide free electronic identification of calves. The program will be available to North Dakota producers seeking electronic ID for their 2004 calves.

The NDBCIA and seven other entities are participating with the program, which has two First Responder Crews. Each crew has a minimum of five team members who will transport working corrals, chutes and scales to individual producers. Electronic ID tags for the 2004 calf crop are free, according to Garry Ottmar coordinator of the Calf AID First Responder Crews.

"This program will be a beef cattle management relationship between the NDBCIA, the Dickinson Research Extension Center, the other collaborating agencies and individual beef producers," Ottmar said. "These crews will also vaccinate and tag each individual calf and work to implement a management process that can benefit producers."

The early details of the Calf AID program call for finding the best and most efficient identification system. "Calf AID is the execution of electronic communication and management protocols that can safeguard producers and continue to provide consumers with the quality, wholesome product they are used to eating," he said.

The timeline and goals for the Calf AID program are as follows:

Mo.	Job/Task	No. Calves Worked
June	Place EIDs in calves as pasture rotations begin.	1,500
July	Place EIDs in calves and begin pre-weaning work.	2,500
Aug	Place EIDs in calves; continue pre-weaning work.	2,500
Sep	Place EIDs in calves; continue pre-weaning work.	2,500
Oct	Place EIDs in calves; finish pre-weaning work.	1,000
Nov	Coordinate and read EIDs from calves during fall sales	4,000
Dec	Coordinate and read EIDs from calves during fall sales	4,000

Calf AID approved in Bismarck on June 15, 2004

During the ND BCIA Board of Directors meeting, held on June 15, 2004, board members approved the sponsorship of the Calf AID project.

Ringwall said, "The research component of this program is very real. We are working with many individuals to develop a reliable system that has universal acceptance under various management systems."

Calf AID is using some of the protocols advanced by the United States Animal Identification Plan for electronic identification and agri-security programs in beef cattle.

Calf AID has 11 objectives as follows:

1. Identify and implement preparedness solutions
2. Maintain privacy for all participants and data
3. Determine feasibility of project numbers and conditions
4. Determine actual manpower requirements and costs
5. Implement data requirements and traceability
6. Source verification and certification of data
7. Safety concerns of staff, participants and livestock
8. Determine actual equipment needs and standards
9. Work with EID developers on products and protocols
10. Educate the public
11. Gain industry acceptance

In addition to the presentation to Dorgan, Ringwall, his staff and collaborators have held meetings regarding the development of an acceptable program. Dan Wogsland, former agricultural representative from Dorgan's office, has been on site at the Dickinson Research Extension Center to learn how such a program could and would be structured. Wogsland has also attended NDBCIA hosted producer meetings at the DREC Ranch Headquarters near Manning, Bismarck and Carrington to gather input.

Veterinarians partner in Calf AID Program

A group of 21 veterinarians from across the state are committed to be part of the Calf AID team. Named the Vet Corps, the veterinarians are resources for producers to assist with the implementation of the Calf AID program. "The Calf AID program calls for the use of vaccines and other veterinary supplies," Ringwall said. "It is important for producers to have a one-to-one relationship with their veterinarians for development of a herd health protocol and other beef production issues. We encourage producers to work through their local veterinarians for health and management issues."

The veterinarians who have signed on as part of the Calf AID Agri-Security team are as follows:

