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SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE D'ENREGISTREMENT DES ANIMAUX



C.L.R.C. WORKSHOP REPORT - 2006

The Annual Workshop presented by CLRC was held on April 1, 2006 at the Executive Royal Inn in Calgary, Alberta. This year, the Workshop was a half-day event in the morning, followed by the CLRC Annual Meeting in the afternoon. Approximately 35 representatives of various breed associations were on hand for this very informative morning.

After an enjoyable continental breakfast, CLRC Chairman Dan Stephenson welcomed all of those present.

Following is a summary of each of the three presentations:

1. Brett McConkey, Canadian Cattle Identification Agency

The Canadian Cattle Identification Agency is led, operated and sustained by the industry. It has a good relationship with government.

To date, 45 million animals have been entered in the database, and the industry is now 98.3% compliant.

The agency serves multiple species, has international recognition, and offers value-added services; e.g. age verification.

The system capabilities include: traceback, premises ID, full animal movement tracking, group lot ID, age verification. There is full automation and electronic transfer of records.

CCIA sets national standards for user logons to the system, for animal and premise ID, and for manufacturers and sellers of tags.

Only RFID tags are now being sold. The sale of bar coded tags ceased in July 2005. There are currently 6 approved RFID tags on the market. The tag numbers follow the International livestock numbering system. Benefits of RFID tags are: improved retention and readability (the criteria is 99% retention and 100% readability), data integrity, and the ability to be read at a distance without clear line of sight. RFID tags will permit easier tracking of full animal movement and value added services; e.g. age verification, herd management.

Premise ID is the assignment of a unique ID to each physical location. Once premise ID is in place, each tag must be associated with a premise ID, rather than owner, for herd of origin, movements and sightings.

Group lot identification will come into play for swine and poultry.

CCIA is committed to value added service and capture of carcass data and is moving forward on this.

Age Verification requires the association of a birth date with the unique ID of the animal. Age verification is currently voluntary, but will become mandatory in Alberta in 2007.

This replaces age determination by dentition. It increases access to export markets, as countries such as Japan require age verification when importing beef. Age verified animals can be much more easily presorted at the packing plants to be channeled to particular markets.

The next steps for CCIA include:

- continuing to meet domestic and international commitments
- keeping abreast of the technology to meet those commitments
- enhancing the interface with other related organizations
- becoming ever more multi-species
- cost efficiency and industry sustainability
- North American harmonization

2. Vel Evans, Equine Canada

The Canadian Equine Identification and Traceability Program is starting in 2006 on a voluntary basis, with the participation of breed registries and sport organizations, aiming to capture foals registered in 2007.

The program will:

- assign a unique lifetime number for each horse
- maintain owner of record contact information
- standardize the format for the identification of horses
- standardize the format for all documents required for moving horses
- use the existing network of pedigree registries and horse shows to collect information on identification and movement of horses

Horses are included in the national livestock traceability program for reasons of animal health and food safety. Because horses move on and off farms and other premises regularly, there is an increased risk of disease; thus the need to track movements in the case of a health emergency. Any emergencies need to be dealt with quickly in order to allow continued movement of horses.

The strategy has been developed by a working group representing various sectors of the horse industry.

Equine Canada has a seat on the Board of the Canadian Livestock Identification Agency, as does each other species group.

At this time, the working group is not proposing mandatory identification; however, if all registries and sport and racing groups participate, 70% of the horses in Canada could be captured by the system. The remaining horses (e.g. the backyard child's pony) generally undergo much less movement, and are not as critical to the program.

The working group has decided on a standardized written descriptor and graphic, based on the current Coggins test format, as no device yet meets all the criteria. Where an animal does have a microchip, the microchip will be recorded as a secondary identification. New technologies; e.g. on-site DNA verification, iris or retinal scanning, are possible means of identification for the future.

Other countries are also moving ahead with ID programs. In the European Union, all horses must have a passport document to move off the home farm. In the United States, both animal ID and premises ID systems are being developed. Identification and tracking is likely to be mandatory in the U.S. by 2009.

3. Ron Black, CLRC General Manager

Some of the newer services provided by CLRC were highlighted.

Electronic Herd Book: All membership and pedigree information, searchable by various criteria, for each participating association, is included on the CLRC website. One can research the pedigree of an animal and view its progeny. Animals owned by non-members, or animals which have died or been sold without papers, may still be found by name, registration number or identification.

Electronic Registration: Available for breeds that do not require photos or diagrams, and which have had the by-laws amended to allow electronic registration.

Marketplace: Breeders place webcards advertising their farm or herd. Part of the annual fee is turned back to the breeder's association.

Microchips: CLRC is a retailer of AVID microchips.

Lists and labels, mail outs, secretarial services: Services that are available to help associations with administration. Five associations currently use the CLRC secretarial services.

All of the presenters answered a number of questions from the floor.

For further information, visit the following websites:

CCIA: www.canadaid.ca

Equine Canada: www.equinecanada.ca

CLRC: www.clrc.ca

Prepared by Ron Black, General Manager
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