



Corral Notes

2010

By Greg Lawley, Bureau Chief



Corral Notes provides you with updates from the Bureau of Livestock Identification each time you renew your brand. In this issue, we'll provide information on how the furloughs are affecting brand inspections, pertinent enforcement activities for the past year, information on the *2010 California Brand Book* and animal disease traceability information.

If you have difficulty contacting a brand inspector in your area, you may call one of the Regional Brand Supervisors:

John Romano – Cottonwood (530) 347-5721
David Fischer – Oakdale (209) 845-8352
Richard Wright – Tulare (559) 685-3505

They will gladly assist you or put you in contact with the appropriate brand inspector for your area.

If you need any other assistance, please call (916) 654-0889. You can also contact me at the above phone number or at glawley@cdfa.ca.gov

Billing Invoice – Brand inspection fees are due and payable at the time of inspection. However, the Food and Agricultural Code provides for inspection fees to be paid up to 30 days after the inspection without the minimum 20% penalty. It is your responsibility to ensure that fees are paid timely. Brand inspectors will assist by sending billing invoices within seven (7) days of the inspection date. If you have not received a billing invoice within 14 days, please call me at the number listed above.

Change of Address – Many times the renewal notice will be forwarded to you at your new address. In those instances, please return your renewal notice with the completed change of address form we have enclosed. This will ensure we update our records accurately.

Brand renewals may be completed and paid electronically using American Express, MasterCard or Visa via the Internet at www.californiabrand.com

2010 California Brand Book – The 2010 Brand Book will be available in mid-summer for \$50.00 (hard copy) or \$30.00 (CD). The price includes shipping and handling. When the Brand Book has been printed and is ready to mail, an order form will be available on the Bureau's Home Page http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Livestock_ID/Livestock_ID_Home.html

Furloughs – As most of you may know, brand inspectors for the Bureau of Livestock Identification have been furloughed in accordance with the Governor's executive order. Currently until June 30, 2010, all of our employees are furloughed the first three Fridays of each month. California Department of Food and Agriculture offices are also closed. With few exceptions, brand inspections will only occur at salesyards, registered feedlots and slaughter plants on furlough days. You can assist us in meeting this mandate by scheduling your inspections on another day other than a furlough Friday if possible.

Enforcement Activities – In 2009, the Bureau assisted local law enforcement in the arrest of nine individuals for cattle theft. Through our investigations, we returned 274 head of cattle to their rightful owners. Personnel from the Bureau also provide another vital service by offering document, brand and animal identification training to local law enforcement. Last year, we provided on-going training to 135 law enforcement personnel from 25 agencies.

In addition, during the upcoming year, the Bureau will be working in conjunction with staff from the California Cattlemen's Association to schedule document, brand and animal identification training with the California Highway Patrol's Commercial Vehicle Enforcement program.

Statistics July 2008 – June 2009

Cattle Inspected – 3,290,363 head
Recorded Brands – 22, 834
Brand Inspectors – 51
Missing and Stolen Cattle Reported – 1,349 head
Value – \$711,729
Stray Cattle Returned – 1,555 head
Value \$935,535

The California Cattlemen's Association offers a reward for substantial and accurate information on persons stealing, maiming or slaughtering cattle in California. Informants may remain anonymous. Call 1-800-671-4327

Listed below are some of the theft cases that local authorities and the Bureau were successful in obtaining arrests in 2009:

Santa Clara County – Jeffery Whalen was convicted of five felony counts of grand theft and two felony counts of forgery. He brokered 156 head of dairy cattle that did not belong to him by forging signatures on the contract. Whelan was sentenced to 16 months in State Prison.

San Benito County – An unbranded heifer was stolen from a neighbor and sold through a livestock auction. Using auction records the heifer was located and the Bureau's investigator used DNA evidence to establish ownership. The case has been turned over to the San Benito DA for prosecution.

Solano County – Michael Etcheverria stole eight cows from a neighbor. He rebranded the cows sold calves for four years. Etcheverria plead guilty and is scheduled for a restitution hearing in Solano Superior Court.

Riverside County – Steven Seick was arrested on six counts of grand theft of cattle. The nine head of cattle belonged to the Morongo Tribal Cattleman Association and were valued at over \$3,600.00.

America's Heartland – Last Fall, the weekly public television series featuring agriculture in the United States, *America's Heartland*, featured the Bureau of Livestock Identification in a segment dealing with cattle theft. If you did not get a chance to see the show when it originally aired, you may read the article and view the video at http://www.americasheartland.org/episodes/episode_509/rounding_up_rustlers.htm

Meet Richard Wright, Northern Regional Brand Supervisor



Richard has been employed with the Bureau of Livestock Identification since November 1996. He was a brand inspector for nine years before promoting to a Regional Supervisor four years ago. Richard grew up in Northern California and moved to Fresno when he began his career with the state, where he currently resides. He is an active board member for the California Rural Crime Prevention Task Force as well as the Director at Large for the Western States Livestock Identification Association. In his spare time he enjoys spending time with his family and helping them with their Quarter Horse operation.

Help Protect California's Livestock and Support Animal Disease Traceability - The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced a new framework for animal disease traceability in the United States. According to the USDA, the following are the basic tenets of an improved animal disease traceability framework in the United States:

- Only apply to animals moved in interstate commerce
- Be administered by the States and Tribal Nations to provide more flexibility
- Encourage the use of lower-cost technology
- Be implemented transparently through federal regulations and the full rulemaking process

With this announcement, the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) is terminated and the USDA will be hosting a meeting with State animal health officials on March 18-19 to discuss implementation of the new framework. After this meeting, CDFA will seek industry input to help define uniform performance measures for cattle, and possibly other species, to assist in measuring animal disease traceability capability.

Although NAIS has ended, its standards for location and animal identification can still be used to manage animal health programs. For instance, 840 ear tags can be used as official identification for animals moving interstate or when testing for diseases such as brucellosis or tuberculosis. Therefore, if you already obtained a premises number under NAIS, you will not need to request a new one.

The USDA plans to replace the current Tuberculosis and Brucellosis State status system with a risk-based approach that imposes testing and movement restrictions on an individual herd or a zone, rather than affect livestock in an entire State. Therefore, being able to trace an affected animal to the herd of origin could allow producers in the rest of the State to move cattle interstate without additional restrictions.

Obtaining a location identification number is an easy way for you as a rancher to contribute to enhancing animal disease traceability. During a disease or disaster event, animal health officials can use this information to determine the most efficient means to assign resources and provide assistance to livestock owners. If you have not obtained a location identifier or want to more about animal disease traceability, visit www.californiaid.org or call 866-325-5681.