Dr. Larry Schuler	State Veterinarian		
Dr. Susan Keller	Deputy State Veterinarian		
Dr. Diedre A. Quam	Assistant State Veterinarian		
Dr. Thomas D. Moss	Assistant State Veterinarian		
Hebron Veterinary Clinic	George Amsden DVM	Hebron	(701) 878-4200
Minot Veterinary Clinic	Russell Behm DVM	Minot	(701) 852-4831
Missouri Valley Vet	Thomas Bettenhausen DVM	Bismarck	(701) 222-1912
West Dakota Vet Clinic Inc	Kim Brummond, DVM	Dickinson	(701) 225-0240
Casselton Veterinary Clinic	Daniel Burchill DVM	Casselton	(701) 347-5496
Southwood Veterinary Clinic	Greg Carlson DVM	Jamestown	(701) 282-3430
Knife River Veterinary Clinic	Morgan R. Dallman DVM	Beulah	(701) 843-5525
Western Veterinary Clinic	Lee M Garbel DVM	Williston	(701) 572-7878
Northwest Veterinary Service	Marshall W Hermanson DVM	Powers Lake	(701) 464-5121
Interstate Veterinary Clinic	Blaine A. Hopfauf DVM	Mandan	(701) 663-4337
Cooperstown Veterinary Clinic	Allen C. Hoverson Jr DVM	Cooperstown	(701) 797-2216
Valley City Veterinary Clinic	Nathan J. Kjelland DVM	Valley City	(701) 845-3662
New Salem Veterinary Clinic	Margo Kunz DVM	New Salem	(701) 843-8020
Rugby Vet Service	Richard Lagasse, DVM	Rugby	(701) 776-5726
Dakota Veterinary Hospital	Timothy E. Matz DVM	Wahpeton	(701) 642-9277
Dakota Prairie Veterinary Service	Kristi M. Pennington DVM	New Town	(701) 627-3159
Enderlin Veterinary Clinic	Andrew A. Peterson DVM	Enderlin	(701) 437-3201
Steele Veterinary Clinic	Arlyn R. Scherbenske	Steele	(701) 475-2300
West River Veterinary Clinic	Donald L. Safratowich DVM	Hettinger	(701) 567-4333
Ashley Vet Clinic	Todd Tedrow DVM	Ashley	(701) 288-3234
The Vet Shack	Jesse Vollmer DVM	Denbigh	(701) 537-3864



Calf AID Electronic Coordinator Mick Riesinger goes through the steps of reading an electronic ID.



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Calf AID registration is fast and easy

Participation in the newly developed Calf AID beef cattle management protocol is only a phone call, email or letter away. The beef cattle management program is coordinated through the DREC as part of an agri-security grant and will provide free electronic ear tags and records processing to participants.

The Calf AID program is available to all producers whether or not they currently have a calving book or any type of record keeping system. The goal is to structure a comfortable management system for beef producers. The anticipated outcome is protection of a producer's beef enterprise and the beef industry through source verification.

By contacting the DREC, producers can enroll their herd. Members of the First Responder Team will work with the producer to establish a place, date and time to process a beef herd under the Calf AID protocol.

The First Responder Team will bring a portable corral, tub, chute and scale to pro-

Calf AID
Registration Procedure

Step 1: Contact the North Dakota Beef Cattle Improvement Association

•• *Phone:*
Doni: 701-483-2045
Mick: 701-483-0028

•• *email: chaps@ndsu.nodak.edu*

•• *mail: NDBCIA, 1133 State Avenue, Dickinson, ND 58601*

Step 2: Discuss protocol with Calf AID Field Agent, Select Options

Step 3: Select date to work herd(s)

Step 4: Review records

ducer locations to process a beef herd. The cost is only \$4 per cow-calf pair.

The First Responder Team directs and does the work and scoring of the cattle that

are moved through the tub and chute.

The Calf AID program will provide free of charge the following for all calves: stainless steel ear tag (placed in the right ear), weight, frame score, body condition score and record processing. The calf EID is free.

The Calf AID team can make multiple trips to a producer's location within the year. The chute charge remains constant for each trip. Producers are urged to maintain a close relationship with their veterinarian because of the need to establish the health maintenance schedule and purchase the necessary pharmaceutical supplies.

Calf AID is a voluntary program designed to meet the proposed identification standards of the United States Animal Identification Plan (USAIP) and also to give producers performance data. The data will be helpful to producers in making management decisions for the future.

Calf AID is designed to help prepare the beef industry so choices are available for producers, Ringwall noted.

Important Beef Cattle Industry News Especially For

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