

Meeting Traceability Requirements

AngusSource® Genetic offers cattlemen a means to document animal identification.

by **JENA McRELL,**
American Angus Association

Earlier this year, USDA enacted a new rule regarding animal disease traceability. The rule requires livestock 18 months or older to have official identification (ID) and a certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI) or similar documentation before moving interstate.

To comply with new regulations, each state is reviewing its current policies and, if necessary, revising them to meet national standards. Both the shipping and receiving states must agree on what is considered acceptable official ID. Accepted ID could include brands, tattoos, ear tags, registration papers, certificates, owner-shipper statements or a combination of ID systems.

While many producers will not need to change their management practices to comply with the rule, those planning to sell replacement heifers or breeding bulls across state lines must meet requirements of receiving states. View a list of regulations by state at www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/animal_import/animal_imports_states.shtml.

The American Angus Association offers cattlemen options to comply with the new traceability requirements.

AngusSource® Genetic

AngusSource Genetic provides cattlemen with ear tags featuring a 15-digit unique animal identification number (AIN), which is accepted as official documentation, according to new traceability rules.

Ginette Kurtz, AngusSource Genetic quality manager, says the newly improved program offers flexible, user-friendly options to manage animal ID.

“Herd identification should be top of mind given the new traceability rule,” Kurtz says. “AngusSource has undergone some changes that bring more capabilities in-house. It’s now easier than ever to enroll your calves and capture the value of documented Angus genetics.”

AngusSource Genetic is designed for commercial cattlemen who want to document their calves’ genetics, age and source. The program uses a tamper-evident AIN tag.

To be eligible for AngusSource Genetic, calves must be sired by registered-Angus bulls, born on the ranch of origin, and have calving or breeding records to document group age.

“AngusSource Genetic will give potential buyers specific data and more information on the bulls you used to sire the calf crop,” Kurtz says. “The program also gives you additional marketing support and passes on documented information from one of the most

trusted names in the beef business, the American Angus Association.”

Kurtz says the difference is in the tag. Producers can choose between a generic version to meet the animal traceability requirement, or enroll in the AngusSource Genetic program that meets requirements and improves marketability through Angus-based commercial programs and services.

Angus recordkeeping tools

The process does not end after the official ID is assigned. It's equally as important that the AIN, brand or tattoo be properly documented in herd records and passed along to the buyer if the animal is sold.

One option that meets this need is Angus Information Management Software (AIMS). A Windows-based software package offered by the Association, AIMS can simplify herd recordkeeping by giving Angus breeders a central location for all their information.

“The key to traceability is being able to store the proper identification markers and provide them when the animal is sold or moved,” says Scott Johnson, AIMS director. “Our software makes the process very simple and helps producers quickly pull reports about the animal's history.”

The greatest advantage of using AIMS, as it relates to the new rule, is that the software can store and report back a variety of ID fields, such as tag, tattoo, electronic ID, registration number and other user-defined fields. Specific examples of reports available through AIMS can be found online at www.angus.org/aims/index.aspx. As the industry becomes more digitally based, AIMS can be synchronized with electronic tag readers to instantly access and update information.

A variety of e.Tags and traditional ear tags are available for purchase online through the Association's Tag Store (www.customcattletags.com/CustomCattleTags.aspx). The interactive website allows producers to build custom cattle tags, step-by-step, and preview a mockup before ordering. The Tag Store sells Destron Fearing™ products exclusively.

Any combination of these resources should be of assistance when considering options to comply with the recent USDA animal traceability requirements. Exceptions to the rule are show cattle and rodeo stock; however, events across the country do require specific ID and health records. The Association's activities and events department can answer questions relating to show requirements. For more information, visit the Association website at www.angus.org.

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