

SHEEP ELECTRONIC IDENTIFICATION NOTES TO HELP YOU

Electronic Identification (EUD) in sheep has become mandatory from January 1st 2010.

EID is being introduced in an attempt to improve traceability in the EU's sheep flock. New regulations require individual sheep identities to be recorded each time sheep move between holdings, and EID is seen as being the best way to manage this requirement.

Sheep can be electronically identified with either an EID tag, and EID bolus or pastern tag. For sheep born after 31st December 2009 EID tags must be YELLOW, so they are easily identifiable. Replacement tags must be RED (if not on the holding of birth) and the matching tag in a sheep with an EID bolus must be BLACK. So the secondary tag for sheep with an EID tag can be any colour apart from YELLOW, RED or BLACK.

EID tags can carry other management information so long as it is separate from the official number.

All sheep born after 21 December 2009 and NOT intended for slaughter before 12 months old will have to be electronically identified. These sheep will have two identifiers, ONE of which must be ELECTRONIC. Sheep intended for slaughter before 12 months old can either be identified with the full EID tag and visual matchup or can be identified by either a single Electronic Slaughter tag or a single non-EID tag both of which will display the UK flock number.

There are THREE options for SLAUGHTER sheep to ease recording of batch within batch information. The slaughter derogation only requires sheep intended for slaughter under 12 months to be identified by a non-electronic tag, but these tags will create problems for store lamb buyers who may buy and sell large numbers of lambs from different holdings of birth, and for buyers who take lambs from finished markets to a holding centre, for batching with other lambs, for onward movement to slaughter.

The EID Slaughter tag allows market trade to continue as normal as possible and will give everyone the opportunity to continue to buy lighter or unfinished lambs for further fattening or to pick out ewe lambs for breeding. There is a likelihood that large scale finishers will discount lambs without EID tags, as not being able to read their tags electronically will mean more costs for their business.

It is OUR ADVICE that, in order to retain the maximum number of options for marketing your lambs, you install, at the very least, an Electronic flock tag in each lamb, as these are capable of being upgraded and read electronically, whereas a manual tag is not.

Farmers will NOT need to buy an EID reader. Following extensive lobbying, Markets (and abattoirs) will be able to act as Central Point Recording Centres (CPRC). These CPRCs will be able to record the required individual sheep identities and pass that information back to seller and buyer. At CHELFORD you should have all the information returned to you on the day sale. However, if you sell any sheep farm-to-farm, you will need to record those animal's numbers manually, or buy a reader.

There is no need to electronically identify sheep born before 31 December 2009 or record their movements individually in the holding register. But from 31 December 2011 these animals will need to be recorded individually on movement documents unless they are moving direct to slaughter or via a market to slaughter. When moving to slaughter a batch movement document can still be used.

You will need new tags for all sheep born from 31 December 2009. The stock tags you have now will not be accepted. If a sheep LOSES a tag, you can replace the tag in one of 2 ways. You can either order an identical replacement, in the same way you do for cattle, or, you can cut out the remaining tag and replace it with two new ones. If you decide to cut the tag out for a sheep bought in from another holding, the replacement tags must be RED. Also, you will need to cross-reference the replacement tag number with the old ones in your flock register.

If a sheep loses both its tags you will need to fit two new tags and make a note in your flock register entering a sheep as identity unknown and cross-referencing this to the new tag number. You have 28 days from discovering the loss of a tag to fit replacement tags. Replacement tags for sheep still on the holding of birth will be YELLOW, with match-up tag in another colour. ALL replacement tags for animals not on the holding of birth will be RED.

Movements to different holdings where the sheep remain in the same ownership will only need to be batch recorded.

Sheep can be upgraded from non-Electronic identification to full Electronic even if not on the holding of birth as long as the animals in question can be traced back to the holding of origin. Upgrading would though be easier and less costly if the animals are originally tagged with the electronic slaughter tag, which already carries an individual number.

As far as the flock register is concerned, for animals born and identified after 31 December 2009 individual numbers will need to be recorded when they are first tagged, are moved on or off your holding, die or have a tag replaced or are upgraded. However, most of this recording will not require a single-line entry and CPRs will provide details of all sheep moved through them. Slaughter lambs identified by batch tagging will need to be recorded on a batch basis as at present. Additionally, batch within batch recording must take place to record the number of lambs with different flock numbers – hence electronic slaughter tags will make life easier for all!

If you have any further questions, we will be delighted to try and help.

Chelford Office 01625 861122

Mobile Numbers:	Gwyn Williams	07785 350588
	Nigel Ashley	07775 868881
	Jonathan Farrall	07796 952948
	Roy Waller	07774 995969