Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Identifying and recording sheep and goats

Guidance on the rules for keepers in England

April 2014

Contents

1. Introduction

This guide replaces the December 2009 edition. It explains how keepers must identify sheep and goats, and record and report their movements, to comply with the law.

> **Defra will not be reprinting this guide so keep this copy for reference! In future we will only update the online version of this guide on GOV.UK.**

1.1 The key changes to the ID and reporting rules:

When	What
1 April 2014	**Electronic movement reporting:**
	• must be done through the Animal Reporting and Movements Service (ARAMS)
	• will make it easy to produce movement documents and to report moves electronically
	• you can still use the paper system if you're not ready to 'go digital'
	Electronic identification (EID) injectables for goats:
	• are an option if the goats are not intended for the food chain
	• only one of the identifiers can be an approved injectable EID
1 January 2015	**Electronic tagging of slaughter lambs:**
	• you must only use the single EID tag for lambs intended for slaughter before 12 months
	• you must have used up or disposed of any non-EID slaughter tags
	Individual reporting of older (pre-2010/EID) animals:
	• you must include the individual tag numbers of all sheep and goats identified before 2010 on movement documents, unless they move direct to slaughter (or direct to slaughter via a market).

2. What you must do if you keep sheep or goats – a summary

You're a keeper if you have responsibility for the day-to-day care and control of sheep and goats (even as pets, or on a temporary basis). You don't have to be their owner.

You must identify the animals in your care, record them in your register and report their movements. This helps the authorities to control disease and supports traceability.

If your sheep or goats are not correctly identified when they arrive at a market they will be rejected.

Also, if you don't comply with the law, the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) may reduce your Single Payment Scheme subsidy.

What	How and when
Register your holding	• contact the RPA, who will give your holding a County/Parish/Holding (CPH) number
Get a flock/herd mark	• contact your regional Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) office to get a flock/herd mark
Correctly ID your animals	• you must tag any animals born on your holding within 6 to 9 months of age (or when they leave the holding, whichever happens first) • you must give animals that you keep/sell for breeding two tags (identifiers). For sheep one of these must be electronic • alternatively, you can identify animals for slaughter with a single slaughter ear tag. For slaughter lambs this must be electronic if you tag them from 2015
Keep your holding register up to date	• record the dates of ID, moves and deaths within 36 hours • record tag numbers for animals moved to a Central Point Recording Centre (CPRC) within 48 hours of the move (full EID animals) • compile your inventory total annually (as at 1 December each year)
Report moves	• within 3 days of receiving the animals • if you cannot report electronically, you can use a paper document, which you must send to the new Animal Reporting and Movements Service (ARAMS)
Submit your annual inventory	• by 31 December, using the form sent to you in the post or by email.

3. Register your holding and get a County/Parish/Holding (CPH) number

You must register all land parcels where you keep sheep and goats (even as pets) with the RPA (☎ 0845 603 7777). You must do so within 1 month of keeping animals. The RPA will give your holding a unique 9-digit CPH number; for example: (C)11 / (P)222 / (H)3333.

If you own or permanently rent

- several parcels of land to keep sheep or goats on
- within 5 miles of your main holding, as the crow flies
- and the land is not used by other livestock keepers

you can register all the parcels as a single holding (in other words, with one CPH number).

3.1 Temporary grazing

If you temporarily use or rent land to graze your animals but the owner of that land doesn't let you use their CPH number, ask your regional AHVLA office for a temporary CPH number. You can get their telephone number from the Defra helpline (☎ 08459 33 55 77) or by using the postcode search tool on the AHVLA website: http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/postcode/index.asp.

4. Get your flock/herd mark

You must advise your local AHVLA office that you will be/are keeping sheep or goats. They will give you a unique flock/herd mark. You can get their telephone number from the Defra helpline (☎ 08459 33 55 77) or by using the postcode search tool on the AHVLA website: http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/postcode/index.asp.

5. Identify your animals

You must identify your animals on the holding where they were born:

- within 9 months of birth, or
- within 6 months of birth if you house them overnight, or
- before you move them from the holding they were born on, if that is sooner

If the animal was born on a temporary holding or common land, use your main holding flock/herd mark.

