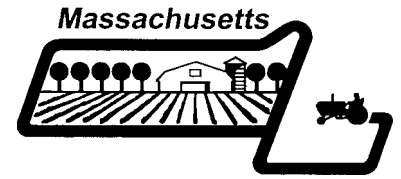


THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY
AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
Department of Agricultural Resources

251 Causeway Street, Suite 500,
Boston, MA 02114
617-626-1700 fax 617-626-1850 www.Mass.gov/AGR



DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

IAN A. BOWLES
Secretary

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

SCOTT J. SOARES
Acting Commissioner

October 30, 2007



Dear [REDACTED]:

You have been identified as the appropriate contact for a Massachusetts location at which livestock is kept. This letter is to inform you that the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources has compiled data for this site and would like to upload the information to the USDA National Animal Identification System. Participation is voluntary. You may choose not to become part of NAIS. There is information below on NAIS, benefits, and how to opt out of participation if you so choose.

NAIS is a USDA program. In short, it is a system by which to identify 1) premises at which livestock is kept, 2) individual animals or groups of animals, 3) tracing of animals. The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) has been working under a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to implement the Premise Identification component of NAIS in the Commonwealth.

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>

<http://www.mass.gov/agr>

NAIS was developed in response to a number of animal diseases of concern both to human and animal health, most notably Foot and Mouth Disease, Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis (mad cow disease) and Avian Influenza.

At present, DAR is only asking for your participation in the premise identification component of NAIS. Participation in Premise Identification will not obligate you to participate in other components of NAIS. I strongly encourage your participation as NAIS offers a number of benefits to participants and the public:

- Knowing the premises at which animals are kept helps DAR in doing outreach on important animal health issues.
- During a disease outbreak, Premise Identification data can help DAR locate those premises most at risk from disease and take measures to monitor and protect those premises.
- In the event of a disease outbreak, Premise ID data can help DAR perform "tracebacks" to farms at which animals may have been housed, which might be at risk.
- Premise ID can assist in emergency response situations. During a major blizzard in Colorado, officials there used Premise ID to identify remote herds and airdrop feed in locations that were otherwise cutoff.

Premise Identification information includes your name and the name of the farm, the address where your animals are kept, a mailing address (if different), a phone number, the predominate species on your property and the purpose for which you keep them (production, exhibition, recreation, etc.). MDAR and USDA keep this

information confidential. After MDAR uploads the information, USDA will assign a premises identification number, an account number, and a user name and password so you can access and update your information as necessary. Please contact us if any of the supplied data is inaccurate.

Facility Name: [REDACTED]
Address: [REDACTED]
Contact Name: [REDACTED]
Phone Number: [REDACTED]

NAIS has been controversial and some producers have been opposed to being made part of the USDA database. USDA has stated that participation in NAIS is voluntary. MDAR will honor the voluntary nature of NAIS. If you do not want your data uploaded into the USDA system please contact MDAR within 45 days of the date of this letter. You may write to:

Joao Tavares
MA DAR
251 Causeway St., Suite 500 Boston, MA 02114-2151

You may also email to joao.Tavares@state.ma.us.

If we do not hear from you within 30 days of the date of this letter, your data will be entered into the federal system.

I do hope that you will consider being part of NAIS. MDAR believes strongly and sincerely that participation in NAIS will offer significant benefits to producers and to agriculture in Massachusetts.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Cahill at (617) 626-1794.

Thank you for your time and consideration,


Brad Mitchell

Director of Biosecurity and Regulation Services