



# Georgia Department of Agriculture

19 Martin Luther King, Jr Dr SW • Atlanta, Georgia 30334-4201

**Gary W. Black**  
Commissioner

## **Animal Disease Traceability Rule Summary**

USDA APHIS has passed a new rule (Traceability for Livestock Moving Interstate) for livestock traceability. This rule will become law effective March 11, 2013. The rule will affect all states and can be found at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/>. Georgia will implement the national rule and work closely with producers and markets to meet the requirements.

Animal disease traceability – knowing where disease or at-risk animals are, where they have been, and when, is very important to ensure a rapid response when an animal disease event takes place. An accurate and efficient traceability system helps reduce the number of animals involved in an investigation, reduces the time needed to respond, and decreases the cost to producers and the department of agriculture.

This rule addresses requirements for ID and for proper documentation of movement. The species covered in the rule include cattle (beef and dairy) and bison, sheep and goats, swine, horses and other equines, captive cervids (e.g., deer and elk) and poultry. The covered animals moved interstate, unless otherwise exempt, will have to be officially identified and accompanied by an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI) or other movement document.

Interstate movement requirements for sheep, goats, swine and cervids have not changed from existing rules. Equine and Poultry requirements can be found at the USDA website. The purpose of this summary is to address the rule as it applies to cattle and bison.

In order to have a system that can be used efficiently, the system has to be used by everyone. Thus, identification of livestock must be consistent across the state and nation. Official individual identification standards have been set by USDA in order to ensure that each state will recognize and accept livestock identification from other states. Each state has importation rules that are required to be met when livestock enter the state; however, no state can require identification other than the official ID listed.

Official Identification consists of:

- Official eartag. An identification tag approved by APHIS bears an official identification number for individual animals. Beginning March 11, 2014, all official eartags manufactured must bear an official eartag shield. Beginning March 11, 2015, all official eartags applied to animals must bear an official eartag shield. Animals tagged with the "non-shielded" tags applied before March 2015 will be recognized as official for the life of the animal.

- Metal eartag
- Electronic identification eartag
- Registration tattoo or brand (provided the registration papers accompany the animal)when agreed to by shipping and receiving states authorities
- For now, the DHIA tags with the National Uniform Eartagging System (NEUS) number are official without the shield. The rule requires that all newly manufactured tags have the Official Eartag Shield starting March 11, 2014 and tags applied to animals after March 11, 2015 have the Official Eartag Shield..

The identification requirements of cattle and bison can be divided into beef, dairy and exhibition/show/rodeo. Each group will be discussed separately.

All cattle and bison crossing a state line will require an official interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI) or other movement document as agreed to by both the shipping and receiving states. Cattle and bison traveling directly to slaughter (harvested within 3 days) do not require a ICVI.

- Beef Cattle and Bison requiring identification:
    - o All beef cattle 18 months of age and older (as evidence by the eruption of adult teeth) will be required to be officially individually identified.
    - o Steers and spayed heifers are exempt
    - o Beef cattle going directly to slaughter (harvested in 3 days) may travel with backtag identification and do not require other ID
    - o Beef cattle under 18 months are exempt from the rule and individual identification
    - o Group/lot identification when a group/lot identification number (GIN) may be used
  - Dairy Cattle requiring identification:
    - o All female dairy cattle of any age and all males bom after March 11, 2013 are required to be officially individually identified
    - o Steers are not excluded and require official individual identification
    - o DHIA official ear tags are accepted as official ID
    - o Dairy cattle going directly to slaughter (harvested within 3 days) may travel with backtag identification and do not require other ID
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- **Exhibition/Show/Rodeo Cattle and Bison**

- o All Exhibition/Show and Rodeo cattle and Bison of any age require official individual identification.

- **Livestock Markets**

- o Cattle and bison moving through livestock markets must meet the identification and travel requirements.
- o All identification eligible cattle and bison coming into a market must come to the market with ID, receive ID at the market or return to its place of origin.
- o Cattle and bison going directly to slaughter may move to slaughter with backtag identification and no other ID.
- o Georgia cattle and bison leaving the livestock market with an out of state destination must travel on an official interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI).
- o Georgia cattle and bison staying in Georgia do not require an ICVI.
- o Cattle and bison may come from out of state directly to an official tagging site without individual identification, but when leaving the tagging site must be individually identified and listed on an official interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI) or other approved documentation.

- **Where to find tags**

- o Official tags will be distributed to official tagging sites.
  - o Producers, veterinarians, livestock markets and possibly other locations may be approved to become official tagging sites.
  - o Metal Eartags (NUES) can be obtained from the Georgia Department of Agriculture, free of charge, by calling 404-656-3667.
  - o Electronic ID should be acquired from a vendor of choice.
  - o An identification tag approved by APIDS bears an official identification number for individual animals. Beginning March 11, 2014, all official eartags manufactured must bear an official eartag shield. Beginning March 11, 2015, all official eartags applied to animals must bear an official eartag shield.
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Producers are recommended and encouraged to apply official identification to their livestock on the farm. Livestock markets are required to ID the identification eligible livestock if they are not already tagged. It is important to maintain the speed of commerce necessary for livestock markets to operate in an efficient manner. The more identification eligible livestock that are tagged prior to entering the markets, the more efficiently the markets are able to operate. This allows the producers to market their livestock in a timely manner. For more information, call your Georgia State Veterinarian's office at 404-656-3671 or Animal Health at 404-656-3667.

Robert M. Cobb, Jr, DVM  
State Veterinarian  
Division Director of Animal Industry

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