



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

Joelle Schelhaus (301) 734-0595

Marci Hilt (202) 720-4623

USDA ANNOUNCES COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH FOUR TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

WASHINGTON, Oct. 20, 2008--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today announced a partnership with four tribal organizations for National Animal Identification System (NAIS) education and outreach. The four tribal organizations are Intertribal Agriculture Council, Indian Nations Conservation Alliance, Intertribal Council of Nevada and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation.

"We are proud to partner with Indian Country to provide valuable education and outreach on how to participate in the National Animal Identification System," said Bruce Knight, under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs. "I am excited for tribal producers and Tribes to coordinate with APHIS partners, to help ensure our Nation's food safety."

The Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) will work with tribal nations in four states and will host outreach meetings to promote participation in NAIS. The Indian Nations Conservation Alliance (INCA) will work with tribes in six states to offer NAIS training events and outreach to the tribal communities.

The IAC and the INCA serve all American Indians and Alaska Natives. INCA's outreach has helped form 30 Tribal Conservation Districts across the United States.

The Intertribal Council of Nevada, which is an independent federally recognized tribal organization that works with 27 tribes in the Great Basin region of Nevada, will provide training and educational events for its member tribes. And the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation, located in Montana, will conduct reservation-wide education about NAIS and complete premises registration on tribally-owned agriculture lands.

These cooperative agreements are part of an outreach effort to small and economically disadvantaged producers through 1890 historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, 1994 tribal land grant colleges and universities, tribal organizations and community-based organizations. In addition to the four partnerships announced today, APHIS recently announced agreements with Langston University/Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project and Operation Spring Plant.

NAIS is a modern, streamlined information system that helps producers and animal health officials respond quickly and effectively to animal health events in the United States. The program consists of three parts: premises registration, animal identification and tracing. More information about NAIS is at www.usda.gov/NAIS.

Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS news release page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom>. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to lyris@mdrdlyriss10.aphis.usda.gov and leave the subject blank. In the message, type `subscribe press_releases`.