



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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Identifying and recording sheep and goats

Requirements for English slaughterhouses



August 2014



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Introduction

This guide replaces guidance issued in April 2010. It explains how the law on the identification, recording and reporting of movements of sheep and goats applies to slaughter houses in **England**.

**Equivalent digital guidance will be placed on the GOV.UK website
It will be in a different but accessible and easy to navigate digital format
Defra will not reprint this paper guide so you may wish to retain it for reference.**

2014-15 changes to the recording reporting rules

When	What
1 April 2014	Reporting movements by slaughterhouses:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• must be done electronically through the Animal Reporting and Movements Service (ARAMS) and include individual animal numbers for all electronically identified animals
1 April 2014	Electronic identification (EID) injectables for goats:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• is an option for (adult) goats only• only one of the identifiers can be an approved injectable EID – the other will be a black ear tag• where an injectable identifier is used the goat cannot go into the food chain
	Electronic tagging of slaughter lambs:
1 January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• from this date - lamb producers must only use the single yellow EID tag to tag lambs intended for slaughter before 12 months of age• Slaughterhouses should therefore stop seeing the non-EID/non-yellow tag in English slaughter lambs by summer 2015

What you must do if you slaughter sheep or goats – a summary

What	How and when
<p>Ensure animals you receive are correctly identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unidentified animals should not be moved to your premises • if an animal has lost its ID on the way you must satisfy yourself as to its origin before slaughtering it • an animal kept past 12 months of age will have two identifiers – in most cases two tags. • for sheep tagged since 2010 one of these will be electronic and be coloured yellow • producers can, alternatively, identify animals for slaughter before 12 months of age with a single slaughter ear tag. • for slaughter lambs, tagged from 2015 this may only be a yellow electronic ear tag.
<p>Keep your own holding register up to date</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • record the moves on to your premises in your own register within 36 hours
<p>Report moves via the ARAMS system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report the moves on to your premises within 3 days of receiving the animals at your premises

Checking tags in animals

The tags you see will depend on type and age.

You should visually check a sample of between 2% and 5% (on a risk basis) of every consignment upon arrival to ensure that animals are correctly identified.

If an animal that has arrived at your premises is not correctly identified according to the above rules, you must satisfy yourself as to where it has come from before you allow it to go into the food chain.

Adult animals – double tagged

Animals kept past 12 months of age, must have been double tagged.

For **sheep** tagged from 2010 one of their tags must be an electronic identifier (EID). This will most likely be a (yellow) EID *ear tag*.

Both tags will show the same individual ID number - which must be recorded in your register and reported electronically to ARAMS.

Below is what is printed on each tag in a full EID pair, and programmed into its microchip			
Country	Zero	Flock/herd mark	Individual ID number
UK	0	2 4 4 2 2 0	0 0 1 2 3
For pre-2010 animals, and goats, the format is: UK + 6-digit mark + (up to) 6-digit individual number.			

Older sheep tagged before 2010 were not electronically tagged. The number of these animals sent for slaughter will reduce year on year. Sheep born before 2010 (and not re-tagged with EID tags) when moving to an abattoir do not need to be individually recorded. However their batch movement must be electronically reported by the abattoir.

Slaughter animals – single tagged (< 12months)

Instead of double tagging, Defra allows producers the **option** to identify lambs/kids intended for slaughter under 12 months of age with a single ear tag.

This 'slaughter tag' has 'UK' + the animal's 6-digit flock/herd number (only) printed on it.

Until 2015 for sheep and goats it may be an EID tag or a non-EID tag (see below).

Below is what is printed on a slaughter tag:	
Country	Flock/herd mark
UK	2 4 4 2 2 0
For an EID slaughter tag, the full EID number can be scanned from its microchip.	

The electronic identification (EID) slaughter tag

Before 2015 this is an option for slaughter sheep and goats.

From 1 January 2015 keepers in England identifying lambs with the single slaughter tag must only use the (yellow) EID slaughter tag.

This change is not retrospective. You may see non-EID / non-yellow tags in English slaughter lambs until June 2015 or thereabouts.

Before 2015, if you have a commercial preference for handling only lambs with EID slaughter tags, or an EID tag pair (because it may make your electronic recording/reporting easier) you need to make that clear to your lamb suppliers.

Similar considerations may apply at some point from late 2015 onwards if you slaughter Welsh lambs. At the time of preparation of this guidance the Welsh Government is considering the results of a consultation on future options for tagging of Welsh slaughter lamb. They may decide that some/all Welsh lamb should be EID tagged.

