

**CANADIAN CATTLE IDENTIFICATION AGENCY RELEASES
TAG RETENTION PROJECT MATURE COW PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Calgary, Alberta, January 8, 2016 – [Canadian Cattle Identification Agency](#) (CCIA) is pleased to announce key preliminary findings resulting from the mature cow portion of the national Tag Retention Project, which is intended to collect baseline data on cattle tag retention and tag readability, recommend solutions to enhance tag retention and readability as well as provide the foundation for further study. The broad-based approach and survey of the existing situations will provide the foundation for identifying specific tag retention challenges that may require further data collection.

The national Tag Retention Project involves animals from various geographical areas across Canada to ensure appropriate representation of farming styles and environments. The study has tagged more than 5,000 animals with equal distribution of approved CCIA radio frequency identification (RFID) tag types/brands at each test site. Each farm test site was selected based on appropriate handling facilities to optimize tagger safety, tag application and tag retention. In this study, each tag type is applied according to manufacturer's directions in terms of tag location, using the corresponding manufacturer's tag applicators, etc.

"The mature cow data collected in 2014 includes cattle of varying ages from those tagged as calves in the spring of 2011 to mature cows tagged in 2011. This period of time represents one-third of the productive life of a beef cow in Canada," states CCIA Vice Chair and Tag Retention Project Committee Chair Mark Elford. "Tag readability at the first stage of this project was greater than 99 per cent. Recent preliminary findings on tag retention across all of the project herds averaged at 88.9 per cent, with a range of 64.7 to 100 per cent. This means within three years, tag loss ranged from 3.8 to 35.3 per cent, with an average of 11.1 per cent."

"The average mature cow tag retention percentage was 89.7 per cent across the 13 herds where data was gathered in 2014. Since the final calf/yearling tag retention percentage presented in April 2013 was 98.9 per cent, the preliminary mature cow data represents an average decrease in retention of 9.2 per cent," adds CCIA Tag Retention Project Manager Ross MacDonald. "Although the mature cow data has yet to be analyzed for statistical significance, preliminary tag retention data for the mature cows is lower and more variable than in the calf/yearling group. Within the coming months, we will summarize and analyze the mature cow data for tag retention across all herds, tag loss by herd and tag brand as well as tag readability."

"The project's 2015 cow scan schedule started with three herds in the spring and summer, 11 this fall and one in the winter. Moving forward, this project will continue to analyze the mature cow scan data, complete the mature cow scans and the project's final analysis, report and communications strategy next spring. We look forward to sharing this important information with the entire value chain," CCIA General Manager Anne Brunet-Burgess affirms.

As a not-for-profit, industry-initiated organization led by a board of directors made up of representatives from all sectors of the livestock industry, CCIA fully supports the national Tag Retention Project and its findings which will educate producers on cattle RFID tag retention and tag reading performance, and recommend solutions to enhance tag retention and reading performance. Details regarding tag retention and reading performance rates as well as recommendations to reduce tag loss and tag readability problems will be included in with the statistical analysis in the final report, which will be posted online within CCIA's home page 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/](http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._296/).

For more information, please contact:

Kori Maki-Adair, CCIA Communications Manager at kmaki-adair@canadaid.ca

