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**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

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**HB 2625**

**Brief Description:** Concerning the development of a proposed policy option for achieving the goal of electronically reporting intrastate transfers of ownership of livestock as a means to increase participation in the animal disease traceability program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Haigh, Buys and Blake.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture to develop a proposed policy option for achieving an electronic reporting system for intrastate transfers of livestock ownership.

**Hearing Date:** 1/30/14

**Staff:** Megan Mulvihill (786-7291) and Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

**Background:**

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is authorized to adopt rules to prevent the introduction or spreading of infectious diseases into the state. Animal disease traceability is used to track where diseased and at-risk animals are, when they were there, and where they've been to increase responses to disease outbreaks.

WSDA's Animal Disease Traceability Program assists in the containment of animal diseases by maintaining and managing an animal health database. All livestock animals in Washington are required to be tagged or branded for identification purposes and are required to receive an inspection certificate from the WSDA director or a state certified veterinarian that documents ownership after inspection. While livestock are required to be identified by tags or brands, they are not required to have an individual identification number.

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If a livestock animal becomes infected or is exposed to disease, the owner is required to report the disease or exposure to the WSDA. The WSDA uses identification records to track and contain livestock diseases.

**Summary of Bill:**

The WSDA Director must develop a proposed policy option for achieving electronic reporting of intrastate transfers of livestock ownership. The Director must coordinate with stakeholders from equine, bovine, and other industry associations, to achieve a system of animal disease traceability with the following elements:

- electronic transfer of data that individually identifies animals;
- an outreach program to encourage reporting participation;
- random and report-driven inspections to ensure compliance; and
- penalties for failure to report transfer of ownership.

The electronic reporting system must be a voluntary alternative to traditional brand inspections. The director must issue a report to the Legislature by November 1, 2014.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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