

CANADIAN CATTLE IDENTIFICATION AGENCY RELEASES TAG RETENTION PROJECT FINAL REPORT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Calgary, Alberta, January 31, 2017 – [Canadian Cattle Identification Agency](#) (CCIA) is pleased to release the final report for its national Tag Retention Project – a four-year study in a variety of Canadian environments designed to determine the long-term retention rates and operability of the current set of approved CCIA radio frequency identification (RFID) beef cattle tags used in Canada.

“CCIA’s Tag Retention Project was designed to address industry’s growing concerns regarding the effectiveness and long-term viability of the types of approved tags available as well as poor tag retention, which affects the accuracy and availability of livestock traceability data, and emergency response time,” states Mark Elford, CCIA Board Chair and Tag Retention Project Committee Chair.

QUICK FACTS:

- This project involved the tagging and scanning of 2,000 calves, 1,000 yearlings and 700 cows with approved CCIA RFID beef cattle ear tags, ensuring distribution of all approved tag types and brands for use at each test site.
- Farm test sites were selected based on appropriate handling facilities to optimize tagger safety, tag application and tag retention. Participating farm test sites were of varying sizes, management conditions and geographic locations.
- The overall tag retention rate for calves exceeded 96 per cent in all herds with six ranches reporting no lost tags in the followed calves.
- The overall tag retention for yearlings was 99 per cent, with tag retention varying from 98 to 100 per cent in the followed yearlings.
- In the final year of observation, the average tag retention rate for mature cows averaged 82 per cent in the animals remaining in the study.
- All tags applied and retained during the project were readable; therefore, retention and readability were found to be equal in terms of performance for the tags that were applied and retained during the project.

“This study showed tag retention to be high in animals from birth to yearling stage. However, it also showed tag retention to be unsatisfactory for the lifetime of a mature cow,” affirms Paul Laronde, CCIA Tag and Technology Manager. “Multi-location, multi-year projects are difficult to manage and implement. Invariably, circumstances arise that alter methods and affect results. As a result, full explanation of the factors causing variation in tag retention will require more sophisticated data collection, management and analyses. With that in mind, we look forward to announcing a second phase for this project that will examine tag material degradation that results in tag loss. We are confirming the details for an announcement in 2017. Please stay tuned.”

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This project was funded through support from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in 2011 and 2012. In 2013, CCIA received funding through the Assurance Stream of the AgriMarketing program under *Growing Forward 2*, a federal/provincial/territorial agreement, to complete the final two years of the study. For more information on this project, please visit the final report online at www.canadaid.ca. For more information on the *Health of Animals Regulations*, please visit http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._296/.

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