

SCRAPIE DISEASE

A deadly disease of

Sheep and goats

We need animals to be

Officially Identified

USDA offers producers

Free Official Ear Tags



**To Get Your Supply of
Free**

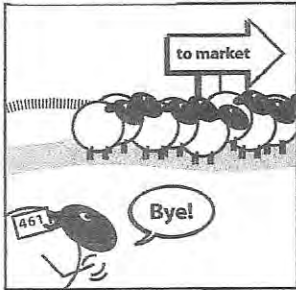
Official Tags

Complete the attached Tag Order Form

Questions? Please call 1-866-873-2824

How to Comply with the Scrapie Eradication Program

Step 1



Determine which of your sheep or goats need official ear tags or other official ID to move within New York and from state to state.

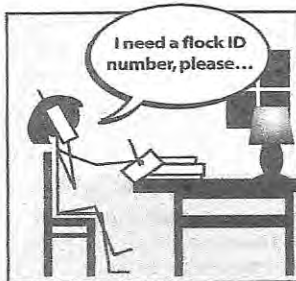
It is the producer's responsibility to make sure that their sheep and goats are "officially identified".



Sheep and Goats Required to be USDA "officially identified":

- Sheep and goats of any age being sold for breeding or as a pet.
- All sheep and goats being exhibited.
- All sheep and goats (wethers included), over 18 months old, in slaughter channels. This includes animals going to a livestock market or directly to a slaughter plant.
- Any lamb or kid, under 18 months that is being consigned to a livestock market.

Step 2



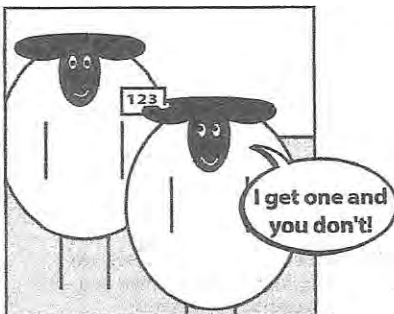
Complete the enclosed Identification Tag request form. This will assign you a flock identification number and provide you with free ear tags.

Complete the enclosed Identification Tag Request Form and mail it to:

USDA, APHIS, VS
500 New Karner Rd
2nd Floor
Albany, NY 12205

Or, Fax it to: (518) 218-7545

Step 3



Determine which of the approved ear tags or other approved ID systems will work best for you.

Metal ear tags are free from USDA, Veterinary Services. All tags ordered will be metal..

1. Other tag types (bangle, button, etc.) are available if paid for by the producer.

Order from an approved tag company where you would pay for the tags

- Hasco Tag Company (859) 261-6000
 - Premier Sheep Supplies, Ltd. (800) 282-6631
 - Allflex USA 1-800-989-8247
 - National Brand and Tag Company (606) 261-2035
2. Tattoos: Registration tattoos or premises number plus individual animal number tattoos.
 - Tattoos should be placed in the ears.
 - LaMancha goats may be tattooed in the tail web.
 - Goat registry tattoos may be used as premises ID, as long as the goat is accompanied by it's registration papers.
 3. Flocks or herds enrolled in the Scrapie Flock Certification Program should continue to use the types of ID approved for that program.

Step 4



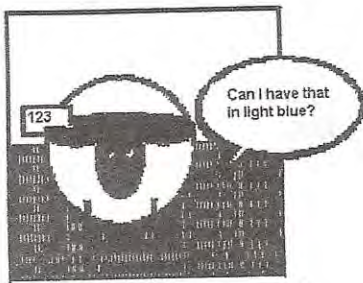
Set up a method to record the ear tags or other official ID that is applied.

Record Keeping Methods

- Notebook
- Computerized Records
- Whatever works for you as long as you can identify which tag went on which animal.

If an animal loses a tag, it may be re-tagged. Keep a record of the old tag number, the new tag number, and when the new tag was applied.

