

News Release



WYOMING SENATE DISTRICT 3

FOR RELEASE Immediately

CONTACT Senator Cheri E. Steinmetz

TO REACH (307) 534-5342

Wyoming must reject USDA's Electronic Livestock Traceability Rule

America's Superior Livestock Tracking System

Americans have built a comprehensive and effective disease traceability system which has proven over decades to be reliable, affordable, flexible and the envy of the world in its ability to protect the food supply. Just as important is the system's protection of private property rights, assuring confidentiality, proprietary investments, and cost-adjustable aspects that fit the producer. Wyoming laws have codified the right to VOLUNTARILY identify livestock using historically reliable means which include brands, backtags, tattoos and ear tags.

Whose Agenda Is Demanding This Rule?

The new electronic identification device (EID) mandate is being implemented by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as an agency "rule". In other words, this was not requested by Congress or, more importantly, by the livestock industry. This type of traceability - a tag emitting a signal that could be captured by any compatible receiver - is a food sustainability goal of the World Organization of Animal Health (WOAH.org) which is an advisory organization for the World Health Organization (WHO).

Elites in the global organizations want control of the livestock industry and food supply. They want to know how many cattle people own in order to regulate the industry. The goal isn't just safe food, it's part of their climate change cult which includes control of land use by monitoring livestock movement patterns. To show where this is going in the U.S., Ireland has embraced EIDs, and the result is a government proposal to kill 200,000 cattle to slow climate change.

The USDA rule does not enhance disease traceability but does allow for tracking of the animal's life history and location, going far beyond disease tracing at a cost that will seriously affect producers and require spending millions of your tax dollars when we're pushing to reduce government spending.

While this first go-round would only track 11% of our livestock - the rodeo stock and cattle and bison crossing state lines - you can be sure that will quickly expand. To date, the USDA has spent \$15 million just to stand up the office within the USDA; this price does not include the EID tags, wands to read the tags, computer infrastructure, extra labor costs throughout the supply chain or extra costs at the sale barn and processing plants. From this we can see that actual numbers are likely in the billions. We all know these costs will be passed on to you and I at the grocery store.

Rejecting and bypassing the mandate.

I have introduced SF0064 "Wyoming Opposes Mandatory Electronic ID Devices-Livestock", which opposes the EID mandate and requires the State Veterinarian and all Wyoming veterinarians to inform livestock owners of their rights concerning voluntary identification methods. The bill also stipulates receiving buyers in states requiring EID shall be responsible to tag with EID upon receipt of the animal in their state.

As the Chairman of the Agriculture State and Public Lands Committee in 2024, I drafted a bill during the interim (which passed the Committee) directing the Wyoming Livestock Board Director to use the exemption in the USDA “rule”, which allows for state-to-state agreements to continue “business as usual.” This bill is not yet numbered, but I expect it to be soon. I have contacted Legislators from six other states who plan to introduce similar legislation, joining us in pushing back against this federal agency overreach and continuing “business as usual” between states. I am thankful the Livestock Board Commissioners passed two resolutions based on my legislation, which have started the state-to-state agreement process.

Support Country of Origin Labeling (COOL)

The vast majority of livestock affected by the mandatory EID rule originate in wide-open spaces and live on clean, disease-free pastures and not in confined areas with thousands of livestock coming from different areas. If the USDA was concerned with and focused on preventing a livestock disease outbreak, they would stop the main route to infection: the importation of livestock from countries that have known and documented disease problems. This is why I am sponsoring a bill requiring Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) for beef and hope to see it passed this session so that consumers know the origin of the product, and producers benefit from the labeling as a value-added market component.

We have a superior traceability system worth defending, which is already protecting our livestock industry, our food source, and the pocketbook of every consumer. Our way of life is worth protecting.

About Senator Cheri Steinmetz:

Senator Steinmetz represents Goshen, Niobrara, and Weston counties.

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