



GARY TAUCHEN

State Representative • 6th Assembly District

(608) 266-3097
FAX (608) 282-3606
Toll-Free (888) 529-0006
Rep.Tauchen@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

Chairwoman VanderMeer and members of the Assembly Committee on Rural Development, thank you for allowing me to testify on Assembly Bill 812.

Recent news reports have struck a nerve in China, the United States, and around the world. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) traced-back the origins of the Novel Coronavirus to the “Wuhan South China Seafood City” (which encompasses the South China Seafood Wholesale Market and the Hua Nan Seafood Market). On January 27, 2020 the CDC issued a travel advisory warning for all nonessential US travel to mainland China. This advisory was due to reports of a quarantine in areas of Wuhan, widespread infections, and reported deaths. Since then, the Trump Administration has declared a health emergency and implemented a mandatory 14-day quarantine for people returning from the area. This is the first quarantine order in 50 years. Also, the African Swine Fever in Asia, which began over a year ago, has claimed more than 5 million hogs to date. History has shown that these types of outbreaks will not only affect human life, but also have the potential to seriously damage economies, lifestyle, food supply, and food markets.

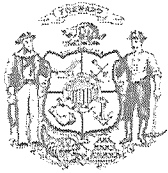
About 60% of diseases are zoonotic – those that spread from animals to humans. The CDC has classified means of transfer as “Direct Contact” (with an infected animal), “Indirect Contact” (with infected animal environments), “Vector-Borne” (ticks and mosquito), or “Foodborne” (unpasteurized milk, or undercooked meat/eggs). SARS, BSE, Zoonotic Tuberculosis, Listeria, E.coli, and Salmonella have all impacted human health, economies, and animal markets.

I am a strong advocate for animal health and food safety. Livestock premises registration, individual animal identification, and traceability strengthen our tools to protect human life, and limit the negative impact to Wisconsin’s number one economic engine: agriculture. Voluntary individual animal identification tied to premises registration provide a strong foundation for food safety and access to international markets.

Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC) and DATCP have established an effective partnership. WLIC and DATCP have developed a cost-effective, market-driven program based on a public-private partnership. An identification and records program is key to quick response and recovery. Everyone deserves a safe and secure food supply. Food safety is essential – producers are in the food business. Today’s consumers demand a focus on quality and safety in food products.

No law, regulation, or policy will prevent diseases from occurring. However, passage of AB 812 will be a proactive step to limit market disruptions and give our public health response teams a powerful tool for quick response.

Thank you again for holding this hearing on AB 812 and allowing me to testify. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



ANDRÉ JACQUE

STATE SENATOR • 1ST SENATE DISTRICT

Phone: (608) 266-3512

Fax: (608) 282-3541

Sen.Jacque@legis.wi.gov

State Capitol - P.O. Box 7882

Madison, WI 53707-7882

*Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Rural Development
Senator André Jacque
February 4, 2020*

Chair VanderMeer and Committee Members,

Thank you for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 812, relating to creating a voluntary individual animal identification program. Animal disease traceability helps animal health officials know where diseased and at-risk animals are, where they've been, and when. A comprehensive animal disease traceability system is our best protection against a devastating disease outbreak.

Assembly Bill 812 requires the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection to create a voluntary individual animal identification program for livestock owners. Under the program, DATCP would maintain an online list of retailers that supply radio frequency identification number that is connected to the livestock premises identification code for the animal's premises of origin. While there are several steps USDA needs to take in order to strengthen its traceability system, the most essential one is to move from metal identification tags to electronic identification tags. The electronic tags use radio frequency identification (RFID), which speeds information capture and sharing.

Assembly Bill allows DATCP to contract with an agent to collect and maintain individual animal identification records, which may include submitting the information to an existing state or federal database.

Beginning January 1, 2023, animals that move interstate and fall into specific categories will need official, individual RFID ear tags.

An effective and efficient animal identification system is the foundation of being able to perform proper trace back and trace forward investigations during a disease outbreak. This ensures the spread of the disease can be controlled with the least impact to individual producers and the industry as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration of Assembly Bill 812.



State of Wisconsin
Governor Tony Evers

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

February 4, 2020

Re: AB 812: creating a voluntary individual animal identification program and granting rule-making authority

Chair VanderMeer, and members of the Assembly Committee on Rural Development, thank you for the opportunity to provide information about Assembly Bill 812 related to creating a voluntary individual animal identification program and granting rule-making authority. My name is Dr. Darlene Konkle, and I am the State Veterinarian and Administrator of the Division of Animal Health at the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. With me today is Dr. Gretchen May, who is a Veterinarian Program Manager at DATCP. Dr. May manages the state's animal disease traceability program. I will briefly describe the work the department does with regards to animal identification and how AB 812 might impact those efforts.

