

## Be Proactive, the Bite is Better if it Isn't Out of One's Own Rear

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Through the North Dakota Beef Cattle Improvement Association (NDBCIA), CalfAID™ successfully completed the requirements for the USDA Process Verified Program (PVP). “So what,” may be a typical response from a cattle producer, but the action shows the NDBCIA has opted to take a proactive, leadership role for its membership.

Leadership roles are not easy and a leadership role within the beef industry can be even more challenging. Credit the NDBCIA for stepping up to help beef producers prepare to meet the challenges of age and source verification of their cattle.

Verification, as defined in Webster’s Universal College Dictionary, is “the act or process of verifying.” To verify is “to confirm or substantiate in law by oath or to establish the truth, accuracy or reality.” The “v” word will come to have considerable bite in the future for cattle producers. The NDBCIA is moving to help producers become proactive, to be prepared on all sides and to avoid any bite from the rear.

Now is the time to become acquainted with PVPs. There is much information on the USDA Web site, <http://processverified.usda.gov/>, about PVPs. A click on the Web address reveals that “the USDA Process Verified Program provides suppliers of agricultural products or services the opportunity to assure customers of their ability to provide consistent quality products or services. This is accomplished by having their documented manufacturing or service delivery processes verified through independent, third-party audits.”

The NDBCIA has been working on getting the CalfAID™ program PVP approved for more than two years. The early efforts were directed at formalizing a plan. In the last few months, the efforts involved interacting with the USDA’s Audit Review and Compliance (ARC) Branch.

The net result of the NDBCIA CalfAID™ efforts, according to the USDA Web site, allows calves processed through CalfAid “to make marketing claims, such as processing claims, and market themselves as “USDA Process Verified.”

The USDA Web site notes, “The USDA Process Verified Program uses the International Organization for Stan-

dardization’s ISO 9000 series standards for documented quality management systems as a format for evaluating program documentation to ensure consistent auditing practices and promote international recognition of audit results.”

To operate an approved USDA Process Verified Program, suppliers must submit documented quality management systems to the Livestock and Seed Program and Audit Review and Compliance Branch and successfully pass an audit. To pass the audit, the following ARC procedures must be followed: ARC 1000 Procedure, Quality Systems Verification Program General Policies and Procedures (PDF file), ARC 1001 Process Verified Program (PDF file) and ARC 1001A Policy QSVP Policies for PVP Programs (PDF file).

The Web site also lists all the approved USDA Process Verified Programs that have passed a document review and on-site audit following the previously mentioned procedures, as well as conformed to “all criteria of their approved quality management systems.”

If you still are reading, welcome to the club. The PVP club is not easy to get into and, once in, not easy to maintain, but no one said age and source verification is going to be easy.

The first hurdle is cleared and CalfAID™ is process verified. This means doors are unlatched and ready to open. The next question is “open to what?”

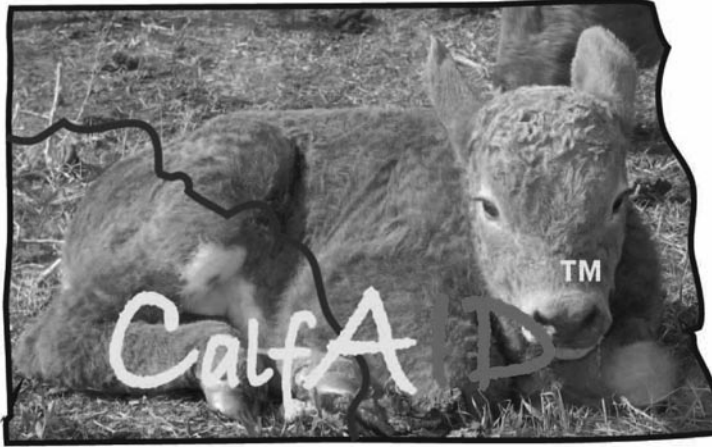
The beef markets are giving lip service to identification and verification. The cash, however, is not visible on the table.

The NDBCIA knows leadership in a free, demand-based market also means risk. With risk, the cutting edge is sharp, but at least the future is brighter in a proactive mode.

May you find all your NAIS-approved ear tags.

Your comments are always welcome at [www.BeefTalk.com](http://www.BeefTalk.com). For more information, contact the North Dakota Beef Cattle Improvement Association, 1133 State Avenue, Dickinson, ND 58601 or go to [www.CHAPS2000.com](http://www.CHAPS2000.com) on the Internet. In correspondence about this column, refer to BT0270.

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**Electronic Animal ID**

**Source & Age  
Verification Through  
Data Management**

**Traceback**