

Sheep/Goat - Official ID Options

California requires sheep and goats to bear **Official Identification (ID)** when they enter the state or change ownership.

Official ID must be a device or identification mark approved by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and provide a unique identification number for each animal.

It is unlawful to remove official ID.

I. Eartags: All official sheep and goat eartags must bear the official U.S. shield. Tags are plastic or metal and come in a variety of styles, shapes, and colors. Official tags must have:



Serial Numbers: Typically the U.S. Postal Service state abbreviation followed by a letter/number combination that is six characters in length;



Herd/Flock ID/Animal Numbers: Typically the U.S. Postal Service state abbreviation followed by a series of numbers and/or letters. If the tag includes the flock's national premises ID, it will not have the postal abbreviation; or



840 Animal Identification Number (AIN):

Tags begin with the official county code (840 for U.S.), followed by 12 digits. These tags can have RFID technology or be visual only. A list of approved AIN devices can be found at: [AIN Approved Devices](#). AIN tags are issued to producers or USDA.

Obtaining Official Tags: USDA provides official metal tags free of charge. Producers may request free tags by calling 866-USDA-TAG (873-2824). In addition, producers may purchase USDA approved tags directly from an approved manufacturer to fit their needs and preferences.

Note:

- Sheep and goats only need to be officially identified when leaving the premises or when being sold to another owner.
- Do not buy or sell animals of any age that may be used for breeding or animals over 18 months of age for any purpose unless they are officially identified.
- Official tags may not be sold or given to another person. If you no longer need the tags, they should be destroyed or returned to USDA.

Tag Manufacturers

ALLFLEX USA, INC.

(833) 727-2743

WWW.SCRAPIETAGS.COM

ALLIANCE ID, USA

(800) 434-2843

WWW.MICROCHIPIDSYSTEMS.COM

EZID, LLC

(877) 330-3943

WWW.EZIDAVID.COM

NATIONAL BAND & TAG CO.

(859) 261-2035

WWW.NATIONALBAND.COM

PREMIER 1 SUPPLIES, LLC

(800) 282-6631

WWW.PREMIER1SUPPLIES.COM

SHEARWELL DATA USA

(320) 760-4696

WWW.SHEARWELL.COM

USDA National Scrapie Eradication Program

VETERINARY SERVICES AREA OFFICE

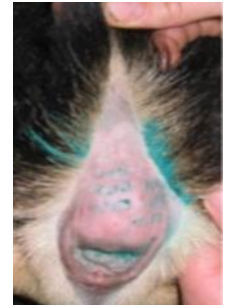
(866) 873-2824

<http://www.eradicatescrapie.org/>

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/sheep-and-goat-health/national-scrapie-eradication-program/ct_to_order_ear_tags

II. Official Tattoos (Two Types Accepted):

1. **USDA Flock ID + Individual Animal ID:** USDA Flock ID Number tattooed in the right ear or tail web, and a unique Individual Animal ID Number in the left ear or tail web. The tail web is the loose skin near the base of the tail that fans out on each side of the bones of the tail.
2. **Registration Tattoo:** USDA approved breed registry tattoos include a unique Premise ID Number and Individual Animal ID Number. A registration certificate must accompany animals when traveling or sold. Animals traveling or sold without a registration certificate must have official ear tags.



III. Electronic Implant Device (EID): The EID, or microchip, may be used as official ID in the Scrapie Eradication Program if the animals are registered with a national registry association, and the implants are ISO compliant and obtained from a USDA-approved manufacturer. Animals at exhibition, transported or sold must be accompanied by a microchip reader and the registration certificate. Animals sold without transfer of registration papers, such as to slaughter or through livestock markets, must be identified with *visible* official ID such as ear tags or tattoos.

In sheep and goats, EID placement is recommended at the top of the ear between the skin and cartilage near where the ear meets the head. The tail fold may also be used.

www.eradicatescrapie.org: [Use of EID as Official ID for Sheep and Goats \(Addendum\) \(2013\)](#)

TIPS FOR TAGGING

- The preferred placement for eartags is in the left ear, to avoid interfering during shearing. Ear tags should be placed close to the head and centered between the main veins. For best tag retention, avoid the outer edges where tags can get caught on fences.



- The preferred method of ear tagging short eared goats is with small, rectangular tags; tags can be applied to the ear tissue close to the head.