In an emergency you can take unidentified animals to the vet's, but record the move in your holding register. You must identify the animals once they're back on your holding.

Two tags or one		
If the animal is for:	**Sheep**	**Goat**
Slaughter (before 12 months of age)	Single electronic ear tag (compulsory after 31 December 2014)	Single ear tag, EID optional
Breeding (kept past 12 months of age)	Two identifiers (Both with the same number, one of which must be electronic. This is called 'full EID'.)	Two identifiers, EID optional
	If you can, you should put the EID tag on the left ear.	

Combinations for animals over 12 months of age		
Sheep must have full EID. For goats, EID is optional.		
1st identifier EID	**2nd identifier conventional**	**Able to export?**
EID ear tag	Ear tag	Yes
EID ear tag	Tattoo Can go across both ears. (UK code + flock number on one, individual animal number on the other.)	No
EID ear tag	Pastern (leg band)	Yes
EID bolus	Black ear tag or black pastern	Yes
EID pastern (leg band)	Ear tag	No

Goat-only combinations		
1st identifier conventional	**2nd identifier conventional**	**Able to export?**
Ear tag	Ear tag	No. Export animals must have full EID.
Ear tag	Tattoo Can go across both ears. (UK code + flock number on one, individual animal number on the other.)	
Ear tag	Pastern (leg band)	No. You're not allowed to export animals with an EID pastern or an injectable EID.
EID injectable (groin)	Conventional black ear tag	

Colours reserved for specific visual identifiers	
Yellow	• any visual electronic identifier applied on the holding of birth (and replica EIDs)
Red	• any visual identifiers (excluding replicas) applied off the holding of birth (including electronic identifiers)
Black	• 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)
You must not use these colours for any other tags, including management tags.	

The flock/herd mark printed on a visual identifier is the flock/herd mark of the holding on which that identifier is applied to the animal.

You must apply a red replacement identifier if an identifier that has been lost or damaged is being replaced on a different holding from the holding on which the animal was originally identified. However, replacement identifiers don't have to be red if they're replica tag(s), in other words, they have the same ID number as the lost tag(s).

Below is what is printed on a slaughter tag:	
Country	**Flock/herd mark**
UK	**244220**

For an EID slaughter tag, the full EID number can be scanned from its microchip.

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**	**244220**	**00123**

However, for all pre-2010 animals, and goats, the format is:
UK + 6-digit mark + (up to) 6-digit individual number.

5.1 Buy your identifiers

You can order them using your CPH number and flock/herd mark. The ID numbers printed on them are allocated from the GB Ear Tag Allocation System (ETAS) to suppliers of approved identifiers. You can find a list of suppliers and their approved products on the RPA website at www.rpa.gov.uk, or phone their Livestock ID Helpline on ☎ 0845 050 9876.

5.2 Clearly separate any management information added to identifiers

You can put management information on identifiers, as long as it is clearly separate from the official mark, which must be readable at all times. You must not add the letters 'UK' or the flock/herd mark to separate management tags. Management tags must not be yellow, black or red.

5.3 Remove or replace damaged or lost tags

You must remove and replace any damaged or lost tags, including EID tags that you know cannot be scanned. You must replace damaged and lost tags within 28 days of finding out. You can take a tag off if there is an infection. You must put on a replacement tag once the problem has cleared up.

If you have an animal intended for slaughter that you decide you want to keep for longer than 12 months, you must upgrade its slaughter tag to full EID for a sheep, or to a pair of non-EID tags, or a full EID pair for a goat. You must retag by 12 months of age. If you want to do this off the birth holding, you can only do so if you can fully trace the individual lamb or kid back to its holding of birth.

See the table on the last page for a summary of the replacement rules.

6. Keep your holding register up to date

As a keeper, you must maintain a register for each of your holdings to record:

- keeper and holding details
- the tags you apply, with
  - the flock/herd mark for slaughter lambs, and the individual number for animals individually identified from 2010
  - the date you applied the tag(s)
  - if the animals were born on your holding, the year of birth
  - the breed and genotype if you know them
- any replacement tags you apply, with
  - the flock/herd mark for slaughter lambs, and the individual number for other animals
  - the date you applied the tag(s)
  - previous or surviving identifier details if you know them
- all on- and off-movements
- any deaths
- an annual inventory count (as at 1 December each year)

You must keep the register for 3 years after the last animal in it has left the holding. As the keeper, you're responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the information in your register even when it is given to you to use or added to your electronic register automatically by someone else or another organisation (for example if you accept downloads to an electronic register).

