

USDA plans voluntary cattle tracking

June 21 2006

The U.S. Department of Agriculture still has no system to track livestock during an outbreak of infection, such as mad cow disease.

Former Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman asked the department to create a national livestock tracking system in 2003, when the first U.S. case of mad cow disease was discovered, The Wall Street Journal reported. There is still no such system for most farm animals, including chickens and beef cattle.

The Agriculture Department, which has spent \$84.7 million to develop a tracking system, told the Journal such a system will begin operating next year, but has decided not to make the tracking mandatory.

Officials told the Journal they dropped the idea of mandatory participation because of industry feedback, and, instead, plan to rely on market forces to convince livestock producers to register their animals. Only if that doesn't result in adequate participation does the agency say it would again consider making the system mandatory.

Livestock tracking might be crucial in controlling outbreaks of contagious diseases by allowing investigators to quickly locate animals that were exposed to an infection, such as mad cow disease.

Copyright 2006 by United Press International

Citation: USDA plans voluntary cattle tracking (2006, June 21) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2006-06-usda-voluntary-cattle-tracking.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.