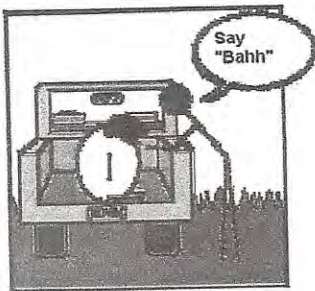
Step 5



Identify the animals before they leave your premises.

All sheep and goats (as listed in Step 1 above) will need to be identified to their flock of birth. If the animal was not born in your flock/herd, record what tag was applied, when the animal entered your flock and where it came from. If you know the flock of birth, record the flock name, address, and telephone number.

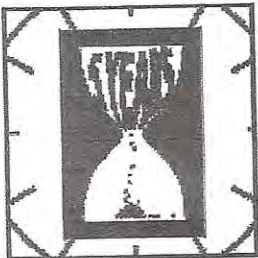
Step 6



Get a health certificate from an accredited veterinarian prior to interstate shipment or sale into interstate commerce of animals for breeding or exhibition.

The health certificate must show the animal's official identification number, including premises/flock number and individual animal number. This might be an official ear tag, official tattoo, or registration tattoo.

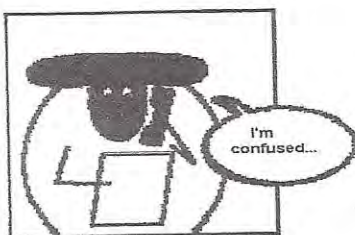
Step 7



Retain records for at least 5 years from the date you have applied USDA official ID to the animal.

The incubation period for Scrapie can be as long as five years from the exposure. Keep records of animals you buy and sell, including official identification, dates, names and address information for the animal's origin or destination for at least 5 years. You should keep records of where every animal in your flock was born.

Step 8



For more information, call toll-free: 1-866-873-2824.

You may also call the USDA, Veterinary Services, New York Area Office at (518) 218-7540. The above information should cover most sheep/goat producers and zoos in New York. There are always exceptions. Please contact the Area Office if you need more detailed information.

USDA APHIS VS
Scrapie Program
New York State
1-866-873-2824

Scrapie

Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of sheep and goats. It is among a number of diseases classified as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE). Infected flocks that contain a high percentage of susceptible animals can experience significant production losses. Over a period of several years the number of infected animals increases, and the age at onset of clinical signs decreases making these flocks economically unviable. Female animals sold from infected flocks spread scrapie to other flocks. The presence of scrapie in the United States also prevents the export of breeding stock, semen, and embryos to many other countries. TSEs are the subject of increased attention and concern because of the discovery of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle, the link between BSE and variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) in people, and feline spongiform encephalopathy (FSE) in cats in Europe. This increased concern has led to the following:

- Packers and producers have had difficulty finding options for disposal of sheep offal and dead sheep causing packers and producers to incur significant increases in disposal costs,
- Other countries have expressed concerns and have indicated that they may prohibit or restrict certain ruminant products because the United States has scrapie, and
- Domestic and international markets for U.S. sheep-derived meat and bone meal have been adversely affected.

The combination of all of these factors has led to the decision to develop a strong scrapie eradication program in the United States.

Epidemiology and Transmission

The agent responsible for scrapie and other TSEs is smaller than the smallest known virus and has not been completely characterized. There are three main theories on the nature of the scrapie agent: (1) the agent is a prion, which is an abnormal form of a normal cellular protein, (2) the agent is a virus with unusual characteristics, and (3) the agent is a virino, a very small piece of DNA that acts like a virus. The scrapie agent is extremely resistant to heat and to normal sterilization processes. It does not evoke any detectable immune response or inflammatory reaction in sheep and goats.

The scrapie agent is thought to be spread most commonly from the ewe to her offspring and to other lambs through contact with the placenta and placental fluids. Signs or effects of the disease usually appear 2 to 5 years after the animal is infected but may not appear until much later. Sheep may live 1 to 6 months or longer after the onset of clinical signs, but death is inevitable. The genetics of the sheep affects their susceptibility to scrapie.