Sheep identified in Scotland and Northern Ireland are already electronically identified (either with the EID slaughter tag or a 'full EID' pair of tags).

Ageing of slaughter tagged animals

It is difficult to determine the exact age of slaughter animals. A slaughter lamb born during a lambing season (Dec-May) identified with the single slaughter tag is deemed to comply with tagging legislation¹ if it is slaughtered before 30 June in the year following the lambing season. For example, lambs born in the Dec 2013 – May 2014 season may be presented for slaughter with a single tag up to 30 June 2015. These animals are therefore properly identified and can be accepted for slaughter.

Failure to properly identify animals may result in action being taken by a Local Authority. Details of animals presented for slaughter with a single slaughter tag after 30 June, which you believe are older than 12 months of age and should therefore have been identified with double tags, should be recorded and be available to the Local Authority on request.

Reserved tag colours

Colours reserved for specific visual identifiers	
Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">any visual electronic identifier applied on the holding of birth
Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none">any visual identifiers (excluding replicas) applied off the holding of birth (including electronic identifiers)
Black	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ear tag or pastern on an animal with a bolus EID (‘B’ printed on it)ear tag on a goat with an injectable EID (‘I’ printed on it)

Tag colours used in Scotland and Northern Ireland vary slightly. Wales is largely the same as in England, but the Welsh Government has yet to decide how it will implement the slaughter tag provisions from 2015. Scotland has no reserved colour for animals EID tagged there (although yellow is recommended). Northern Ireland has not reserved a colour for animals EID tagged there, but has reserved light blue for the bolus matchup tag. Sheep from other EU member states may have different colour combinations. Some combinations of different types of ID that may be presented in the lairage are at Annex A.

¹ The Sheep and Goats (Records, Identification and Movement) (England) Order 2009, as amended.

Completing your holding register

A premise where livestock is kept, even temporarily, is a holding and must keep a holding register. For abattoirs this must record animal IDs and their date of slaughter.

When tagged	What to record	
Before 2010	All animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> total number of animals in each batch where they have last come from date of their arrival date of death
From 2010	Double tagged animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> individual animal number(s) where they have come from date of arrival date of death
	Single tagged slaughter animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> batch total only how many of each different flock/herd mark are in the batch date of arrival date of death.

Operators can decide how to obtain this information, e.g. from

- scanning (EID) tags on arrival
- a visual read (the individual ID number printed on the tag is the same as its electronic number), or
- record it from the incoming movement document – if present
- if scanned into ARAMS – at its departure premises – automatic download to your premises ARAMS electronic holding register (if you choose to use it).

You should let your customers know if your preferred animal ID option is for EID tags because it makes your recording easier. Whatever method is chosen the operator is responsible for the accuracy of the information entered in the abattoir's holding register.

After you register to use the ARAMS system to report your incoming movements of sheep you will be able to choose to maintain a free **electronic holding register** (rather than a paper record). You can use this to record movements and deaths (the date of slaughter).

Holding registers in whatever form they are kept (see below) must be retained for a minimum of 3 years.

Paper or electronic registers

How you keep your register is up to you so long as you record the required information. For most businesses keeping it in an electronic format will be the most practical solution

a) Defra paper register

Defra has produced a model document for keepers you can see a version published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sheep-and-goat-holding-register>

Copies are available via the Defra helpline (☎ 08459 33 55 77, quote PB13281).

b) ARAMS electronic register

Later in 2014 you will have the option to use a **free** ARAMS based electronic holding register in place of your paper register. This will be available to you if you report movements through the ARAMS website abattoir portal.

When animals are moved to your premises and you have started to use ARAMS to record those moves on the electronic holding register you can choose to let it automatically fill in the on-movements section of your e-register based on your movement reports.

c) Commercial software

You may use a commercial software package or programme to keep an electronic register.

Reporting movements into your abattoir

Movements of animals onto your premises must be reported into ARAMS within 72 hours (3 days).

The change to electronic reporting (mandatory)

From April 2014 all abattoirs regardless of size must report the details of movements of animals on to their premises **electronically** through the new Animal Movements Reporting Service database (ARAMS), as must markets, and collection and assembly centres.

You may do this through a direct interface between your back office IT system, or if you do not have one you must use the dedicated abattoir portal on the ARAMS website at: www.arams.co.uk. (Before you use the portal you will need to register on the website for an ARAMS account.

