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TAHC Adopts ADT Rules

Recently, the Texas Animal Health Commission adopted new rules for Animal Disease Traceability. Beginning January 1, 2013, all cattle 18 months of age (sexually intact, parturient or post parturient) changing ownership in Texas must be tagged with a TAHC approved permanent identification tag. The metal bangs tag, RFID tag and USDA metal tags will be the only approved permanent identification tags allowed at this time.

The Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas along with the majority of Texas livestock associations supported an amendment to the proposed rule that would have allowed slaughter cattle to use a market back tag only instead of a permanent identification tag. Older cattle moving directly to slaughter need to avoid being placed in a chute and having a metal tag put in their ear. This practice would have eliminated many injuries, bruises, and additional stress placed on these cattle. Animal Disease Traceability would have been accomplished through the use of market back tags. Unfortunately, this amendment was defeated by a majority vote of the TAHC Commissioners.

The new rule, when enacted on January 1, 2013, will require all producers and markets to permanently identify all adult cattle changing ownership in Texas. Ownership fire/freeze brands will **not** be recognized as a permanent means of identification for Animal Disease Traceability.

TAHC is still developing a program to distribute the metal identification tags to markets and producers.

Currently, the USDA rules concerning Animal Disease Traceability allows the use of market back tags for interstate cattle moving directly to slaughter. You can be sure ICA will continue to support the Livestock Marketing Association of Texas and others as they work to amend this impending rule.

ICA was founded in 1974 to provide strong leadership for Texas cow/calf producers and has grown from its 17 original members to become a voice for thousands of cattle producers.

If you have questions concerning the new rule or would like more information about ICA, visit www.icatexas.com or call us at 512-620-0162.
