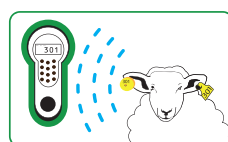


# Important information for sheep keepers in England

New rules on the electronic identification (EID) of sheep are being introduced from 31 December 2009



- Sheep born or identified after 31 December 2009, which are not intended for slaughter within 12 months of age, must have an electronic identifier.
- Sheep intended for slaughter within 12 months of age may be identified with a non-electronic slaughter batch tag. Alternatively a keeper may choose to electronically identify these sheep.
- Individual recording will be required for all sheep, except for those identified with a non-electronic slaughter batch tag. A phased introduction to individual recording has been agreed to give industry time to adjust to the new recording rules.
- Keepers do not have to purchase electronic reading equipment. They can choose to record individual numbers manually if they prefer.



## When will EID be introduced?

31 December 2009.

## What does this mean for sheep keepers?

Sheep which live beyond 12 months of age will need to be electronically identified and individual records kept.

## What about animals intended for slaughter?

Animals intended for slaughter within 12 months of age can be identified with a single non-electronic slaughter batch tag. Individual recording of these animals is not required. The rules do, however, require the number of animals with different identities within a batch to be recorded. This may be difficult for some premises, such as markets, which handle large volumes of animals at speed and they may require the application of an EID device to be able to handle your stock. For further information speak to your customer or industry representative.

## Will I need to purchase reading equipment and a computer?

No. Individual animal information can be recorded manually if you choose. It is up to you to decide whether it will be easier for you to use electronic reading equipment to capture individual animal information.

## What do I have to do and when?

<b>31 December 2009</b>	<b>Identification</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apply two identifiers to animals to be kept beyond 12 months of age. One of the identifiers must be electronic and both must bear the same individual number.</li><li>• Apply a single non-electronic slaughter batch tag to animals intended for slaughter within 12 months of age. This can be electronic if you wish or your customers require it.</li></ul> <b>Holding Register</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual animal information must be recorded for electronically identified animals born after 31 December 2009. Batch records continue for slaughter animals and animals born before 31 December 2009.</li></ul>
<b>1 January 2011</b>	<b>Movement documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual animal information must be recorded for electronically identified animals (i.e. born after 31 December 2009). Batch movement documents continue for slaughter animals and animals born before 31 December 2009.</li></ul>
<b>31 December 2011</b>	<b>Movement documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual information must be recorded for all animals, except for animals born before 31 December 2009 which are moving direct to slaughter or via a market to slaughter where batch movement documents continue to apply.</li></ul>

## What happens next?

We will be consulting on proposals to implement the new sheep identification and traceability rules early in the Spring. Further information will be provided as more details of the new requirements are agreed.

## What should I do?

Speak to your preferred eartag supplier to discuss the type of identifier and reading equipment (if appropriate) you might use and to your customers about the type of slaughter tag they might require.

Useful Contacts and Further Information:

**Call the Defra Helpline on 08459 335577**

Or go to: [www.defra.gov.uk/farm/livestock](http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/livestock)

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