Background:

DATCP rules require the official identification of animals in certain circumstances, including:

- Livestock animals going to markets or dealers, with specific exceptions by species;
- Livestock animals being tested for specific diseases;
- Cattle imported into the State, with some exceptions;
- Cattle receiving vaccination against specific diseases;
- Farm-raised deer that are at least 12 months old and enrolled in the CWD herd status program;
- Farm-raised deer that are moving, with exceptions for movement to slaughter; and
- Sheep and goats when they leave their farm of origin, with a few exceptions.

While official ID is required for each of these circumstances, the form of official ID is not required to be radio frequency identification or RFID tags. However, RFID tags do have an advantage over non-RFID official tags in that they can be read electronically and easily incorporated into records. This can speed up the ability to read and record identification numbers, reduces chances for animal and human injury, and improves accuracy.

Comments on the bill and amendment:

AB 812 would require DATCP to create and administer a voluntary program under which a person who has obtained a livestock premises registration may obtain RFID tags. DATCP would evaluate opportunities for sharing animal ID records with other state and federal databases with the goal of improving animal traceability. Under the amendment, DATCP would post a link on its Internet site to USDA's list of authorized manufacturers. DATCP would promulgate rules, including rules substituting other technologies if RFID becomes obsolete in future years. Efficient animal traceability is critical to rapidly address disease issues. Upon introducing AB 812, Representative Tauchen and his staff contacted DATCP, to run the bill by our staff. We appreciated the opportunity to work with Representative Tauchen, and his staff on a couple of minor language changes based on department feedback.

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Thank you again for the opportunity to provide information on AB 812 as it is currently written. We would be happy to answer any questions committee members may have.

Assembly Bill 812

My name is Keith York and I am 6th generation Dairy farmer from Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. I would like to speak on Assembly Bill 812 relating to creating a voluntary individual animal identification program for Wisconsin.

I am in favor of establishing RFID individual animal identification because of three reasons.

1. To protect my ability to market my products (Milk and meat) every day I need to.
2. Add value to my products
3. Expand markets for my products.

I will start by explaining how RFID traceability can protect me to continue to be able to market my products. There are two ways I may lose my ability to sell my products to the market. This would be because of a disease outbreak or a food recall. In both of these cases the amount of time it takes to solve the problem is critical to my being able to market my products. If I have records that show where my products came from and are available within minutes instead of days or months the chances of our farm having to stop marketing our products are less. If I have RFID individual identification and accurate records it will take less time and not only would this help me but any other farm with accurate records would not be affected. I will be able to continue to sell my milk or beef because I have accurate records that show where my animals come from in case of an animal disease so the processors or buyers are benefitting too. If we are relying on people's memories for when or where they bought or sold animals it will take a long time to solve the problem.

Traceability is also of no value if records are not accurate. Without accurate records we're at the mercy of the disease. Accurate records are the pathway to finding where the disease is. The problem with the old metal ear tags which are accurate if you read and write down the numbers but you must catch the animal and scrape off any dirt then read the tag and write the correct number down. How legible are most farmers or vets writings. There are mistakes made. In ^{fact} ~~doing~~ research on writing down numbers it has been shown that 1 out of 7 numbers were wrong. With RFID there is almost no chance that the number is

wrong because the readers transfer the numbers directly to the program that has the IDs.

If we look at a state like Michigan that has mandatory RFID for all cattle, the animals are tagged when born with a 840 RFID tag which has the individual tag (15 number ID) which is registered with the Premises ID number of the farm. Every movement of the animal to another farm or market is recorded. For example: When they have a positive TB animal they can go and search to see what farm they came from and anywhere that animal has been in its lifetime. So the infected animal can be separated and all animals it has contact with will be tested to see if they are infected. They have stopped the spread of the disease in hours. Compare this to the Dakotas who have no individual traceability where instead of being able to find where the animal has been in minutes to taking months or years to locating all the animals infected. This works for food recalls too. How much has the vegetable recalls affected there sales when it takes months to locate the source of the recall?

How does this add value to my products?

Traceability systems streamline farmers ability to work with supply chain partners, strengthens brand equity and market access, captures more value and reduces risk in the case of a food recall by assuring the safety of the food that I produce. Traceability offers critical value and a key one is consumer trust. Traceability is much more than putting an RFID tag on an animal. It's the ability to access all information pertaining to our products. Which increases transparency to consumers and this allows us to build trust. Which lets us grow our demand for our products. This is how it adds value. Consumers increasingly want to know where their food comes from and this gives us the ability to let them know.

