

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5439

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning livestock identification.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Warnick, Dozier, Hasegawa, Lovelett, Salomon, Schoesler and Van De Wege).

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

Background: The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Animal Health Program is charged with protecting animals and the public from communicable animal diseases. Program officials monitor movement of animals across state lines, set requirements for reporting and controlling diseases, and conduct testing and investigations.

Livestock Inspection Program. The Livestock Inspection Program records brands, licenses feedlots and public livestock markets, and conducts surveillance and inspection of livestock at time of sale and upon out of state movement. Cattle and horses are inspected for permanent identification such as brands and ownership documents at:

- public livestock markets;
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) slaughter plants;
- licensed, certified feedlots;
- change of ownership; and
- prior to leaving the state.

Livestock Identification Advisory Committee. Through July 1, 2024, the Livestock Identification Advisory Committee (advisory committee) is comprised of 12 members—two beef producers, two cattle feeders, two dairy producers, two livestock market owners, two meat processors, and two horse producers. The advisory committee must meet at least twice a year and a quorum of the committee consists of a majority of members. If a member has not been designated for a position described above, that position may not be counted for determining a quorum. A member may appoint an alternate who meets the same

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qualifications as the member to serve during the member's absence. The director may remove a member from the advisory committee if that member has two or more unexcused absences during a single calendar year.

Inspection Fees. The inspection fee for identified cattle is \$1.21 and the inspection fee for horses is \$3.85. A certified feed lot licensee must pay a \$0.28 fee for each head of cattle handled through the feed lot. If inspection fees collected in any one-day sale day at a livestock market do not exceed \$150, the livestock market must pay \$150 for inspection services. A \$20 call-out fee is collected for inspections, including inspections at a processing plant, certified feed lot, or livestock market. These fees expire July 1, 2024.

Reporting. WSDA is required to submit reports to the Legislature and the advisory committee starting September 1, 2023, and annually thereafter that include the amounts collected, expenditures, and recommendations for making the program more efficient, improving the program, or modifying the livestock inspection fees to cover the costs of the program.

Summary: The inspection fees that expire July 1, 2024, are extended to July 1, 2026. WSDA must submit a report to the Legislature and the advisory committee by November 1, 2023, that includes the amounts collected, expenditures, and recommendations for making the program more efficient, improving the program, or modifying the livestock inspection fees to cover the costs of the program. The report must be submitted annually until July 2026.

The advisory committee must review the costs and operations of the livestock identification program. Changes enacted by the Legislature to the committee in 2019 will extend through July 1, 2026.

The call out fee for an inspection done by a certified veterinarian or field livestock inspector is removed.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 49 0

House 96 0

Effective: July 23, 2023
July 1, 2026 (Section 2)