In the laboratory, the scrapie agent has been transmitted to hamsters, mice, rats, voles, gerbils, mink, cattle, and some species of monkeys by inoculation. There is no scientific evidence to indicate that scrapie poses a risk to human health. There is no epidemiologic evidence that scrapie of sheep and goats is transmitted to humans, such as through contact on the farm, at slaughter plants, or butcher shops.

Clinical Signs

Signs of scrapie vary widely among individual animals and develop very slowly. Due to damage to nerve cells, affected animals usually show behavioral changes, tremor (especially of head and neck), rubbing, and locomotor incoordination that progresses to recumbency and death.

Early signs include subtle changes in behavior or temperament. These changes may be followed by scratching and rubbing against fixed objects, apparently to relieve itching. Other signs are loss of coordination, weakness, weight loss despite retention of appetite, biting of feet and limbs, lip smacking, and gait abnormalities, including high-stepping of the forelegs, hopping like a rabbit, and swaying of the back end.

An infected animal may appear normal if left undisturbed at rest. However, when stimulated by a sudden noise, excessive movement, or the stress of handling, the animal may tremble or fall down in a convulsive-like state.

Several other problems can cause clinical signs similar to scrapie in sheep, including the diseases ovine progressive pneumonia, listeriosis, and rabies; the presence of external parasites (lice and mites); pregnancy toxemia; and toxins.

On the farm, veterinarians diagnose scrapie based on the appearance of its signs combined with knowledge of the animal's history. Scrapie can be diagnosed in the live animal by biopsy of the lymphoid tissues on the inside of the third eyelid. This test is used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

(APHIS) to determine whether exposed flocks are infected. Scrapie is most often diagnosed by microscopic examinations of brain tissue at necropsy or by procedures that detect the presence of the abnormal prion protein in brain tissue.

Research

Scrapie research efforts are currently focused on developing more practical live-animal tests to diagnose infected sheep before they show signs, investigating transmissibility of the agent, identifying the scrapie agent and its different strains, identifying genes that influence scrapie infection and evaluating genetic selection as a tool for scrapie eradication. Substantial evidence has accrued to show that the risk of scrapie transmission by embryo's is negligible provided that the embryos are properly handled between collection and transfer, but additional experimental data are needed to support existing evidence.

Related Diseases

The TSE family of diseases includes BSE: transmissible mink encephalopathy; FSE; chronic wasting disease of deer and elk; kuru; both classical and variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease; Gerstmann-Straussler-Scheinker syndrome; and fatal familial insomnia. TSEs have also been reported in Europe in captive wild ruminants in the bovid family, cats, and monkeys. The occurrence of TSEs in captive wild animals is believed to have resulted from BSE-contaminated feed.

Eradication Program

USDA has initiated an accelerated scrapie eradication program. The program is based on the following key concepts:

- Identification of preclinical infected sheep through live animal testing and active slaughter surveillance,
- Effective tracing of infected animals to their flock/herd of origin made possible as a result of the identification requirements, and
- Providing effective genetic based flock cleanup strategies that will allow producers to stay in business, preserve breeding stock, and remain economically viable. APHIS provide the following to exposed and infected flocks/herds that participate in cleanup or monitoring plans:
 1. Indemnity for high-risk, suspect, and scrapie positive sheep and goats, which owners agree to destroy,
 2. Scrapie live-animal testing,
 3. Genetic testing, and
 4. Testing of exposed animals that have been sold out of infected and source flocks/herds.

Operating an effective program to deal with this insidious disease requires cooperation among producer organizations, allied industries, and governmental agencies.

History

First recognized as a disease of sheep in Great Britain and other countries of Western Europe more than 250 years ago, scrapie has been reported throughout the world. Only two countries are recognized by the United States as being free of scrapie: Australia and New Zealand.

