

Maryland 4-H Animal Science Program Guidebook

UNIVERSITY OF
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2016 4-H Exhibitor Information Livestock Animal Identification (Abbreviated Version-Revised)

Overview

Maryland 4-H youth wishing to exhibit livestock during 2016 Maryland 4-H Fairs and Shows will need to have two forms of animal identification on their animal; each serves a different purpose.

- 1) A Maryland 4-H Tag – A Maryland 4-H Tag is required for the following animals for the purpose of 4-H project verification according to Maryland 4-H guidelines. (See Table 1)
 - a. Beef – Market Steers, Commercial Breeding Females
 - b. Dairy – Market Steers
 - c. Goats – Market Goats, Commercial Breeding Meat Breed Females
 - d. Sheep – Market Lambs, Commercial Breeding Females
 - e. Swine – Market Swine
- 2) An approved form of Official Identification – Official Identification is required for health verification according to 2016 Maryland Animal Health Fair and Show Requirements. Veterinarians completing Maryland CVIs must include official identification information on the Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI).
 - a. Swine: Recognized breed ear notches or tattoos will not be acceptable as official identification in Maryland exhibitions. Swine must have tags bearing official identification.
 - b. Cattle: Brands or tattoos will not be acceptable as official identification in Maryland exhibitions for cattle. Animals must have a tag with official identification
 - c. Sheep and Goats: All sheep and goats must be officially scrapie-identified. Official identification for sheep and goats include the following:
 - i. USDA-approved eartags;
 - ii. Legible registration tattoos, for which the registration paper shall accompany the animals; or
 - iii. Legible tattoos consisting of an individual animal number unique within the flock in one ear and the official scrapie premise identification number (flock ID) in the other ear, except that the tail web or flank may be used for earless animals or animals with damaged ears and must be accompanied by an owner statement.

Maryland 4-H Tags – What are They and When, Where and How to Get Them

- Maryland 4-H Tags are purchased by County Extension Offices from the State 4-H Office. The cost for tags is typically passed on to 4-H members. The tags are color coded for species and type of animal.
- 4-H Tags are applied to project animals at the county scheduled tagging and weighing event. Tagging and weighing events are scheduled near the 4-H ownership deadline for each species. 4-H Tags must be applied by 4-H Faculty/Staff or their designated official.
- An animal may be tagged as either Commercial Breeding animal or Market animal, but not both. Commercial Breeding animals must have a copy of their tagging paperwork to present at 4-H show check-in.
- All market animals must be castrated and healed before tagging.
- If an animal loses its ear tag, the member must contact their County Extension Office regarding replacement. The Extension Office must retag with a Maryland 4-H replacement tag and make note on the member's Maryland 4-H Animal Registration Form at the time of retagging.

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Official US Eartags – What are They

Official USDA eartags are tags approved by USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) that provide official identification numbers for individual animals. The primary criteria for Official US Eartags include the following:

- Imprinted with an official identification number (USA = “840” or MD = “MD” or “51” followed by letters/numbers designating flock/herd, premise or animal number.)
- Official eartag shield 
- Tamper evident, high retention

There are several different types of Official US Eartags. Each has a slightly different use. Some of the more common types for livestock exhibitors include:

- National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES) Tags - Commonly made of metal and referred to as “Silver” or “Brite” tags.
- Animal identification number (AIN) “840” Tags - Provided directly to producers from manufacturers [or their distributors], or to producers through accredited veterinarians or animal health officials. Various sizes, shapes, colors and materials. Visual only or with variable frequency RFID technology.
- Sheep and goat tags - Serial and flock identification tags including scrapie flock certification program tags approved through the scrapie program.

Official US Eartags – When, Where and How to Get Them

- Official US Eartags may be applied at an animal’s point of origin, or where it is born. This provides the greatest level of effectiveness for animal disease traceability systems. This could mean that 4-H project animals which are purchased by members may already have their Official US Identification applied. If animals do not have Official US Identification applied when purchased, the options below are possible ways for 4-H members to obtain Official US Eartags.
 - a) Official US Eartags are available from Maryland Accredited Veterinarians if 4-H members just have one or a few animals needing identification. Members should contact their veterinarian in advance about this need. Veterinarians may choose to apply the tag at the time they are performing the visual inspection needed for issuing a CVI. 4-H members should not assume that their veterinarian will have tags if not contacted in advance!
 - b) Official US Eartags may be requested from the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) by calling 410-841-5810 or emailing animal.disease.traceability@maryland.gov. NOTE: Tags are provided to individuals or farms classified as *producers* who raise and market livestock for profit or income. 4-H members with just one or a few head of show livestock are not classified as *producers* by MDA and are not eligible to receive tags through MDA.
 - c) If 4-H members do their own breeding or have several animals needing official identification they should register their farm and obtain a premise number by contacting the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) by calling 410-841-5810 or emailing animal.disease.traceability@maryland.gov. 4-H members will need to obtain a premise number through MDA if they wish to order Official US Eartags through commercial tag vendors. A premise number is required to order Official US Eartags from vendors. A list of approved vendors and tags are provided on the ADT Website at: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/materials.shtml> . Vendors will typically have a minimum order size requirement.
- DO NOT apply more than one Official US Eartag to an animal. If an animal has an Official US Eartag already do not apply a second tag. Also, DO NOT REMOVE an Official US Eartag from an animal; this action is considered unlawful!
- Official US Eartags are not required to be in animals at the time of 4-H tagging and weighing. They are, however, required at the time of Veterinary visual inspection for a CVI.

If you have questions contact Chris Anderson, 4-H Youth Development Specialist, Animal Sciences via email: canders2@umd.edu or phone: 301-314-7187.