In most of the country including especially Wisconsin the trend is to buy foods locally. This is not only in the smaller retail stores or local markets but in the largest stores also. By having the location of my farm linked to the individual animals ID gives my products the ability to be used in the local food market and reach the local market demand which again adds value to my products. Buying local is because consumers trust local producers and they know who they are which is traceability

Remember when Chipolte Restaurants pushed using local products at their restaurants. This was a beginning trend and pushed Chipoltes to

one of the most successful food restaurants until they had a recall at their restaurant. It took them months to locate the problem because they had no records of where every restaurant was purchasing their food. They lost more than 30% of their market because they had no traceability to locate the problem. ^{people were getting sick all over the country} If they had traceability it would have been a one day event and little effect on the consumers health and the loss of demand of their restaurant for years by Chipoltes.

The increased demand from consumers to know where their food comes from and how there animals are raised and how safe the products are have created a vicious spiral staircase. The more differentiation that occurs in products the more verification occurs and the more that is needed. Adding value to livestock is verified by the ability to trace livestock to farms that do the right things that individual consumers want.

How does it expand global markets for my products?

If we want to be a major supplier of products to the rest of the world there needs to be traceability. Consumers are now driving the bus in the food industry not only in the U.S. but in all countries. The U.S. and India are the only countries in the world that do not have traceability of their cattle. The point is that traceability systems are the norm. Going forward it remains to be seen how the development of this norm impacts U.S. position as a leading exporter. Are we going to be able to export without traceability?

Looking at the first half of 2018 there were premiums of from \$3.72 to \$15.05 per hundred pounds of beef for age verification, non-hormone treated or animal welfare program verifications. The baseline of those verification programs is animal identification and traceability. There is no question that identification and traceability carry premiums in the marketplace.

Wisconsin was leading the nation in 2005 when they passed a mandatory Premises Registration program with WLIC as the independent organization that kept the records. Premises Registration is only one part of traceability and needs to have individual animal identification to have COMPLETE traceability. A growing number of

states have surpassed us by using both individual RFID and Premises IDs so that their producers can benefit from complete traceability. We no longer are offering added value that other states are implementing for their producers in the livestock industry. This bill will start the process to have a voluntary RFID system that will add value for the producers. WLIC during the last year has updated our ability to record and verify all records in a system that can obtain information on all animals that come into our state. We have the system that can give our producers the ability to capture added value in their markets. Therefore I strongly suggest that you pass this bill because of the potential added value, security of market and export marketability it gives to the farmer.

of all livestock

Assembly Bill 812 95.185

This voluntary individual livestock identification program is a progressive step forward in protecting Wisconsin animal agriculture by:

- #1. Helping to ensure livestock animal health (by improving Animal Disease Traceability – ADT),
- #2. Supporting economic well-being for agriculture reliant communities,
- #3. Assuring market access for our livestock origin products, and
- #4. Maintaining consumer confidence and trust in the food and fiber from WI origin livestock.

This is a “nuts and bolts” bill that facilitates the transition to faster, more efficient and accurate mechanisms of tracing livestock movements. Because radio frequency identification ear tags (RFID) can be scanned and read by digital reading devices (such as hand held wands and stationary panel type readers), the required time to manipulate an animal’s head to manually read a small metal official tag is bypassed. This unique 15 -digit official RFID number is immediately scanned with the number recorded and sent by blue tooth technology to a computer, tablet or smart phone. Not only does this method improve speed and accuracy of identifying animals, it also eliminates potential human injury while handling an animal’s head along with possible errors in reading and writing down the small 9 numbers and letters of the old-fashioned government official tags still used routinely today.

Michigan NVE

We anticipate that the USDA-APHIS will be phasing out the distribution and use of the small metal tags as official ID in the next couple of years. The use of RFID tags for interstate movement of livestock will then replace the metal ear tags as official ID.

The RFID tags purchased by livestock farms under this program will be assigned to that farm’s unique premised identification number (PIN). Since the RFID tags are official ID they can’t be removed from that animal and serve to trace that animal back to its herd of origin if it is sold and moved away for feeding, breeding, production or slaughter.

WI led the nation early in this 21st century with our law mandating individual livestock farm premise identification. This program is ongoing. WI hasn’t required the official ID of individual animals, unless they are to be transported across state lines. (Then animals must be officially IDed, inspected and travel with a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection signed by a WI licensed and Federally accredited DVM).