If the off movement of an animal you receive has been notified electronically you will be able to confirm the move using the electronic record already on ARAMS. If the animal is electronically identified and the individual animal number has not been recorded (i.e. in the case of slaughter lambs that are electronically tagged) you will need to record the individual animal details and report them to ARAMS.

If the off movement of an animal you receive has not been notified electronically you will need to enter the off and on movement details (including individual animal numbers) onto ARAMS.

There has been a transitional period of a few months from April 2014 for abattoirs to move over to electronic reporting. Defra expects abattoirs to be doing this from Autumn 2014. Defra and Local Authority Trading Standards teams will be monitoring compliance.

Information you must include in your electronic movement report

- Departure/keeper/premise details
- Haulier details
(The above will be on the incoming movement document that travels with the animal)
- Your abattoir/arrival details
- Animal tag numbers (see table below)

Type of tag	What to record
(Adult – double identified animals)	
EID tagged sheep (or goats)	UK + full 12 digit tag number (printed on the tag and stored in its chip)
Non EID tagged goats EID	UK + (up to) 12 digit tag number (printed on the tag)
Pre-2010 tagged animals	Total number of animals in the batch only
(Slaughter animals – single tagged)	
Non-EID slaughter tag	Batch total, and how many of each different flock/herd mark.
EID slaughter tag	UK + full 12 digit tag number - stored in its chip

Please consult the abattoir user guide on the ARAMS website for how you submit your movement report.

Capturing the electronic tag data you must report

When

You are required to electronically **report** movements from April 2014. However a transitional period is in place until autumn 2014.

You are expected to be including electronically scanned tag data in those movement reports as soon as practicable (see below).

Defra appreciates it may take some time for all businesses to be ready to do that, particularly smaller ones. All abattoirs must include that data in their movement reports before the end of 2014.

How (options)

Accept scanned tag data already entered into ARAMS at the departure premises

This will be available to you **if** the departure premise was a market, a collection centre, or simply a farmer using ARAMS who scans their own sheep.

The outbound details will be recorded on the ARAMS system. EID tag numbers may have been scanned into the system (mandatory if the premise was a market or a collection centre²). If this data is already on ARAMS you can download it into your movement report and not have to scan the tags yourself.

You must ensure the haulier's transport information (which will be on the inbound movement document that travelled with the animals) and your premises information is included in the movement report.

Scan the tags yourself

If the EID tag data is not already on ARAMS for the move (or it is but you do not wish to rely on it) you must scan the tags yourself.

You should scan **all** of the **EID** tags in the incoming batch and include the EID numbers in your movement report.

For EID tags you must include the (full) EID number from the microchip – i.e. 'UK' + the 12 digit number. When you scan a chip 'UK' might be shown as '0826'³.

You will need your own scanning equipment to capture this data.

Manually enter the tag data

In most cases the tag data should be on or with the movement document. The exceptions may be **if** you are an abattoir providing a CPRC service – see below, **or** the animals have come from a farmer who has not scanned EID slaughter tags – see below.

Full EID sheep & Double tagged goats	Single tagged lambs
If you are a small operator handling just a few animals you may decide to visually read the tags and manually enter the individual tag numbers printed on them, or the requisite flock/herd mark printed on them, into your movement report into Arams.	If the tag(s) are EID slaughter tags in lambs and if it has not been done by the departure premise you must scan them to capture the individual number* stored on the microchip * (Those tags will only have UK plus the flock mark printed on them so that number cannot be visually read from the tag)
	In that scenario you will need to use scanning equipment to capture that EID slaughter tag data. Alternatively - you may request that the producers who supply the animals identify them with a pair of 'full EID' tags – so that you can visually read the individual tag number that will be printed on those tags.

² These premises are transitioning to e-reporting from April 2014+ so it will take a few months before all of them are e-reporting also.

³ (0)826 is the ISO country code for the UK. .

Reading equipment - for electronic tags

The EID tag reading equipment you use should be sufficient to cope with your throughput.

For small throughput establishments it may be a simple handheld /stick type reader.
For very large throughput establishments it may be race reading kit.

It is recommended that any EID tag reading kit you use should comply with the relevant ISO standards⁴.

A handheld/portable reader should be able to read an EID ear tag from up to 12cm (20cm for a ruminal bolus EID).

A stationary race reader should be able to read all types of identifiers from up to 50 cm away.

Food Chain Information (FCI)

As a Food Business Operator you should ensure that this is provided to you when appropriate. The ARAMS-1 movement form will have the facility for the dispatching keeper to use it to include an FCI statement and accompanying documentation.

