

USDA announces plan for national animal identification system

On 5 May, the US Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS) announced a draft of a strategic plan for the development of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) and solicited feedback from agriculture producers, leaders, and industry partners^{1,2}.

APHIS administers the NAIS, a cooperative state-federal-industry program that was created to track animal movements from birth to death to track animal diseases.

This draft plan will highlight the importance of a national identification system that NAIS will develop after field trials and integration of premises identification, animal identification, and animal tracking.

The NAIS will enable State and Federal animal health officials to contain animal

disease through improved tracking of animal species that could impact the health of US food animals, better management of disease surveillance and control programs, implementation of electronic systems for monitoring intra- and interstate animal movement, and identification of animals and premises that have had contact with a foreign or domestic animal disease of concern within 48 hours of an initial presumptive-positive diagnosis.

1. USDA. USDA unveils multi-year draft strategic plan for the National Animal Identification System. (5 May 2005).
2. USDA APHIS. Notice of availability and request for comments. National Animal Identification System; notice of availability of draft strategic plan and draft program standards. *Federal Register* **70(87)**, 23961–23963 (6 May 2005).

PETA and PETCO reach agreement

On 12 April, the animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and PETCO Animal Supplies, Inc. announced an agreement that will end PETA's campaign against the pet supply chain¹.

According to a press release posted on PETA's website, PETCO will end the sale of large birds in its stores¹. In addition, PETCO will expand its 'Think Adoption First' cat and dog adoption program to include birds, and will recommend and promote flight cages.

For their part, PETA will end their boycott of PETCO, will cease demonstrating at their stores, and will take down its website criticizing PETCO. PETA has also agreed to work with PETCO on developing the bird adoption program.

1. PETA and PETCO announce agreement: PETA to end campaign against PETCO as company ends sale of large birds. (12 April 2005). <http://www.peta.org/feat/PETCOAgreement/default.asp>.

DEA issues final rule on electronic orders for controlled substances

On 1 April, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) revised its regulations to provide an electronic equivalent to the DEA official order form that it requires for all distributions involving Schedule I and II controlled substances¹. This rule is effective 31 May.

These regulations will allow, but not require, registrants to order Schedule I and II substances electronically and maintain the records of these orders electronically, thus

reducing paperwork and transaction times for DEA registrants who handle, sell, or buy these controlled substances.

This rule will not affect patients' abilities to receive prescriptions for controlled substances from practitioners, or to have such prescriptions filled at pharmacies.

1. DEA, DOJ. Final Rule. Electronic orders for controlled substances and notice of meeting; final rule and notice. *Federal Register* **70(62)**, 16901–16919 (1 April 2005).