MICHIGAN TAG - Dec 12

Other states, Michigan regulations, for example, require cattle to have RFID’s before leaving their farm of origin. With WI’s huge economic impact of livestock agriculture, we should be leading with the adoption of this advantageous RFID technology – that facilitates ADT at digital speed. An animal’s RFID tied to its farm of origin premise ID (PIN) will go into the digital database monitored by our WDATCP. This database can provide rapid animal movement tracking / traceability in the event we need to isolate, control and eradicate an emergency livestock disease outbreak. The information in the digital data base can be shared with Federal authorities and other states in real time to limit disease spread ~~fast~~ faster. (*A note here is that many animals move within states and across state lines still using a paper copy of the C.V.I. – these take longer periods of time to manually type into DATCP’s database and extend the time required to research animal movement in a disease situation when time is really critical.)

Bill 812. page 2. hearing testimony.

^{WI}
An example: Recently WI had a dairy herd diagnosed with TB. A cow from the herd was found to have TB at slaughter inspection. That cow had an RFID tag which facilitated the trace back and official action with that herd.

The U.S. and WI livestock industries are well aware of the risk we share in the event that a contagious foreign animal disease hits our herds. The USDA – APHIS, our state animal health officials and practicing Veterinarians are responsible on a daily basis to watch for, report and take immediate action on any potentially devastating foreign animal disease such as Foot & Mouth disease and African Swine Fever. If a FAD infection is detected animal movements would be halted to prevent the spread. So, not only animal health is affected by the disease but market access and product flow to the consuming public will be limited. The use of RFID technology and ability to trace animal movements quickly will speed the process of isolation for eradication and also show where disease affected animals didn't move.

This voluntary RFID program as detailed in the bill moves WI Forward by putting the "machinery in place" for when the USDA transitions away from metal tags to RFID official ear tag livestock ID requirements.

Digital I.D. technology ~~not only~~ increases speed and accuracy in an emergency disease outbreak isolation / eradication situation. Data developed will also assist in risk analysis, showing premises where a disease hasn't spread to, or where there is low risk of spread. Decisions can be made where milk and other livestock products can move and continue to be distributed to the consuming public – with less disruption.

In summary, this bill authorizing the WDATCP to create a voluntary individual animal identification program facilitates faster animal and premise traceability that provides for faster, more definitive action in an emergency livestock disease outbreak. It is a step forward accomplishing:

1. Protecting Animal Health & Livestock Resources
2. Prepares WI livestock agriculture and the WDATCP for upcoming USDA elimination of metal ear tags and requiring RFID tags.
3. Joins our WI Premise Registration requirements adding RFID tags tied to that farm's premise PIN.
4. Facilitates fast accurate tracing of animal movements and using electronic CVI's vs. paper copies.
5. Demonstrates to retailers and our consuming public, dedication to livestock animal health from the broad perspective of quality "from farm to fork".

Sincerely,

Dr. Lynn Schultz

*HEARD
TIMELY*

*NEW
USDA PROGRAM
DOVE TAGS
→ BILL 812*



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Assembly Committee on Rural Development
FROM: Eric Johnson, President, Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association
DATE: February 4, 2020
RE: Voluntary Livestock Identification AB 812 (*Information Only*)

Representative Vander Meer and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on **Assembly Bill 812**. My name is Eric Johnson and I am the President of the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association.

Right now, the WCA has a policy stating our support for Wisconsin's current premises identification program. Under current law, all premises where livestock are housed or kept must register with DATCP and report information to the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC). However, WCA does not currently have a policy on implementation of individual animal ID in Wisconsin. So, I am testifying for **information only** today.

There are several benefits provided by this legislation that should generate voluntary participation in this program by producers. Export markets: Individual ID and accurate traceability continue to be a requirement for many export markets (age and source verification).

Also, individual animal ID helps address biosecurity concerns. For example, right now in the U.S., we do not have a system in place to trace an outbreak of any type of contagious livestock disease. Having an animal ID system and method for traceability will help in that situation. Premises ID has already proven to be essential when it was used in Wisconsin to trace and contain the avian influenza outbreak a couple of years ago. In the event of a disease outbreak, without animal identification and traceability, livestock farms could face prolonged and extended quarantines, which would be financially devastating for Wisconsin cattlemen. (Quarantine times are based on the date that a disease is contained and start from that date.)

However, we do also have a concern with this legislation. This bill must protect farmers' privacy. We need to ensure that under this bill, location and farm data is maintained securely and protect from open records requests that provides a clear and detailed list of legitimate reasons for sharing of producers animal ID information (such as a biosecurity event). This protection is needed so that production information cannot be used as a business advantage. The concern is that if we allow individual animal ID, the states and the federal government will have a complete and accurate inventory of all animals in the U.S. If that information is released to certain parties, it could be used to manipulate prices. Protection of farmers' information is critical to the success of an animal identification program.



