

CHAPTER 4.2.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES ON IDENTIFICATION AND TRACEABILITY OF LIVE ANIMALS

Article 4.2.1.

- 1) *Animal identification* and *animal traceability* are tools for addressing animal health (including zoonoses) and food safety issues. These tools may significantly improve the effectiveness of activities such as: the management of disease *outbreaks* and food safety incidents, *vaccination* programmes, *herd* or *flock* husbandry, zoning or compartmentalisation, *surveillance*, early response and notification systems, animal movement controls, inspection, certification, fair practices in trade and the utilisation of veterinary drugs, *feed* and pesticides at farm level.
- 2) There is a strong relationship between *animal identification* and the *traceability of animals* and products of animal origin.
- 3) *Animal traceability* and traceability of products of animal origin should have the capability to be linked to achieve traceability throughout the animal production and food chain taking into account relevant OIE and Codex Alimentarius standards.
- 4) The objectives of *animal identification* and *animal traceability* for a particular country, *zone* or *compartment* and the approach used should be clearly defined following an *assessment of the risks* to be addressed and a consideration of the factors listed below. They should be defined through consultation between the *Veterinary Authority* and relevant sectors or stakeholders prior to implementation, and periodically reviewed.
- 5) There are various factors which may determine the system chosen for *animal identification* and *animal traceability*. Factors such as the outcomes of the *risk assessment*, the animal and public health situation (including zoonoses) and related programmes, animal population parameters (such as species and breeds, numbers and distribution), types of production, animal movement patterns, available technologies, trade in *animals* and animal products, cost/benefit analysis and other economic, geographical and environmental considerations, and cultural aspects, should be taken into account when designing the system.
- 6) *Animal identification* and *animal traceability* should be under the responsibility of the *Veterinary Authority*. It is recognised that other Authorities may have jurisdiction over other aspects of the food chain, including the traceability of food.
- 7) The *Veterinary Authority*, with relevant governmental agencies and in consultation with the private sector, should establish a legal framework for the implementation and enforcement of *animal identification* and *animal traceability* in the country. In order to facilitate compatibility and consistency, relevant international standards and obligations should be taken into account. This legal framework should include elements such as the objectives, scope, organisational arrangements including the choice of technologies used for identification and registration, obligations of all the parties involved including third parties implementing traceability systems, confidentiality, accessibility issues and the efficient exchange of information.
- 8) Whatever the specific objectives of the chosen *animal identification system* and *animal traceability*, there is a series of common basic factors, and these must be considered before implementation, such as the legal framework, procedures, the *Competent Authority*, identification of *establishments* or owners, *animal identification* and animal movements.
- 9) The equivalent outcomes based on performance criteria rather than identical systems based on design criteria should be the basis for comparison of *animal identification systems* and *animal traceability*.

NB: FIRST ADOPTED IN 2006; MOST RECENT UPDATE ADOPTED IN 2007.