They may provide it separately from the movement document. (This may be a preferred option for some keepers who may be printing off (single sided) movement documents from the ARAMS system).

Providing a Central Point Recording Centre (CPRC) service for producers

In 2010 when EU legislation first required keepers to record and report sheep and goat moves individually it also provided for farmers to avoid having to include the tag numbers for individually (electronically) identified animals on their **outbound** movement documents. They could avoid that **if** they were sending animals **to** a premises that would provide a service to scan incoming animal's tags and send a list of the tag numbers back to the keeper for inclusion (when necessary) in their holding registers (off movement section).

It is the farmer's responsibility to check that tag data they enter into their holding registers is accurate even if it is provided by a third party.

Premises are approved to provide this 'Central Point Recording Centre' (CPRC) service by AHVLA. Many markets decided to provide this commercial service to keepers. Most abattoirs have not yet done so.

When keepers use this service they tick a CPRC box on the outgoing movement document to alert the receiving premises that they wanted their animals' tags read for the above-mentioned purpose (you can see this box on the new movement document reproduced at Annex B).

⁴ ISO standards 11784 and 11785. (11784 specifies the structure of the ID code. 11785 specifies how the EID chip is activated and how the stored information is transferred to a tag reader)

Now that all abattoirs are required to report their **on**-movements into ARAMS electronically, and as they may often be scanning tag data, more abattoirs may over time decide to provide a CPRC EID tag reading service to **farmers** sending them sheep who want the tag data for their on-farm records. That will be a commercial decision for any abattoir to decide if they want to provide that data on request to their customers. Producers who may send you animals direct from their premises should not presume you are providing this service without checking with you first.

The easiest way this could be accomplished is if the dispatching keeper is using the ARAMS system to set up his/her moves and is using an ARAMS electronic holding register – because the ARAMS system will automatically populate your holding register with movements that have been reported electronically.

Equipment / power failure

If you experience a temporary power failure, or EID tag reader failure you may find yourself unable to submit your moves electronically via ARAMS and/or you may be unable to read the EID tags in the animals you have received. If the failure is of a temporary nature you may find that you can rectify the problem within 72 hours i.e. in time to report the move on to your premises and the required animal data within the legal deadline.

If there is a risk that you may not rectify the problem within 72 hours you may need to contact the Trading Standards Department at your Local Authority. They will consider if they will give you a temporary exemption from having to electronically record the movement and/or the required animal data.

Disposal of EID tags

You should destroy or dispose of EID tags in a secure manner that prevents their re-use. This may include rendering. Under no circumstance can they be re-used.

Further information

Who		E-mail	Website
AIMS	01609 761547	Via www.aims2001.co.uk/contact/	www.aims2001.co.uk
AHVLA	Find your local office on website		www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla-en/
ARAMS	0844 573 0137	TechnicalHelpdesk@arams.co.uk	www.arams.co.uk
BMPA	020 7329 0776	info@bmpa.uk.com	www.bmpa.uk.com
DEFRA	08459 33 55 77	sheepandgoats@defra.gsi.gov.uk	www.gov.uk/sheep-and-goats-identification-registration-and-movement
FSA	020 7276 8829	helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk	www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/meat/

(Note: AHVLA website content may transfer to the GOV.UK website)

Annex A – Types of ID combinations that may be presented in the lairage

Type	Tag colours
Single slaughter tag (UK + flock/herd mark)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up until the latter half of 2015 - any colour – Thereafter – yellow (electronic) for lambs
Pre 2010 double ear tagged animals	Any colours (red if replaced off birth holding)
Post 2009 identified animals:-	
1) EID + non EID ear tags	1) Yellow (EID) + any colour except red, black or yellow
2) EID tag + tattoo	2) Yellow (EID)
3) EID ear tag + non-EID pastern tag	3) Yellow (EID) + any colour except red, black or yellow
4) EID bolus + non-EID ear tag	4) black ear tag
5) EID bolus + non-EID pastern (leg) band	5) black ear tag
6) EID pastern (leg) band + non-EID ear tag	6) Yellow (EID) + any colour except red, black or yellow
7) Injectable + non-EID ear tag (goat only)	7) black ear tag
Scottish animals	Same as for England (injectables not permitted)
Welsh animals	Similar to England (may require EID tags for slaughter lambs, and may permit injectables)
Northern Irish animals (all double identified)	EID tag - any colour Historic tags - green Bolus + light blue tag

