

ELECTRONIC IDENTIFICATION (EID) OF SHEEP.

New rules are being introduced on the 31st of December 2009 that require breeding sheep to be electronically identified and sheep and goats to be recorded on an individual basis.

ALL LAMBS BORN ON OR AFTER THE 31ST OF DECEMBER 2009:

- that are retained as flock replacements or sold for breeding will require **full EID** – one visual identifier and one electronic identifier.
- lambs intended for slaughter in the UK **before reaching 12 months of age** can be identified with a single (conventional or electronic) batch slaughter tag, displaying UK and flock number only, or with full EID.
- store and finished hoggets intended for slaughter in a UK abattoir but kept **beyond 12 months of age** will also require **full EID**.
- individual recording of identifier information for lambs **born on or after 31st December 2009** will be required in holding registers (flock record) immediately and on movement licences from 1st January 2011.

What is Electronic Identification (EID)?

EID makes use of radio frequency microchip that can be read by a handheld or static reader. The microchip is inserted in an ear tag, in a bolus or in a pastern mark.

Will I need an EID Reader and/or a computer?

No, the Regulatory requirement is to record the identity for every sheep or goat born on or after the 31st of December 2009. Wales' implementation and third party recording will allow most keepers to continue with paper records, if preferred.

There is therefore, no requirement to purchase reading equipment, a computer or to keep records electronically, although some keepers may find this of benefit to their farming business.

Slaughter Derogation.

Lambs intended for slaughter in a UK abattoir at less than 12 months of age can be identified with a single (conventional or electronic) batch slaughter tag, displaying UK and flock number only, or with full EID. The single batch tag can be a conventional tag or an electronic slaughter tag.

Not all lambs move from their holding of birth to slaughter. Each keeper is advised to consider which type of slaughter tag best suits their business.

Third party recording.

Third party recording allows Central Point Recording Centres, such as markets and abattoirs to read identifiers onto their premises and to provide a list of individual numbers within 48 hours of the sheep moving off the holding of departure.

What are the important dates?

From 31 st December 2009.	Identification. Apply two identical ear tags (or bolus/tattoo), one of which is electronic to all breeding sheep born on or after this date. Lambs intended for slaughter in the UK before reaching 12 months of age could be identified with either: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A single conventional slaughter tag• A single electronic slaughter tag• Or with full EID. Sheep born before the 31 st of December 2009 do not need electronic identifiers but some keepers may choose to do so. Holding Register/Flock Record. Record the identity for all lambs born on or after 31 st of December 2009.
From 1 st January 2011.	Movement Licence/Document. Sheep or goats born on or after the 31 st of December 2009 must have their individual tag details included on movement documents. For full EID this is the individual identity and for slaughter tags it will be batch information only, i.e. the number of lambs within each flock number.
From 31 st December 2011.	Movement Licence/Document. Sheep or goats born before the 31 st of December 2009 must have their individual tag information included on movement documents unless moving to slaughter (direct, via market or through a collection centre).

Replacement system.

Sheep lose tags for a variety of reasons, from 2010 keepers will have a choice of:-

- Replacing with the same number (like for like).
- Removing the remaining tag of a double tagged sheep, replace with a new set of identifiers and cross reference in your holding register (different number).

Lambs born on or after the 31st of December 2009 must have EID replacements unless using a conventional batch tag under the slaughter derogation. A keeper can decide whether to voluntarily use EID replacement tags for sheep born before the 31st of December 2009.

More detailed instructions will be provide in the 'Guidance for Keepers Bookelt' being published in December 2009.

Tag Colours.

Yellow, red and black will be reserved for official purposes from 31st December 2009.-

- Yellow will indicate the electronic tag.
- Red – replacement tags for animals not on their holding of birth.
- Black must be used when a bolus is the EID device.