The first case of scrapie in the United States was diagnosed in 1947 in a Michigan flock. The flock owner had imported sheep of British origin through Canada for several years. APHIS conducted a slaughter surveillance study from April 1, 2002, to March 31, 2003, which determined the prevalence of scrapie in mature U.S. cull sheep to be 0.2 percent or one positive out of 500 cull sheep.

In the United States, scrapie has primarily been reported in the Suffolk breed. It also has been diagnosed in a Border Leicester, Cheviots, Corriedales, a Cotswold, Dorsets, Finn sheep, Hampshires, Merinos, Montadales, Rambouillets, Shropshires, Southdowns, and a number of crossbreeds. Through October 2003, approximately 2,350 cases in sheep and 12 cases in goats have been reported.

Additional Information

For more information about scrapie, contact your local APHIS, Veterinary Services, area office or contact:

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services
National Animal Health Programs
4700 River Road, Unit 43
Riverdale, MD 20737-1231
Telephone (301) 734-6954
Fax (301) 734-7964

Current information on animal diseases and suspected outbreaks is also available on the Internet.

Point your Web browser to <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/naahps/scrapie/> to reach the APHIS scrapie home page.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Factsheet

National Scrapie Eradication Program: Animal Identification and Recordkeeping Guide for Sheep and Goats

Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of sheep and goats. There is no cure or treatment for scrapie.

The National Scrapie Eradication Program, coordinated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), has reduced the prevalence of scrapie in adult sheep sampled at slaughter by over 99 percent. However, the cooperation of sheep and goat producers is needed to find and eliminate the last few cases in the United States.

Producers are required to follow Federal and State regulations for officially identifying their sheep and goats. Producers must also keep herd records, showing what new animals were added and what animals left the herd/flock. This guide helps producers follow the regulations.

Animals Requiring Identification

The animals listed below are required by Federal* and/or State regulations to be identified as part of the National Scrapie Eradication Program when they move between states as part of interstate commerce or if ownership changes. Some states have ID requirements which are stricter than the federal requirements, so the exceptions listed below do not apply in all states. For information on each State's identification and movement requirements, contact the State Veterinarian's office.

Sheep

- All sheep, EXCEPT
 - Sheep under 18 months of age in slaughter channels
 - Castrated sheep under 18 months of age

Goats

- All goats, EXCEPT
 - Low-risk commercial goats** exempted by the State in which they reside
 - Goats in slaughter channels
 - Castrated goats

*For more details on exemptions to the Federal sheep and goat identification requirements, review the regulation at www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/scrapie

**The definition of a low-risk commercial goat is: a goat that is raised for fiber and/or meat; is not registered or exhibited; has not been exposed to sheep; is not scrapie-positive, scrapie-exposed, or high-risk for scrapie; is not from a scrapie-infected or source herd; and does not reside in California, Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, or Michigan.

Official Identification

Official identification devices, including ear tags and injectable transponders, must be approved by APHIS as being sufficiently tamper-resistant for the intended use, have good retention, and provide a unique identification number for each animal.

An owner may substitute tattooing for an official identification device under certain criteria, which are explained in the “Tattooing” section on the next page.

Obtaining Official Tags

APHIS provides official metal ear tags free of charge to producers. Producers may request free tags by calling 866-USDA-TAG (873-2824). For registered herds, please provide the herd’s registration prefix and ask that it be used as your scrapie flock/herd identification number, along with your postal abbreviation. In addition, producers may purchase tags directly from approved manufacturers to fit their needs. See the “Approved Tag Manufacturers” section below for more information.

All official National Scrapie Eradication Program identification tags have the U.S. shield printed on them.

Tips for Tagging

- 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.
- The preferred placement for ear tags is in the left ear to aid in shearing.

