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## NLPA Explores Animal ID Technology at Meeting

*Colorado Springs, Colo. (NLPA - Aug. 11, 2006) --* The National Livestock Producers Association (NLPA) board of directors got a glimpse into what the future of animal identification may hold at their annual meeting in Sun Valley, Idaho on Aug. 3-5, 2006.

NLPA held its regular board meeting and NLPA Sheep & Goat Fund meetings, and was graciously hosted by the Board from member-organization Producers Livestock Marketing Association), headquartered in N. Salt Lake, Utah.

On Aug. 5, PLMA arranged a demonstration with Cattle Traq at its auction barn in Jerome, Idaho. Cattle Traq is a privately owned company from Oklahoma City that uses a radio frequency identification (RFID) system in conjunction with an integrated system of tags (RFID chips), tag reader antennae, access control sensors, and software.

The Cattle Traq crew set up a few sensors and readers around the sale ring and tagged several dozen head of cattle to demonstrate how the technology would work in a livestock auction setting. As the cattle were worked through the ring, a screen showed the movement of each animal, with a constant update of information.

The Cattle Traq company is a division of American Biomedical Group Inc. (ABGI), which was founded in 1987 to meet the needs of the health care industry. Members of the ABGI staff, including ABGI President Jim Burgess, own cattle and saw practical applications of the technology in livestock tracking, identification and herd management.

With Cattle Traq, data are sent from each animal to the Cattle Traq database at an interval set by the owner. Users can view animal location on a computer, personal data assistant (PDA), etc... in real time. Owners can also identify individual cattle by lot, pen or pasture in real-time and isolate cattle by



*Members of the NLPA Board watch as tagged cattle are tracked in a demonstration by Cattle Traq.*

size, breed, feed requirements or several others options that can be programmed into the database.

“Currently our technology can track thousands of cattle within a kilometer of the readers and we are working to expand that distance,” Jim Burgess, Cattle Traq President, said.

“NLPA is intrigued with Cattle Traq technology because it not only answers some of our members’ questions about how to track cattle in a practical manner, but it is very customizable,” Scott Stuart, NLPA President said. “Livestock tracking presents specific challenges to everyone involved, but especially for markets because so many animals are commingling and changing ownership. We will need a system that is simple, accurate, reliable and customizable to read many different kinds of chips and fulfill governed requirements.”

Currently the United States does not have an official mandatory animal identification system. For the past few years NLPA has been very involved representing livestock markets in the development of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), but while standards have been set no com-

prehensive data-tracking system has been chosen by the USDA. Until a database is established and parameters for the technology to be used are defined by the USDA, NLPA is working to maintain an in-depth understanding of the possibilities to ensure its members can quickly integrate into a national system, once one has been chosen.

For more information about Cattle Traq, visit their web site at [www.Cattle-Traq.com](http://www.Cattle-Traq.com). A downloadable presentation like the one used for the NLPA demonstration is available.

For more information about the National Animal Identification System go to <http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/index.shtml> or you can go to the NLPA homepage at [www.NLPA.org](http://www.NLPA.org) and click on the NAIS icon.

## Barker Retires from NLPA Board after a Decade of Service

The National Livestock Producers Association showed its appreciation to its Vice Chairman Flavius Barker at its board meeting on Aug. 4, 2006.

Barker has represented the Tennessee Livestock Producers on the NLPA Board of Directors since 1996. Earlier this year, Barker retired from his job as President of the Tennessee Farm Bureau, which is the largest state Farm Bureau in the country.



“Mr. Barker has been such a strong supporter of our organization and he has brought so much leadership and credibility to our organization. He has been a tremendous asset and we will miss him and his wife Naomi so very much,” Scott Stuart, NLPA President, said. “We wish them all the best in their retirement!”

## Beefmobile On Track as Third Year Starts to Wind Down

As of Aug. 11, 2006 the Beefmobile project is ahead of schedule to achieve its goal of reaching producers at 250 events and anticipate attending at least 257 events. Currently over 97% of the targeted number of stops have been completed. The year end for the project is Sept. 1, 2006.

Wranglers Tracey Orsburn and Stacy Loutzenhiser have done a spectacular job this year! While both will remain affiliated with the project given funding is secured for 2007, NLPA is looking for Wrangler candidates to fill the third spot on the team. For more information please go to [www.Beefmobile.com](http://www.Beefmobile.com).

## Sheep & Goat Fund Raises Interest Rate, Still Competitive

The National Livestock Producers Association Sheep & Goat Fund Committee met in Sun Valley, Idaho on August 3, 2006. The committee discussed several topics and reviewed new and current loans. The Committee decided to raise the interest rate on the available funds to 5.75 percent, effective Sept. 1, 2006.

Currently the Fund has \$9.4 million in loan commitments with 45 loans to 33 entities in 21 states. The Fund still has money to loan and is in need of applications. Please visit [www.SheepandGoatFund.com](http://www.SheepandGoatFund.com) or call Scharee Atchison at 800.237.7193 for more information.