

Tracking Commingled Cattle

Recording animal movement is a crucial component to the development of an effective traceability system. Currently in Canada, records are kept on where cattle are born and where cattle are slaughtered. However, movement tracking (i.e. the daily movement of cattle and the interactions with other cattle) is not recorded. This project will demonstrate and design livestock tracking systems that can identify and record animal movements using RFID readers and data collection services. This process will ensure a complete 48 hour trace back by keeping track of all premise IDs that the cattle move to. These “real world” trials will help identify the challenges related to tracking the movement of commingled cattle and enable industry participants (i.e. producers associations, RFID manufacturers and systems integrators) to work together to develop viable solutions. At the same time, participants will obtain an increased understanding of the variety of products available and their associated cost.

Benefits

The benefits of a project that demonstrates the viability of tracking cattle in areas of commingling is multi-faceted and covers every sector of the cattle industry. The project will help determine the limitations and feasibility around mandatory tracking of cattle movements throughout areas of commingling across Canada. It will also highlight the need to educate the livestock community on premise ID enforcement and identify the focus that public education should take in order facilitate the transition to mandatory tracking. This project will allow the participating associations to obtain a first hand, real time experience on how they would be involved in the tracking of cattle as they come and go from their individual premise. The participant associations have limited full time staff that would be responsible for the data entry for every event. This project will provide the associations with an opportunity to provide their input to the manufacture, design and currently available data transfer methods. It will also give these associations an increased understanding of the infrastructure changes and associated costs required with such a process. Leading solutions providers and manufacturers will be given a chance to demonstrate their equipment in a real time environment. It will also enable them to adapt the systems to meet governmental requirements, product pricing limitations, environmental issues, product durability, ease of use, download requirements to the CCIA database and most importantly that the products can handle multi-sector traceability for the future in Canada.

Goals

- Demonstrate the implementation of animal tracking by installing proven RFID Readers into real time situations in areas cattle are commingled in across Canada.
- Demonstrate the different types of RFID readers available. (Hand Readers, Wand Readers, Panel Readers)
- Demonstrate the different types of data collection devices available. (Palm Pilots, iPAQ's, Tablets, Laptops and custom data Boards)
- Demonstrate how data can be transferred to the CCIA Database.

- Validate that the current method of reading Low Frequency RFID tags can be done, and accurately as cattle move through areas of commingling.
- Help each individual association identify the hidden costs around a RFID Reading system such as electrical requirements, interference, additional staff costs (if any), software requirements, data reporting requirements and infrastructure costs.
- Give each individual Association the opportunity to try a system of their choice to see the system work in a real time situation.
- Help each association understand the added benefits to a reading system such as inventory control and management issues.

Results

The results of this project will help educate livestock producers on how cattle can be tracked through areas of commingling and how participating associations can play a role in making this process a future success. Participants will be provided the opportunity to try and test systems in an effort to provide them with first hand knowledge of how such a system will work. With the current trends in technology changing every year, this project will also highlight to the product manufacturers future development direction that will be required to meet the needs of associations and producers in filling this gap in animal movement traceability. The project will be highly visible to Canadian producers thus providing the opportunity to increase their understanding of the current technology (RFID Tags) and the benefits around a national traceability program. The results of this project will carry forward for years past the completion date since this project will outline how these associations will participate in animal movement tracking and what issues they will be facing. Though this project will revolve around cattle it will open the doors for multi-species applications in the future and will provide interested stakeholders with the chance to contribute their ideas and identify the limitations around a national tracking system. The public visibility of this project will highlight to the Canadian consumer that the livestock industry is working diligently to ensure the safety of Canadian livestock products now and into the future.

If you have any questions in regards to these pilot projects or if you wish to participate in these pilot projects please contact:

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