Sheep Identification: Visual and Electronic

September 2011
Disclaimer

The following slides are accurate for most States and most situations. However, some States have:

- exempted some animals when moved within the State; or
- set higher standards than USDA.
- For ease of understanding the exemptions provided by USDA to address certain specific situations are summarized on slide 5 rather than listed on every slide where they may apply.
- To ensure you are in compliance, call your state’s Animal Health Regulatory Office or the Animal Health Regulatory Office of the state to where you are shipping your sheep. Many states have provided this information and it can be found on the NIAA Website.
Required to be identified
see notes section for more detail

- The following sheep are required to be identified by Federal and/or State regulation as part of the National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP):
  - All breeding animals regardless of age when sold or ownership changes.
  - All sexually intact sheep NOT in slaughter channels. For instance all show sheep need ID.
  - States may have more stringent ID regulations.
Breeding sheep are required to be identified prior to leaving the farm/ranch or upon change of ownership.
Federal ID Exemptions for Breeding Sheep

- Animals moved for management purposes without change of ownership and without commingling with animals from other flocks (such as grazing)

- Animals moved as part of a same source lot to an approved market where they will be identified prior to sale

- Animals that are exempted from identification in intrastate commerce that are moving within their State of birth.
The federal program does not require lambs in slaughter channels to be identified, but some states do.
Sheep ID Tips/Advice

Do not buy animals of any age that may be used for breeding or sheep over 18 months of age for any purpose unless they have official ID applied.

If you are selling or buying breeding animals, they need to be officially identified, prior to the time of sale.
Sheep ID Tips

Registered animals may be identified with a registration tattoo in lieu of an official ear tag, as long as the animal is accompanied by a copy of the registration certificate listing the current owner.

- The tattoos and registration paper on the following slide are NOT from the same ewe.
# Tattoo and registration certificate

## Tattoo Image
![Tattoo Image](image1.jpg)

## Registration Certificate

![Registration Certificate](image2.jpg)

### Certificate of Registration

- **Registration Number:** 2L-00153
- **Birth Date:** 03/18/01
- **Tattoo:** EKR L61
- **Flock Letters:** 2H
- **Association Secretary:** Elizabeth Reedy
- **Date:** 1/24/2012

### Record of Ownership

- **Owner at Registration:** Bets Reedy
- **Address:** 21727 Randall Dr.
  Houston, MN 55943
- **Breeders:**
  - **Breeder at Registration:** Bets Reedy
  - **Address:** 21727 Randall Dr.
  Houston, MN 55943

### Sale Details

- **Signature of Vendor:**
  - **Date:**
  - **Secretary:**

- **Owner:**
  - **Date:**
  - **Secretary:**

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This sheep has been duly recorded in the official pedigree records of the Association.
Example of Registry information
(application and tattooing instructions from
N.A. Clun Forest Association)

The North American Clun Forest Association
APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION

FLOCK ID.SEX
Flock Letters Year Letter Individual Number

DATE OF BIRTH BIRTH TYPE
Month, Day, Year 1-2-3-4

REGISTERED NAME OF SHEEP

REGISTERED NAME OF SIRE REGISTERED NO. OF SIRE

REGISTERED NAME OF DAM REGISTERED NO. OF DAM

HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS INFORMATION IS ACCURATE AND THAT THIS ANIMAL HAS BEEN TATTOOED IN THE MANNER NOTED ABOVE AND IS IDENTIFIED BY THE FLOCK LETTERS, YEAR LETTER, AND INDIVIDUAL NUMBER SO NOTED.

DATE OF APPLICATION NOT TO BE USED FOR TRANSFER

SIGNATURE OF BREEDER

SIGNATURE OF OWNER

ADDRESS OF OWNER

TATTOOING

All Clun breeders know the difficulties of permanently and clearly identifying their animals. With the fine ears of the Clun, conventional ear tags easily pull or tear out, leaving an unidentified—except by the flapping ear slices—animal. The Association turned to tattooing, but we have had a great deal of difficulty with the tattooing rule, despite our best efforts, I’ve been asked to describe here how best to tattoo Cluns.

