

Official ID Requirements Change: Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) for Cattle and Bison

What is the change to ID requirements happening November 2024?

“Ear tags must be both visually and electronically readable in order to be recognized for use as official identification for interstate movement of cattle and bison covered under the regulations.” This means visual-only tags like the NUES 9 (metal or plastic) tags will no longer be counted as official unless they are “grandfathered in” and applied to the animal before November 5, 2024.

Source:

[USDA's final rule: Traceability \(https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/traceability-final-rule.pdf\)](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/traceability-final-rule.pdf)

Why the change?

RFID enables animal health officials to perform traceability activities more efficiently in the event of a disease investigation. A quick and accurate response means fewer farms and animals are affected by disease and quarantines, which reduces economic impact and keeps the industry moving.

RFID Capabilities

This technology creates opportunity for producers to have the data to provide more individualized care to their animals. On the farm, a RFID reader can locate an individual animal for sale or treatment faster than visually reading a tag, especially in larger herds. The unique ID number ensures the correct animal is being handled and can be associated to data that can help the producer make important decisions on animal health and herd management.

Animal Disease Traceability and RFID

To perform our duties to protect the health of domestic animals, the Board performs tracing activities when diseases arise. When disease is discovered at a farm, processing plant, or market, animal records tell us what animals may have been exposed and where they went or came from so we can follow the trail to find the source of the disease and contain additional spread. The Board and USDA do not passively track RFID tags on producers' private property or remotely monitor herds. Tag information is recorded when tags are applied, at selling points, when official movements are recorded, and when a disease investigation is being conducted. RFID allows a quicker response during investigations because animal health officials can process tag information electronically.

Key dates:

Effective November 5, 2024, all ear tags must be visually and electronically readable to be considered official ID for interstate movement for cattle and bison.

Key contacts:

Questions:

trace@state.mn.us or traceability@usda.gov

Ordering Tags:

Producers can purchase tags from approved manufacturers directly or check with their veterinarian to see if they have a supply of RFID tags.

Purchase tags and tag applicators directly from the following manufacturers. NOTE: Tag applicators are specific to each manufacturer.

- [Allflex \(www.allflex.global/na/\)](http://www.allflex.global/na/): 800-989-8247
- [Ketchum Manufacturing \(www.ketchummfg.com\)](http://www.ketchummfg.com): 800-222-0460
- [National Band & Tag Company \(www.nationalband.com\)](http://www.nationalband.com): 859-261-2035
- [Leadstone \(www.leadstone.com\)](http://www.leadstone.com): 877-608-3877
- [Datamars \(datamars.com/eng/home-us/\)](http://datamars.com/eng/home-us/): 800-433-3112

Tag Examples:

