CANADIAN CATTLE IDENTIFICATION AGENCY
RELEASES AUCTION MARKET RESEARCH PHASE TWO-B RESULTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 11, 2012

Calgary, A.B. – The Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) is pleased to announce the results from Phase Two-B of the Applied Research Project, which advanced the evaluation of radio frequency identification (RFID) tag collection and reporting software by studying the efficiency and effectiveness of software that bypasses management software systems. This final phase of research concluded in December 2011 that software not integrated with management systems was cost effective, had a low-labour requirement and a higher read accuracy than integrated software. The 15-week trial was held at six auction markets in three Canadian provinces.

Since software that bypasses management systems does not need to reside on network servers, it was installed on laptops and office computers, which market staff regularly powered on and ensured reporting was completed on time. Ease of use eliminated the need for extensive training, technical support and labour resources (i.e., the elimination of data entry by group of animals reduced the labour component to a few minutes per day).

The Applied Research Project was developed in light of pending regulations for livestock traceability. Phase One of the Applied Research project in 2010 assessed the ability of existing technology to collect and read RFID tag data at a high level of accuracy. Phase-One research shows the design and location of the RFID system must be unique and located in an area that is well integrated within the normal process flow for efficiency. Phase Two advanced the evaluation of RFID systems by integrating the tag collection and reporting software with enterprise software. Phase-Two research found this process to be costly, cumbersome and without current benefits to the operation, buyer or consigner.

In Phase One and Two, cattle were scanned in individual groups. In Phase-Two-B, cattle were scanned as one group over a 24-hour period. This change in protocol eliminated the:
- Need for staff to record the individual consigner or buyer lot,
- Disruption in cattle flow, and
- Impact on speed of commerce.

"Though there is no single solution that will work in every facility, Phase Two-B demonstrates bypass software will work efficiently for RFID tag collection and reporting. In relation to Phase Two, Phase Two-B shows stand-alone bypass software to be cost effective and have a low-labour requirement for a RFID system. This multi-phase project demonstrates that scanning individual animals in livestock markets and buying stations is not cost effective for the read accuracy achievable at this time," says Donna Henuset, Auction Market Research Project Manager.

Rick Wright, Applied Research Steering Committee Chair and Livestock Markets Association of Canada representative states, "At the National Cattle Traceability Summit in Saskatoon, industry representatives from all sectors agreed to develop a consistent, easy-to-use, national approach for traceability movement reporting involving a standardized movement data set that will constitute a minimum level of critical movement information (including premises identification) and use existing, commerce-based systems. Information from these documents would be reported to CCIA's Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS) database.

"It is evident that without human intervention in the tag scanning process, the RFID systems are not yet able to record and report to a level of accuracy and efficiency that will support the cost benefit for the amount of data collected," he added. " Phase Two-B reconfirms the importance of having a dedicated staff member:

- Trained in the operation of the hardware and software;
- Accountable for ensuring the hardware and software are operating at the highest levels of performance;
- Ensuring errors are corrected in a timely manner and that all cattle are moved through an operating system on scanning day."

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada funded this multi-phase study in support of animal movement reporting for traceability through the Growing Forward Program. A total of 655,871 cattle were scanned through the three phases of the project and reported to the CLTS. Today and moving ahead, the cattle marketing sector will continue to work with industry and governments to find a cost-effective, market-neutral solution in support of traceability that has the least effect on the speed of commerce. Industry will continue to monitor advances in technology that could be used to enhance movement tracking.

– 30 –

About Canadian Cattle Identification Agency:

The Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) is an industry-initiated and led organization that manages the Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS) – a trace back system designed for the containment and eradication of animal disease.

For more information or media contact:

Kori Maki-Adair, Communications Manager
Canadian Cattle Identification Agency
Tel: (403) 476-1984 | Cell: (403) 703-5575 | Email: kmaki-adair@canadaid.ca