It is important:
1) to wait until lambs are 4-6 months old before tattooing
2) to clean the ear with a swab dipped in alcohol
3) to use green tattoo paste rather than ink
4) to scrub the ink into the tattoo with a soft brush like a tooth brush

I also think that the single most important factor is to use the tattoo plier manufactured and sold by Ketchum Manufacturing Sales Ltd in Brockville, Canada K6V 7N5.

Ketchum’s plier is about the fourth one I’ve used. With it I’ve gotten clear, consistent, readable tattoos in all of my lambs over the past few years. The difference between it and other tattoo outfits is that the Ketchum tattoo needle is chisel-shaped rather than pointed, thus allowing more ink to penetrate into the ear. Ketchum offers one outfit that has a double-headed plier so that you can keep your flock letters on one side and the year letter and individual I.D. number on the other—which is quite handy. The disadvantage is price; this is an expensive outfit (prices are in Canadian dollars; it is still expensive in U.S. dollars). The latest prices I have are quite out of date, so I will not quote them to you. Please contact Ketchum directly for current information.

Ketchum Manufacturing Inc.
1254 California Ave.
Brockville, Canada K6V 7N5
Phone: (613) 342-845
Fax: (613) 342-7550
Email: ketchum@sympatico.ca

Ketchum tattoo outfits are now sold by Nasco in the U.S. Nasco has two outlets, one in WI and one in CA. Call 1-800-558-9595. Their website is eNasco.com. Another U.S. source is Wiggins & Associates, Inc. in Gresham, Oregon. Phone 1-800-800-0716. Website is www.wigginsinc.com.

The model I purchased was Model 201R—which has the double-sided, rotating head. I share my outfit with two other breeders in this area—which should be a possibility for many of you. It helps with the investment and can also help with the work. Do remember that disease like OPP can be communicated via blood, so make sure that you work only with OPP-free flocks.
How do I know if a tag is an official tag?

The US Shield is on all official tags.
Where do I get my NSEP tags?

Call 1-866-USDA-TAG

- The above number will direct the caller to the office in their state which places tag orders.
- This office can place a tag order or in some cases directly send serial tags at no cost to you.
There are approved ear tag manufacturers and approved ear tags

Tags provided at no charge to producers by USDA* (regular white or blue slaughter-only tags):
- Plastic - Allflex Couple 74 tag
- Metal - Hasco tag

For Purchase** in various colors and styles:
- Plastic
  - Allflex - SFCP only
  - Premier
- Metal
  - Hasco
- RFID***
  - Allflex
  - Premier
  - Global Animal Management
  - National Band & Tag
  - AVID – implants only

**Contact the manufacturer to purchase

*** Standardized PIN and flock ID required to purchase RFID tags

*Call 1-866-USDA-TAG to request tags
Standardized PIN vs. NSEP Flock ID

Standardized National Premises Identification Number (PIN)

- 7 digit alphanumeric, example: 01AB2CD
- Allocated through interface with premises allocator and a State’s premises registration system
- Held in state databases and may at the discretion of the state be held in federal databases
- PINs are location identifiers for operations
- Required to order “840” devices (RFID and visual only)

NSEP Flock ID number

- Varies in number of digits, starts with the state postal abbreviation (IA=Iowa)
- Assigned by the State or the APHIS/VS office in your State
- Held in State and Scrapie Program databases
- Flock ID represents a group of animals associated with a location; multiple flock ID numbers may be assigned to the same location.
- Required to order any scrapie program tag
Purchase an approved ear tag complementary to your management

The program has evolved to address producers’ needs and management styles.

There are approved tags available for purchase by producers in different styles, colors, sizes, numbering options, and with flock name imprint.

Call 1-866-USDA-TAG to have your flock information entered into the ordering system, then contact the tag manufacturer to purchase your choice of official tags.
Current list of Approved Tag Manufacturers and Contact Information Available at:

Two piece swivel tag distribution has been discontinued due to poor retention.

