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**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

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**HB 2299**

**Brief Description:** Establishing a system of animal identification.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Linville and Schoesler; by request of Department of Agriculture.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Authorizes state rules and agreements for establishing a system of animal identification for meeting federal requirements.

**Hearing Date:** 1/13/04

**Staff:** Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

**Background:**

The state's livestock identification program and laws are administered by the Department of Agriculture (WSDA). Among its provisions, legislation enacted last year: increased the fees charged to fund the program and identified the evidence of ownership that must accompany cattle or horses when they are moved. (Chapter 326, Laws of 2003.)

The 2003 legislation also directed the WSDA to form an advisory committee to: evaluate mechanisms that may need to be established by the public and the private sectors to comply with federal country of origin labeling requirements; evaluate any requirements that may be placed on the meat products industry by federal food safety and traceability requirements as part of homeland security measures; and review the national identification work plan developed by a task force advising the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The WSDA must submit a written report of the findings and conclusion of the advisory committee by December 1, 2005. (Section 1, Chapter 326, Laws of 2003.)

On December 30, 2003, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman announced that the USDA would begin the implementation of a verifiable system of national animal identification.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Director of Agriculture may adopt rules to establish a system of animal identification to support the agriculture industry in meeting federal requirements. The Director may cooperate with and enter into agreements with other states and agencies of federal government to carry out such a system and to promote consistency of regulation.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on 1/12/04.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.