Animal Identification and registration

*Lessons learnt and experiences from the pilot implementation*

**Erik Rehben**

*Senior consultant*

*Livestock identification, information and traceability systems*
Background

The main objectives have been almost achieved from January 2020 to September 2021:

- Implementation of new additional identifiers: marking code and microchip identifier.
- Animal tagging and data collection.
- Mobile application and central data base development.
- Data collection and registration.

However:

- The slaughterhouse participation was limited (only 2 000 animals have been retrieved).
- Cooperation with animal health operation took time to start.
- The herder participation in tagging and registration was too limited.
- The marking code for animal traceability was not enough used.
Identifiers

The **NSO 13 digits family** hold identifier should be used for herd and herder identification.

For on field use, an **AIRS 6 digits identifier**, so called ‘marking code’, equivalent to the NSO one should be used.

The current visual **12 digits animal identifier** is appropriate provided that:

- To **simplify the current numbering rules** which consider the specie and the sex.
- For on field use, to **print in bolt the last digits**.

A legal background of the **15 digits identifier of microchips** is needed.
Organization

The sharing of responsibilities between the public administration and local private service unit was appropriate.

At the local level, there was enough human resource.

Short one day training sessions were sufficient to make field operators able to tag animals and to register data.

Three types of training sessions are sufficient:
- Tagging and data registration,
- Application,
- Microchip affixation
Tags

Microchip for horses is feasible provided that:
- Field procedures are well defined
- Appropriate training sessions.

Current large plastic tags for bovine and camelids are appropriate.

Small plastic tags for goat and sheep should be reviewed to take into account:
- A more appropriate size
- Difference between lifetime tags and transport tags
Animal tagging and registration should take place during a short period from April to June to avoid summer period:
- Cost and time consuming both for service units and herders.
- Risk of worms in the ear of the sheep
- Herder are dealing with other activities: wool...
- ...

The initial tagging and registration of all the animals including adults is a very specific operation, done only once, and work consuming.

After, the subsequent animal tagging and registration concerning only newborn animals and mortality or sales of already registered animals require less work.
Data collection and registration

**On field data collection should be versatile:**
- Appropriate preprinted paper forms from the central data base
- Handheld bare code reader
- Smartphones
- ...

**Data collection should be restricted to that is strictly necessary for the AIRS purpose**

**Data registration by the central data base should be performed locally, as quickly as possible after data collection without intermediate actor.**

**Some herders may be involved in animal tagging and registration through smartphones.**
Coordination

To ensure the AIRS sustainability, mitigating cost and workload both for service units and herders, AIRS, breeding and animal health field operations should be coordinated at the herd level.

To increase the AIRS value, at least the below information should be shared with other activities:

- The herder register.
- Animal list per herd as a prerequisite to any efficient field operation.
- Animal traceability as the history where the animal has been.

One of main the purpose of the AIRS central data base should be data sharing among a maximum of actors.
Meat industry implication needs a specific legal and organizational framework to:

- Specify which data should be available for the different actors: government veterinarians, private operators...
- Take into account that the slaughterhouse activity is not limited to an aimag.
Herder feedback

- **Amount of work** to handle the animals => demand to tag newborn animals.
- **Less awareness.**
- **Few direct benefit.**
- **Interest of tagging** large animals for **fight against theft.**
- **Good acceptation** of microchip for horses with demands for other species.
- **Use of smartphone** to simplify the certification process.
- **Confident in an AIRS** developed by the public administration.
- **Some herders** would like to affix visual tags and to report movements.
Thank you for your attention