Producers may still use their current supply as official ID; however, replacement with newer tag style is recommended.
Factors that Contribute to Optimal Eartag Retention and Minimal Infection/Tissue Reaction

- Ideal Placement Location
- Tag Lambs at < 6 Months Old
- Tag Clean, Dry Ears
- Pre-dip Tag Stem in Lubricant at Time of Tagging
- Place Female Portion of Tag on Inside of Ear
- Avoid Tagging in the Humid Summer Months
Tag Placement

- Official Scrapie Tag (plastic two-piece tag)
- Below are examples of good tag placement
Tag Placement

- Hasco (steel) tag
- Apply close to base of ear.
National Scrapie Eradication Program

Recommended Tagging Practices for Sheep

Examples of Official USDA Tags:

Factors that Contribute to Optimal Eartag Retention and Minimal Infection/Tissue Reaction:

- Ideal Placement Location
- Tag Lambs at < 6 Months Old
- Avoid Tagging in the Humid Summer Months
- Place Female Portion of Tag on Inside of Ear
- Pre-dip Tag Stem in Lubricant at Time of Tagging
- Tag Clean, Dry Ears

No Infection  
Mild Infection  
Severe Infection
Examples of Official USDA Tags

The white, yellow and orange tags are official
National Scrapie Eradication Program
Tags for Sheep

Examples of Official USDA Tags
National Scrapie Eradication Program
Tags for Sheep

Examples of Official USDA Tags
National Scrapie Eradication Program
Tags for Sheep

Examples of Official USDA Tags
Record Keeping

Records are an important tool in eradicating scrapie.

- Keep for 5 years
- Easily retrieved
Scrapie Eradication

- Scrapie Eradication will be facilitated through enhanced record keeping.
- An example of required records is shown.
# Required Record Keeping

**National Scrapie Eradication Program Sheep Scrapie Tag Record**

*Note: records must be kept for 5 years after the animal is sold. Columns with italic headings are optional for official record keeping*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official Scrapie ID</th>
<th>Management ID Tag</th>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>B, F, S</th>
<th>Date Scrapie ID was applied</th>
<th>Born on farm? (Y/N)</th>
<th>Name/address of previous owner(s) (if applicable)</th>
<th>Scrapie Flock ID of Previous Owner</th>
<th>Date sold/Date Acquired</th>
<th>Name/address of buyer</th>
<th>Genotype</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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*B=breeding  F=feeding  S=slaughter*
Record Keeping Quick Tip:

If an official tag is lost, replace it ASAP with another official tag and record that number and if known:

- the previous tag number, or
- the tag(s) numbers that it could have been, or
- the name and address of the flock of origin.
Replacement Scrapie Tag Record
Tag is lost and previous scrapie tag ID is known

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Official Scrapie ID</th>
<th>Previous/Lost Scrapie ID</th>
<th>Management ID</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MN11122 7100</td>
<td>MN11122 6052</td>
<td>6052</td>
<td>3/17/07</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Required Record Keeping

A record must be made when official ID is applied to the animal.
The record must be kept for five years after the animal dies or is no longer owned by you.
Sheep ID Tips

If selling groups of animals that are tagged at the time of sale, it is acceptable to list the first and last number in the sequential series of the tags applied, as long as a sequential series is used and noted.
The following slides clarify how the National Scrapie Program and the Traceability Program will work together.
Confused Regarding How Scrapie Program ID and the Traceability Proposed Rule Relate?
Scrapie Program ID and the Traceability Proposed Rule

Complying with the identification requirements of the National Scrapie Eradication Program is required by federal regulation that has been in effect since September 2001.

The traceability proposed rule incorporates the scrapie program ID regulations by reference, it would not establish new requirements for sheep or goats.
Questions?

If you have additional questions, please call your local VS Area Office, their phone numbers can be found on the following website:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/area_offices.htm

or

email the National Scrapie Eradication Program

scrapie_program@aphis.usda.gov
This presentation was created for the US Sheep Industry by staff at the University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine and NIAA Staff with support from the USDA NSEP.
Copies of this presentation are available from NIAA.