



# Media release

28 February 2011

## **NAIT AND AHB WORK TOGETHER TO SUPPORT FARMERS**

NAIT's Chief Executive, Russell Burnard, welcomes the decision by the Animal Health Board (AHB) to begin phasing out current mandatory bar-coded tags for cattle early, to help farmers transition to the National Animal Identification and Tracing (NAIT) scheme.

The decision will allow farmers to start using a NAIT-approved Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) as the primary tag for off-farm animal movements, other than to slaughter, for calves born after 1 March 2011. Requirements for secondary tags will continue, which can be selected from any of the secondary tag types currently approved by AHB.

Russell Burnard said that AHB has previously only approved NAIT RFID ear tags to be used as a secondary tag.

"We're delighted. This collaboration between NAIT and the AHB will directly benefit farmers.

"It means that for calves born after 1 March 2011, farmers can avoid having to use bar-coded tags. They will be able to tag their calves in readiness for future NAIT requirements.

"There are also on-farm management advantages. Obviously, tagging young animals is a lot easier than tagging older animals."

AHB's Chief Executive, William McCook says the Animal Health Board is committed to working closely with NAIT to ensure a smooth transition to the new National Animal Identification and Tracing scheme.

"It is of paramount importance to the integrity of the National Bovine TB Strategy that there is an orderly transition to the NAIT system", said Mr McCook.

"This includes providing farmers with a clear cut-off date for the use of barcoded tags at slaughter, which we expect will be when NAIT RFID tags become mandatory on 1 November 2011.

"Farmers must also continue completing and providing full and accurate Animal Status Declarations for all off-farm movements of cattle and deer."

Mr McCook says that until NAIT RFID ear tags become mandatory on 1 November 2011, all stock being moved to slaughter must still have AHB-approved bar-coded tags. Current AHB rules for bar-coded primary tags and approved secondary tags will also continue to apply for all movements of stock born before 1 March 2011.

With the AHB and NAIT working together, Mr Burnard said farmers can be assured that future tagging requirements will be kept as cost-effective and hassle-free as possible.

NAIT-approved RFID (Radio Frequency Identification Device) tags are available now, and will be mandatory when both the legislation is in place and the system is operating effectively. Mr Burnard says he expects this to be 1 November 2011.

## **ENDS**

### **For further information, contact:**

Joanna Poole, Communications Manager  
National Animal Identification and Tracing (NAIT) Ltd  
04 894 0137 / 021 648 571

## **BACKGROUND**

### **NAIT**

NAIT (National Animal Identification and Tracing) is an animal identification and tracing system that will link people, property and animals. NAIT Ltd is the industry-owned company that will implement the NAIT system.

NAIT will provide New Zealand livestock owners, processors and government with timely and quality information on the current location, movement history and other related attributes associated with livestock.

With its ability to trace infected animals and properties quickly and accurately, NAIT will improve New Zealand's ability to respond and contain the damage from biosecurity risks and food scares. This will help give assurance to our trading partners and help our ability to resume trade after such an event.

The National Animal Identification and Tracing System (NAIT) Bill was introduced into Parliament in December 2010 and submissions on the Bill closed on 10 February 2011.

For more information visit: [www.nait.co.nz](http://www.nait.co.nz)