

 **NEWS RELEASE**

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
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**SECRETARY VILSACK ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM LISTENING SESSION LOCATIONS**

WASHINGTON, May 28, 2009--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will hold additional listening sessions on the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The meetings will take place next month in, California, Florida, Missouri, New Mexico, North Carolina and South Dakota.

“We would like to hear from a wide variety of stakeholder audiences, so we are bringing the listening tour to six additional cities,” said Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. “This offers additional opportunities for the public, and in particular limited-resource farmers, to voice their concerns about the current NAIS system and offer potential solutions.”

APHIS seeks to gather not only producer comments and concerns, but also potential solutions to create a program producers can feel comfortable supporting. The sessions will include information about the current program, as well as an opportunity to give public testimony or ask a program-related question. Discussion sessions relating to the following areas of concern will allow producers to provide their input on ways to make the program into something they can support: cost, impact on small farmers, privacy and confidentiality, liability, premises registration, animal identification and animal tracing.

The public meetings will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. local time, with registration one hour prior to each meeting. The meetings will be held in the following locations:

Tuesday, June 9: Jefferson City, Mo.

Thursday, June 11: Rapid City, S.D.

Tuesday, June 16: Albuquerque, N.M.

Thursday, June 18: Riverside, Calif.

Thursday, June 25: Raleigh, N.C.

Saturday, June 27: Jasper, Fla.

Additional information on the meetings can be found at: [www.usda.gov/nais/feedback](http://www.usda.gov/nais/feedback).

In 2004, APHIS began implementing NAIS, an animal traceability system that would enable producers and animal health officials to respond quickly and effectively to animal disease events in the United States.

This notice was published in the May 22 *Federal Register*.

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