

FarmAid

- [Donate](#)
- [Shop](#)
- [Get updates](#)

- [About Us](#)
- [Concert](#)
- [Good Food](#)
- [Family Farmers](#)
- [Join In](#)

- [Good Food](#)
- [Find Good Food](#)
- [Ask Farm Aid](#)
- [Putting It Into Practice](#)
- [Good Food Issues](#)
- [Corporate Power in Agriculture](#)
- [Take Action](#)

National Animal Identification System (NAIS)

What is NAIS?

The National Animal Identification System is a recently proposed national program designed to identify all farm animals and the farms where they were raised. The system will also be able to track animals as they come into contact with other animals. In April 2004, the USDA announced the framework for implementing the NAIS in all 50 states. When fully operational, the USDA promises that the system will be capable of tracing a sick animal or group of animals back to the herd or premises that is the most likely source of infection.

How would it work?

Under the current proposal, the first step of the NAIS would require that all farms with as few as one farm animal, whether it's a cow, hog, or chicken or goat, obtain a 7-digit "premises ID number."

Following the registration of all farms, each individual animal will be assigned a 15-digit animal identification number, using a variety of tagging methods including micro-chips, retinal scans, and radio-frequency sensitive ear tags. Implementation of this phase could cost a farmer or rancher \$3 to \$20 per animal -- a prohibitive cost to many family farmers. Giant livestock factories, however, will be

allowed to assign a lot identification number to a group of animals.

Will NAIS make our food system safe?

The most public reason for the new system is the hope of tracking any disease outbreak quickly and to ensure consumer confidence in the safety and health of the U.S. food supply. However, NAIS will not alter current factory farm production practices that cram thousands of animals in confined buildings. According to many experts, factory farms and confinement operations actually play a significant role in turning common animal diseases, like bird flu, into more dangerous strains.

How will NAIS impact family farmers and consumers?

If implemented as proposed, NAIS will likely have serious, detrimental and far-reaching consequences for small-scale producers, and could lead to even more concentration of our food system. If the system becomes mandatory and farmers are forced to shoulder the cost of tagging all animals, many small-scale producers will be forced out of farming because it will be too expensive. If small-scale and niche market farmers are forced out of farming due to NAIS, consumers will be forced to rely on large-scale industrial farms for their meats.

Farm Aid works with many farm and ranching organizations who are organizing and mobilizing their members. The goal is to prevent NAIS from adversely or unfairly affecting small producers, or providing advantages to large-scale producers at the expense of family farmers.

What can you do to learn more about NAIS?

The implementation of NAIS will be initiated at the state level. You can find out about your state's plan by calling your state department of agriculture or visiting their web site. Many family farm organizations are involved in the debates that will influence how NAIS is designed. Call a farm organization in your state to understand their views or call Farm Aid and we can put you in touch with one of our family farm partner organizations near you.

Farmers and consumers alike will be affected by NAIS. You can use your voice to support vibrant and sustainable family farm agriculture in your state and across the country.

[Sign up for our monthly newsletter](#) to stay informed about Farm Aid's activities, the annual concert, and current food and farm issues.

- [About Us](#)
 - [News](#)
 - [Grant Program](#)
 - [Annual Report](#)
 - [Board and Staff](#)
 - [Contact Us](#)
- [Concert](#)
 - [About the Concert](#)
 - [Sponsorship](#)
 - [The Lineup](#)

- [Concert Gear](#)
- [Media Room](#)
- [Past Concerts](#)
- [Good Food](#)
 - [Find Good Food](#)
 - [Know Your Food](#)
 - [Ask Farm Aid](#)
 - [Good Food Issues](#)
 - [Putting it into Practice](#)
 - [Corporate Power in Ag](#)
- [Family Farmers](#)
 - [Help For Farmers](#)
 - [Farmer Heroes](#)
 - [What's a family farmer?](#)
 - [Growing Change](#)
 - [Disaster Fund](#)
 - [The Resource Network](#)
- [Join In](#)
 - [Take Action](#)
 - [Action Center](#)
 - [Farm Aid Blog](#)
 - [Newsletter](#)
 - [Become A Member](#)
 - [HOMEGROWN](#)

Follow Farm Aid

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Youtube](#)
- [Flickr](#)

Donate

- [Member Login](#)
- [Photo Credits](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)

Copyright 2013 [Farm Aid](#)

Site By [ISITE Design](#)

Get Updates

enter email address

