

November 18, 2009

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Re: Request for Limited Use of Congressionally Appropriated National  
Animal Identification Funds

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We, the 100 undersigned organizations, sought to eliminate entirely all funding for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) in the Agriculture Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2010. We were only partially successful. However, we view Congress' decision to severely reduce the funding for NAIS as recognition that NAIS is an ill-conceived, burdensome and badly implemented solution for achieving the national objective of improving animal disease prevention and control in the United States.

We respectfully request that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recognize the fundamental flaws in NAIS and the public opposition to the program, and not use the \$5.3 million appropriated for NAIS to further advance, in any way, this program. Instead, we recommend that your agency expressly limit the use of this money in fiscal year 2010 to: 1) Formally withdraw all pending rulemaking initiated by the agency to advance NAIS and pay the associated costs; 2) Pay all existing contractual obligations and NAIS related costs that USDA incurred prior to September 30, 2009; 3) Pay all costs associated with transferring the computer hardware acquired by USDA as part of NAIS to state animal health agencies, to enable state agencies to improve their ability to communicate among agencies in the event of a disease outbreak; and 4) Pay all costs associated with providing the people of the United States and Congress with an official, comprehensive report on all of the testimony USDA received at each of the NAIS listening sessions held throughout the country in 2009.

We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations and look forward to working with you to enhance our nation's animal disease preparedness in a manner that builds upon our past successes and respects the interests of U.S. livestock producers and consumers.

Sincerely,

*Acres USA*  
Adopt a Farm Family  
American Goat Society  
American Grassfed Association  
American Indian Horse Registry  
American Policy Center  
American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Assoc.

Arkansas Animal Producers Association  
Bluebonnet Equine Humane Society  
California Farmers Union  
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association  
Cattlemen's Texas Longhorn Registry  
Chez Panisse  
Citizens for Private Property Rights (MO)

Colorado Independent CattleGrower's Association  
 Community Farm Alliance (KY)  
 Constitutional Alliance  
 The Cornucopia Institute  
 Dakota Resource Council  
 Dakota Rural Action  
 Davis Mountain Trans Pecos Heritage Assoc. (TX)  
*Edible Austin*  
 Edible San Marcos (TX)  
 Empire State Family Farm Alliance (NY)  
 Equus Survival Trust  
 Fair Food Matters (MI)  
 Family Farm Defenders  
 Farm Aid  
 Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance  
 Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund  
 Farmers Union of Adams County (ND)  
 Food and Water Watch  
 Food for Maine's Future  
 Freedom 21  
 Gun Owners of America  
 Idaho Rural Council  
 Independent Cattlemen of Iowa  
 Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska  
 Independent-Beef Association of North Dakota  
 Innovative Farmers of Ohio  
 International Texas Longhorn Association  
 Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement  
 Kansas Cattlemen's Association  
 Land Stewardship Project (MN)  
 Local Harvest  
 Maine Alternative Agriculture Association  
 Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Assoc.  
 Marshall County Citizens for Property Rights (AL)  
 Massachusetts Smallholders Alliance  
 Michigan Farmers Union  
 Michigan Land Trustees  
 Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance  
 Mississippi Livestock Markets Association  
 Missouri Rural Crisis Center  
 Missourians for Local Control  
 Monroe/ LaCrosse County Farmers Union (WI)  
 Montana Cattlemen's Association  
 Montana Farmers Union  
 National Association of Farm Animal Welfare  
 National Family Farm Coalition

National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Assoc.  
 Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society  
 North Carolina Contract Poultry Growers Assoc.  
 Northeast Organic Farming Assoc. - Connecticut  
 Northeast Organic Farming Assoc. - Massachusetts  
 Northeast Organic Farming Assoc. - New  
     Hampshire  
 Northeast Organic Farming Assoc. - New York  
 Northeast Organic Farming Assoc. - Vermont  
 Northeast Organic Farming Assoc. Interstate  
     Council  
 Northern Illinois Draft Horse and Mule Assoc.  
 Northern New Mexico Stockman's Association  
 Northern Plains Resource Council (MT)  
 Ohio Farmers Union  
 Oregon Livestock Producers Association  
 Oregon Rural Action  
 Organic Consumers Association  
 Organization for Competitive Markets  
 Ozarks Property Rights Congress (MO)  
 Paso Fino Horse Association  
 Powder River Basin Resource Council (WY)  
 Progressive Agriculture Organization (PA)  
 Property Rights Congress  
 R-CALF USA  
 Regional Farm and Food Project (NY)  
 Rocky Mountain Farmers Union  
 Secure Arkansas  
 Small Farmer's Journal  
 Small Farms Conservancy  
 South Dakota Stockgrowers Association  
 Sovereignty International  
 Stop Real ID Coalition  
 Sustainable Food Center (TX)  
 Texas Landowners Council  
 Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association  
 US Boer Goat Association  
 Virginia Independent Consumers & Farmers  
     Assoc.  
 Virginia Land Rights Coalition  
 Western Organization of Resource Councils  
 Weston A Price Foundation  
 Wintergarden Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
     (TX)

For more information, contact Judith McGeary at 512-484-8821 or [Judith@FarmAndRanchFreedom.org](mailto:Judith@FarmAndRanchFreedom.org)