6.1 Record ID information in your holding register

For slaughter animals: record their flock/herd marks when:

- you tag them
  - either as a minimum batch record (e.g. UK 244220 x 25)
  - or if they have EID tags and you have a list of the full number(s) scanned from their tags, you may record the full number encoded in the tag (and record that it was a slaughter-tagged animal).
- an animal dies on your holding
- you move them into or outside your farm business or keepership
  - for a batch of slaughter animals with a mix of different flock/herd marks:
    - either record each different flock/herd mark and how many have that mark. This is often called 'batch-within-batch recording' or 'mixed-batch recording'
    - or if they have EID tags and you have a list of the full number(s) scanned from their tags, you may record the full numbers encoded in the tag (and record that they were slaughter-tagged animals)

For breeding sheep: record their full tag numbers when:

- they're tagged (this can be sequentially e.g. UK-0-244220-00125 to 00150)
- any have died on your holding
- you move them into or outside your farm business or keepership
- you can, however, batch record them when they move if:
  — you're still their keeper at the destination holding
  — you move them to a Central Point Recording Centre (CPRC) that will record their tag numbers for you

Three ways you can record tag numbers in your holding register:		
Type of recording	**What information must be recorded**	**For which animals**
Batch	Record the total number only.	• Slaughter lambs and kids • Animals tagged before 2010
Mixed batch	Each flock/herd mark present eg UK 244220 (x 24) eg UK 123456 (x 26) Total 50	Slaughter lambs and kids that have different flock or herd marks.
Individual	Each individual ID: Sheep: eg UK-0-244220-00005 (1) Goats: eg UK-123456-043 to 047 (5)	• Any animal with full EID since 2010 • Goats tagged since 2010

6.2 Record moves in your holding register

When you move an animal on or off your holding, you must:

- make sure it is correctly identified
- record the move in the on or off section of the holding register

6.2.1 For moves within your farm business:

If you're still the keeper of the animals
and   The land you move the animals to has the same CPH and is within 5 miles of your main holding as the crow flies – you don't need to record the move.   **or**   The land you move them to has a different CPH number* – you can record just the total number (batch) of animals moved. (You don't have to record the mix of flock marks, or individual tag numbers).   **or**   The land you move them to has a different CPH number but is adjacent – record the frequency of the moves between the two CPHs in your register (without reporting the move) if the moves are: frequent, and on foot only, and there is no contact with other livestock.   (Examples are: 'through gate' moves into a neighbour's field that you have permission to graze, or moves across a road to a different CPH.)
* For a sheep holding, land beyond 5 miles of the main holding as the crow flies should have its own CPH number.

If you're not the keeper of the animals after they move and they're:	
Slaughter animals	Record total moved + the mix of flock/herd marks (or the numbers from the EID chips).
Full EID animals Double-tagged goats	Record each individual tag number.
Animals tagged before 2010	Record total number of animals only. (See 'Report moves' for what you have to include in movement documents from 1 January 2015.)

6.2.2 For moves out of your farm business – for example, to a farm, market or abattoir

Slaughter animals		
Type of flock marks	**Holding register**	
One flock mark only	Batch record	Within 36 hours
Different flock marks	Mixed-batch record	

Full EID animals and goats double-tagged after 31 December 2009	
Type of ID number	**Holding register**
Full EID	Each individual number and within 36 hours
Double-tagged goats	
If you move (EID) animals to a CPRC and use their tag-reading service, you can enter the move as a batch in the holding register and on the movement document. Then add the numbers the CPRC sends back to you. You must do this within 48 hours. (See 'Report moves'.)	

Animals tagged before 2010	
Date	**Holding register**
Up to 31 December 2014	Batch record
From 1 January 2015:	
Direct to slaughter	Batch record
All other moves	(See 'Report moves' for what you have to include in movement documents from 1 January 2015)

6.3 Moves to and from common land

You must record in your holding register, and report your animals' moves.