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 the APHIS Veterinary Services District Field Office for your State. Locations for field offices can be found online at: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/contact-us>

Approved Tag Manufacturers

APHIS has approved several companies to manufacture and sell official devices, including tags and injectable transponders. Producers should consider the different devices available—including metal or plastic tags, radio frequency identification (RFID) tags, RFID implants (allowed only for use in [Scrapie Flock Certification Program](#) or in registered animals)—and choose what works best for them. For the list of approved tag manufacturers, visit www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/scrapie (click on “Sheep and Goat Identification”).

Tattooing

Registered animals may be identified with a registration tattoo instead of a tag, as long as the animal is accompanied by a copy of the registration certificate listing the current owner or the registration certificate and a completed transfer of ownership form dated within 30 days that lists the current owner.

In addition, the flock identification number assigned by APHIS may be tattooed (along with an individual animal number) to officially identify sheep or goats that are not registered. If you have a registered herd prefix, you may request that APHIS assign it as part of your flock identification number.

Owners must ensure the legibility of tattoos. Owners should also be prepared to assist with the tattoo reading process, including using a flashlight or other light source to assist with reading when animals are inspected.

Recordkeeping

Records must be kept for 5 years after the animal is sold or otherwise disposed. Ideally, producers should keep records in an electronic format, such as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. You must record the following information:

- official identification number***
- breed
- sex
- date official identification was applied
- date animal was acquired or year of birth if natural addition
- name/address of previous owner (if applicable)
- date sold
- name/address of buyer

***The official identification number is the complete number on the official USDA sheep/goat tag, official tattoo, or approved RFID device. If selling a group of animals that are tagged with sequential numbers, it is acceptable to list the first and last number in the series, rather than each individual number.

More Information

For more information about scrapie or the National Scrapie Eradication Program, please visit the following Web sites:

- **USDA APHIS** www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/scrapie
- **National Institute for Animal Agriculture** www.eradicatescrapie.org
- **American Sheep Industry Association** www.sheepusa.org
- **American Goat Federation Web site** www.americangoatfederation.org

If you have questions, contact the APHIS Veterinary Services District Field Office for your State (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/contact-us>) or your State animal health office (http://www.usaha.org/upload/Federal%20and%20State%20Health/StateAnimalHealthOfficials_rev.pdf).



**USDA Identification Tag Request
Form for Sheep and Goats**
(Metal Tags are free; Applicator NOT included)



NOTE: Please allow at least 3 weeks for processing.

We must have the information below in order to assign your official Flock ID, before you are able to order official tags--either free metal tags from USDA, or other official plastic tags of your choice at your expense.

You are responsible for obtaining a proper tag applicator at your expense.

Owner's Name: _____

Physical Address of Animals (911 address): _____

City: _____, New York Zip code: _____

County: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Operation type (example: breeding, show, dealer, market, etc.): _____

Number of sheep and primary breed: _____

Number of goats and primary breed: _____

Number of tags requested (Request enough tags for three years): (circle one) 100 200 400 500 1,000

OR check this box if you will purchase other non-metal official tags

Premise I.D. Number/Scrapie Flock I.D. Number: (For Repeat Orders) _____

By completing and signing this form, I certify that I will maintain custody of the tags and keep records of all animals tagged for five years.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

My sheep & goats are identified with a registered tattoo. My tattoo is _____

Mail this form to: USDA – APHIS – VS, 500 New Karner Road, 2nd Floor, Albany, NY 12205

Or Fax this form to: 518-218-7545

Or Call Toll Free: 1-866-USDA-TAGS (1-866-873-2824)

Metal Tag Applicator Information: Tag Applicators (Model 505S) can be purchased through:

National Band & Tag Company
721 York St., P.O. Box 72430, Newport, KY 41072-0430, USA
Phone: (859) 261-2035 Fax: (859) 261-8247
E-mail: tags@nationalband.com
Web address: <https://nationalband.com/products/style-505/>