

# Cattle identification and registration

The aim of these rules is to maintain a system for the identification and registration of cattle to make possible their traceability, in particular in the event of a disease outbreak.

## A. You must

### Tagging

1. tag all calves born on your holding, or cattle imported from outside the European Union (EU)<sup>1</sup>, with Defra approved eartags<sup>2</sup> within the following timescales:
  - dairy calves – with one eartag within 36 hours of birth and with the second eartag within 20 days of birth;
  - bison calves – within 9 months of birth or when they are separated from their mother if this is earlier;
  - other calves – within 20 days of birth;
  - all animals leaving your holding – with both tags before they leave;
  - cattle imported from outside the EU – within 20 days of release from import checks;
2. replace illegible or lost eartags within 28 days of noticing the loss<sup>3</sup>;



### Passports and registration

3. register cattle born on your holding no later than 27 days after birth (7 days for bison) by making an application for a passport from the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) through an approved channel<sup>4</sup>;
4. register cattle imported from within the EU, but outside Great Britain, within 15 days of its arrival on your holding by sending the foreign passport/movement document to BCMS and making an application for a passport;
5. register cattle imported from outside the EU within 15 days of tagging the animal and no later than 35 days from its release from import checks by making an application for a passport from BCMS;
6. produce a signed and valid passport for every animal in your care on request;
7. make sure that when cattle are moved off your holding<sup>5</sup> they are accompanied with their valid passport, properly completed and signed;

1 Cattle imported from within the EU must keep their original identification.

2 Eartags should be applied one in each ear and bear the same unique identification code. You can get these from the manufacturers listed on our website.

3 Replacement eartags should bear the same number if cattle were born after 1 January 1998. For older cattle a new tag number may be used and a new passport requested.

4 Approved channels are, a pre-printed application form, CTS online, CTS Web Services or CTS Self Service Line.

5 This includes (but not exclusively) moving to another farm, market, collection centre, export assembly centre, abattoir or showground.

## Notification of movements and deaths



8. notify BCMS through an approved channel<sup>6</sup>; of any movements of cattle on to and off your holding within 3 days of the movement;



9. notify BCMS through an approved channel<sup>7</sup>; of any cattle deaths on your holding within 7 days of the date of death. You must also complete the death details in the passport or certificate of registration and return them and any other official identification documents within 7 days of the date of death;

10. notify BCMS by returning the passport of any lost or stolen animal within 7 days of becoming aware of the loss or theft.

## On-farm records (herd register)



11. Keep on-farm records for your holding, which include the following appropriate details for each animal:

- official eartag number;
- dam's official eartag number;
- date of birth;
- sex;
- date of movements on and off your holding;
- details of where the animal has moved to or from;
- breed;
- date of death;

12. complete the herd register within the following timescales:

- movements – 36 hours of them taking place;
- birth of a dairy calf – 7 days;
- birth of any other calf – 30 days;
- a death – 7 days;
- eartag replacement where the eartag number is changed – 36 hours of the replacement;

13. make sure that these on-farm records are up to date, kept for at least 10 years from the date of the last entry and are available on request to an inspector.

<sup>6</sup> Approved channels are CTS Online, CTS Web Services, CTS Self Service Line, through an Agent or by Movement Card (if applicable).

<sup>7</sup> Approved channels are CTS Online, CTS Web Services, CTS Self Service Line, through an Agent or Death Details section of the passport.

## B. You must not

### Tagging

1. remove or replace eartags without permission from Defra (obtained through BCMS), except when replacing lost or illegible tags;
2. alter, obliterate or deface an eartag;

### Passports and registration

3. alter or deface a cattle passport.




### Further advice and guidance

The *Cattle Keeper's Handbook* published by BCMS gives full guidance on how to comply with the cattle identification rules.

BCMS e-mail: [enquiries@bcms.rpa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bcms.rpa.gsi.gov.uk)

BCMS Helpline: 0845 050 1234

RPA Livestock Identification Helpline: 0845 050 9876