If your holding shares a border with a (registered) common, you can apply to have your holding linked to it on Defra's Animal Movement Licensing System (AMLS) database. This means that you will not have to update your holding register or fill in a movement document every time your animals move directly between your holding and that linked common. To apply to have your holding linked, phone the Defra helpline on ☎ 08459 33 55 77 and give them all the relevant details of your CPH and the common.

6.4 Annual inventory

You must record in your holding register the inventory of the sheep and goats on your holding as at 1 December of each year. Defra will send you a form in November that you must return by 31 December.

6.5 Available types of register

a) Defra paper register

Defra has produced a model holding register. Copies are available by calling our helpline on (☎ 08459 33 55 77), quote reference PB13281.

b) ARAMS electronic register

From 1 April 2014 you can use the ARAMS' free electronic holding register if you also use that service to report moves. If you're not already using farm management software to keep an electronic register (see below) Defra would strongly recommend that you try this out.

When you move animals to or from a premises that is also using ARAMS and electronically reading the tags, the service can automatically fill in the off- or on-movements section of your electronic register with EID tag numbers.

If you have received a paper movement document from another keeper with individual tag numbers, you can enter them yourself into your electronic register (at no cost) or ask ARAMS to do it (but there will be a charge).

c) Farm management software

You can also use a commercial farm management package (FMP) to keep an electronic register.

7. Report moves

From 1 April 2014 you must report all moves that take place from that date via the new Animal Reporting and Movements Service (ARAMS) (www.arams.co.uk). The service is operated for Defra by SouthWestern Business Process Services (UK) Limited ('SouthWestern').

If you use a farm management package it will be able to automatically report sheep and goat movements to the ARAMS database (contact your software supplier for more details).

If you have access to the internet, and you're not already using farm management software to report moves, then the ARAMS website will be the easiest way for you to report moves.

The ARAMS website has a user guide. You can also ring the ARAMS helpline (☎ 0844 573 0137, Monday to Saturday, 8am to 8pm) to help you register for and use the system.

If you're the sending keeper, you must provide the following documents:

Electronically, via the ARAMS database:

- register an account on the website: www.arams.co.uk
- set up the movement online
- pre-populate a movement document (ARAMS-1) with tag details – if required (see table below)
- print (up to) 3 copies – 1 for the haulier and 2 for the receiving keeper.
  - however, you don't have to give printouts to the haulier if you can give them an electronic copy and they can print it out if it is needed (by an inspector during the journey or by the receiving keeper)
  - you don't have to print copies for the receiving keeper if they have an ARAMS account (as they can confirm receipt electronically).

If the off-move or receipt is electronic, you don't need to sign the relevant section(s) of the movement document.

Or on paper:

- obtain a quadruplicate ARAMS-1 form (from markets, abattoirs, or print it out from the ARAMS website).
- fill it in and sign it. Keep 1 copy for yourself, and give 3 copies to the haulier so that they can keep 1 and give 2 to the receiving keeper

Record the haulier details and the departure and destination addresses on the movement document. Add the animals' details as shown below.

Animal tag details to enter on the movement document		
If identified	From 1 April 2014	From 1 January 2015
Before 2010	Total number of animals only.	Total number of animals only if moving direct to slaughter. Individual tag numbers if not moving direct to slaughter.
From 2010	Individual tag numbers.	
Slaughter animal	Batch or mixed batch, with the total for each flock/herd mark if you have scanned tag data. (Alternatively, individual numbers from the chip if EID tagged.)	
Moving to a CPRC	Total	
Moving within your business	Total, if you remain the keeper.	

If you make a mistake with any of the details you enter on the movement document, contact ARAMS via their website or by phone on ☎ 0844 573 0137.

If you're the receiving keeper, you must report the movement of animals on to your holding within 3 days of receiving them.

When you receive a paper copy of the ARAMS-1 movement form, confirm receipt by

- entering the movement details online through your ARAMS account (or through your farm management software). If the move was set up electronically, this will be by a click on screen, or
- sending a copy of the form to the SouthWestern address on the form

For moves that take place from 1 April 2014 please don't send movement forms to your Local Authority Trading Standards department.

If you have an ARAMS account and the move is fully electronic (in other words, you don't receive a paper movement document), you confirm the move with a click on screen on your account.

