

28 July 2026

Consultation: Equine Identification and Traceability
Ministry for Primary Industries
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BiosecurityPartnerships.Policy@mpi.govt.nz

DairyNZ submission on equine identification and traceability.

1. DairyNZ welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on MPI's consultation on improving equine traceability in New Zealand.
2. We support the consultation's objectives of strengthening biosecurity preparedness, improving traceability, and supporting trade outcomes.
3. Traceability systems are a critical component of New Zealand's biosecurity system and are most effective when they can provide timely, accurate information to support disease response activities. The effectiveness of a traceability system relies on unique animal identification and animal location data, including up to date owner information.
4. DairyNZ is the industry good organisation that represents all New Zealand dairy farmers. Our purpose is to deliver a positive future for New Zealand dairy farming.
5. DairyNZ is funded by a levy on milk solids that is paid by all dairy farmers under the Commodity Levies Act 1990, a significant proportion of our work is allocated towards biosecurity.

General comments

6. DairyNZ recognises that traceability plays a critical role in an animal disease outbreak. A traceability system that allows for efficient access to animal records has the potential to significantly decrease response time by enabling responders to quickly access the information needed to carry out disease control activities.
7. Accurate traceability data supports a range of response activities including tracing animal movements, determining infection sources and transmission pathways, testing and surveillance activities, and mapping and modelling of an outbreak. Demonstration of traceability of animals also improves market access of animals and animal products, while also supporting New Zealand's reputation.



There are two essential components that underpin effective traceability; unique animal identification and animal location data (including animal owner information).

8. Rapid response requires confidence that animals can be quickly and accurately identified. Unique animal identification provides stronger traceability outcomes than approaches that rely on herd-level records. Herd composition can change over time, and equines from multiple owners may be kept at the same property or temporarily co-mingled at events presenting challenges to defining a herd. Individual animal identification provides greater certainty during a biosecurity response and enables more targeted disease control measures.
9. Accurate animal location and ownership information supports rapid tracing by enabling timely identification of location of animals, their owners, and at-risk locations. Future traceability systems should include mechanisms to maintain accurate location information and encourage timely updating of records.
10. The benefits of equine traceability extend beyond managing equine disease outbreaks. In a foot and mouth disease outbreak, we understand that equine movements would be affected by the National Livestock Standstill despite equines not being susceptible to the disease. Unique identification records and accurate location and ownership information on equines would assist decision makers to verify risk, process permits efficiently and support the safe movement of equines (if appropriate).
11. Development of an equine traceability system should focus on the core principles of unique animal identification and animal location data (including owner information) to help maximise biosecurity outcomes and ensure the system provides long term value to New Zealand's animal sectors and wider biosecurity system.

Next steps

DairyNZ welcomes the opportunity to discuss these topics further, if you have any questions on the feedback provided in this submission, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Fi Roberts".

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