



Washington
State Department of
Agriculture

USDA ADT RULE REQUIRES ELECTRONIC TAGS FOR CATTLE AND BISON

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) posted in the Federal Register (<https://bit.ly/FedRegEIDtag>), the Animal Disease Traceability Rule to require that eartags applied on or after November 5, 2024 be both visually and electronically readable in order to be recognized for use as official eartags for **interstate** movement of cattle and bison covered under the regulations.



This rule will eliminate the use of metal brite tags, commonly referred to as NUES tags, or any official tag that cannot be electronically read.

What does this mean for you?

This is NOT a new mandatory tagging requirement; the only change is the **type** of tag that can be for regulatory work must be visually and electronically readable for classes of cattle that are already covered under the existing ADT rule (effective 2013).

Are there any exemptions to this rule?

The class of cattle required to have official identification has NOT changed and will remain consistent with current rules.

Cattle that must be identified with official identification when traveling in **interstate commerce** include:

- All sexually intact cattle and bison over 18 months of age,
- All dairy animals of any sex, breed, or age, and
- Cattle and bison of any age used for rodeo, shows, exhibition, and recreational events.

In addition, other official identification exemptions under the existing rule will remain in place including using backtags for direct to slaughter cattle, tagging site exceptions, and out of state cattle moving to an approved livestock market.

If existing cattle have a metal tag, do you have to replace it?

No. Cattle that already have non-electronic official identification, such as a metal brite tag, applied before Nov. 5, 2024 may continue to use that tag for the span of its life.



How is Washington distributing free tags allocated by USDA?

As a result of the rule, WSDA will no longer be distributing orange metal NUES tags (Figure 1) for brucellosis vaccination. Orange (Figure 2) or White 840 RFID tag (Figure 3) can be used for regulatory work. The silver metal NUES tag can ONLY BE USED on species other than Cattle or Bison.



Are there other changes I should be aware of?

- 1. Update records retention wording.** Records of official identification devices applied by a federally accredited veterinarian to a client animal must be kept in a readily accessible record system. Records must be kept for 2 years for poultry and swine, and 5 years for cattle and bison, sheep, and goats, cervids, and equids.
- 2. Interstate movement, responsibility.** The persons responsible for animals leaving a premises for interstate movement must ensure that the animals are accompanied by an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI) or other document required for the interstate movement of animals. Animals that are required to be officially identified, the official identification must be recorded on the record.
- 3. Dairy cattle definition update.** All cattle, regardless of age or sex or current use, that are of a breed(s) or offspring of a breed used to produce milk or other dairy products for human consumption, including, but not limited to, Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn, and Red and Whites. This is important for the Beef/Dairy or Dairy/Beef cross moving interstate as these cattle will require official electronic identification.

What is Washington's use of 840 RFID tags?

In Washington, over 75% of official tags distributed are the 840 RFID button tag. If you prefer a metal tag, Shearwell has an approved official USDA tag called the Meta tag. This tag has the look and feel of a metal tag but also can be read electronically and can be ordered direct from the manufacturer at <https://www.shearwell.com/>.

If you have any questions about the rule, or need any additional information, please contact David Hecimovich at (360) 725-5493.