**WISCONSIN
CATTLEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION**

In conclusion, the WCA will carefully evaluate this legislation and will be developing a policy position on individual animal ID. We appreciate the leadership shown by Representative Tauchen and Senator Jacque on this issue because implementation of individual animal ID has been postponed repeatedly on the national level repeatedly.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions.



16 North Carroll Street, Suite 900 | Madison, WI 53703-2721
phone 608.258.4400
fax 608.258.4407

www.cooperativenetwork.coop

TO: Assembly Committee on Rural Development
FROM: Daniel Smith, President and CEO of Cooperative Network
DATE: February 4, 2020
RE: Assembly Bill 812 – Voluntary animal ID program

Dear Chairwoman VanderMeer and members of the Committee,

My name is Daniel Smith. I serve as President and CEO of Cooperative Network, an association of more than 250 cooperatives from a dozen business sectors in Wisconsin and Minnesota. All of our cooperatives rely on, and serve, agriculture and our rural communities. As you know, animal agriculture is an essential part of our state's economy and heritage.

I also serve on the board of directors for the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium, and on the board of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. I previously served as the Administrator of Agricultural Development at DATCP, and for thirty years, owned and operated my own dairy farm. I have lifelong experience and a deep commitment to agriculture, the industry that provides the safest and most abundant food system in the world.

Protecting that system is why I speak in support of creating a voluntary individual animal identification program, with the appropriate rule making authority, as specified under Assembly Bill 812. This legislation will help ensure livestock animal health through traceability; protect and support our agricultural economy; maintain consumer confidence; and assure international market access for our farm products.

That last point, international market access, is especially important. Wisconsin agriculture has the international trust and respect earned over time by our farmers, processors and export companies. It is essential that we have in place a livestock traceability system that allows us to respond quickly when threats occur. We have the technology in hand to respond quickly and accurately to isolate and eradicate a disease outbreak. I urge you to pass legislation to create a voluntary individual animal identification program for the wellbeing of Wisconsin animal agriculture.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Smith", written in a cursive style.

Daniel Smith

TO: Assembly Committee on Rural Development
FROM: Kevin Krentz, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
RE: Voluntary Livestock ID AB812 & SB737 (*Information Only*)

Chair VanderMeer and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me a few minutes this morning. My name is Kevin Krentz and I am a dairy farmer, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Board member and Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium Board member. I am here today to speak on behalf of WFBF on AB 812 as informational only.

WFBF's current policy states "we oppose any mandate on individual animal identification". One of the major reasons for this is the costs to our members. In a time of extremely tight margins in agriculture and record numbers of farm exoduses, our members do not want extra cost bared on them without a financial return to offset that cost. Another major concern of our members would be the privacy of the information provided. This information must be maintained and secured in such a manner of what it is intended and protected from all others.

WLIC currently maintains a database of livestock farm premises within the state. It is a proven system that has worked in tracing farms in the outbreak of a disease, such as we had a couple years ago with avian influenza. WLIC is also not a government agency and information is held privately.

Although Wisconsin Farm Bureau currently opposes a mandatory individual animal ID, we have no position on voluntary system. But we have in the past supported a voluntary ID system. The biggest benefit of an ID system would be to minimize a disease outbreak. Cattle are moved around this country on a daily basis. Even on my mid-sized dairy farm, I used to send my young heifers to Kansas to be raised. They would return at 2 years old, prior to entering the milking herd. With many movements, an animal ID system would help contain a disease with allowing markets to remain open in unaffected areas. And the risk to markets is greater than to just farmers, it is to the complete supply chain. That is the reason farmers do not want to bare the financial brunt themselves.

The biggest opportunities for a voluntary animal ID system would be marketing a value-added product. Some export markets and domestic retailers are requiring traceability of their products. This would provide more markets and thus more competition for the farmers animals. Farmers who use the ID system could potentially get more money by providing a product other's do not.

In conclusion WFBF opposes a mandate on individual animal ID, but we do see the true value of such a system. That would be to protect the \$105 billion agriculture industry in Wisconsin. A disease outbreak would be disastrous to WI economy if not found, quarantined, and controlled quickly. But we feel this bill needs to be written into WLIC and more money needs to be appropriated for maintaining this database. This would utilize a system capable of such storage and proven itself successful. Along with providing the privacy our farmers desire. Keeping such a system voluntary vs mandatory would create new markets for farmers who wish to participate, thus allowing for greater income on farms. Thank You and I would be happy to answer any questions.