You don't have to report the move if:

- you're still the keeper of the animals and you move them to land with the same CPH number
- you're moving animals to common land that is adjacent to your holding and you have registered it as linked to your holding. To apply to have your holding linked to an adjacent common, contact the Defra helpline on ☎ 08459 33 55 77.
- you move the animals frequently, on foot, to or from adjacent land with a different CPH that is not used by other livestock.
- you take an animal to a vet's

7.1 Central Point Recording Centres (CPRCs)

Many livestock markets and abattoirs provide a (commercial) CPRC service to keepers. Before you use the service, check the market or abattoir you're using is an approved CPRC.

If you tick the CPRC box on the off-farm movement document, the CPRC will scan your animals' EID tags and provide you with a list to keep with your holding register and movement records.

You must update your holding register with the list of tag numbers the CPRC gives you within 48 hours of the animals leaving your holding. It is your responsibility to check that the list is accurate (in other words, 100% of the EID animals are on the list the CPRC gives you).

8. Observe standstill restrictions

Once sheep and goats arrive on a holding, all livestock on it is under a standstill to help reduce the risk of spreading disease. This means that all sheep, goats, cattle and pigs have to stay on that holding for 6 days afterwards. So sheep moved onto a holding on a Monday would not be clear to move off that holding until the following Monday.

If you have an AHVLA approved sole occupancy authority (SOA), in other words, a group of holdings with different CPH numbers within your sole management and control, the standstill rules don't apply for moves between the CPHs in your SOA.

However, you must still record and report any movements to, from or within it.

If you move animals into any part of your SOA from outside the SOA then a standstill will be triggered on the whole of your SOA.

Since July 2012, Defra has not issued any new SOAs, and has not added any premises to existing SOAs.

9. Export and import rules

Before exporting animals to Northern Ireland, another EU member state, or to a non-EU country, double-tag them with full EID. You can find out more on the export/import section of AHVLA web pages.

You must not re-identify animals imported from another EU member state.

If you import animals from a non-EU country, you must replace their tags with a red UK pair within 14 days of them arriving on your holding. Cross-reference the old/new tag numbers in your holding register.

Animals cannot be exported from or imported to common land.

10. Sheep and goat ID inspections

The RPA inspects 3% of holdings each year under the cross-compliance regime. Other bodies, such as Animal Health and Local Authorities, also carry out inspections.

You can find out what is involved at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farm-inspections.

You can also phone the RPA livestock ID helpline on ☎ 0845 050 9876 for information on inspections.

Replacement rules for lost, damaged or illegible tags

Age	Tag Type	Replacement Options	On Holding of Birth		Not on Holding of Birth	
			Tag colour	**Holding register**	**Tag colour**	**Holding register**
	Illegible includes EID tags that don't scan: replace within 28 days of discovery, or before leaving the holding if sooner. Note in holding register. Cross-reference in certain circumstances →		Yellow, red and black are reserved colours	Cross-reference?	Yellow, red and black are reserved colours	Cross-reference?
Older than 12 months	Full EID (2 identifiers, including an EID)	**One lost:** Replace with new tag with same number as lost tag ('replica'). (Only option for bolus or tattoo) or	EID tag (yellow) Bolus match-up tag (black) Conventional tag (non-reserved colour)	No*	**Red if** EID or conventional tag (Not red if a replica) **Black if** match-up ear tag for sheep or goat with a bolus or goat with injectable	No*
		Remove remaining tag. Replace with a new pair with new tag number.		Yes		Yes
		Both lost: New pair. Same number as lost pair (replica) or		No*		No*
		New pair with new tag number.		Yes (if old number known)		Yes (if old number known)
For slaughter (under 12 months)	Single ear tag	Conventional ear tag (not allowed from 2015 for lambs) or	Non-reserved colour	Record in replacement section	Red	Yes (if number known)
		Electronic ear tag	Yellow			
Tagged before 2010 (the 'historic flock')	Two ear tags	Full EID – new pair. Recommended by industry and Defra because from 2015 the historic flock **must** be individually recorded on movement documents for moves out of business (this is only practical with EID).	As above (for new pair with new tag number)			

* If you're replacing a lost tag with a replica you should still record the date of replacement and the tag number.

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