



Animal Health Notes

February 20, 2020

Official RFID tags to be supplied by USDA

In October 2019, USDA announced a pause in the timeline for transitioning to RFID tags as the approved official ID for cattle and bison that move interstate. Although the timeline has been put on hold, USDA still plans to move forward in advancing animal disease traceability.

On January 31, 2020, the National Animal Disease Traceability and Veterinary Accreditation Center emailed an [announcement](#) to accredited veterinarians that USDA will begin to offer the option of free orange and white RFID “840” tags for use in cattle and bison as an alternative to the free metal orange and silver official tags.

States will be allotted a limited number of RFID tags in proportion to the annual number of replacement heifers as determined by the National Ag Statistics Service. Orange RFID tags may be used only by accredited veterinarians for brucellosis vaccination. White RFID tags provided by USDA are intended for use in replacement cattle and bison that are not brucellosis vaccinates.

In South Dakota, requests for official RFID tags will be handled using the same protocol that has been in place for requesting official metal tags. Accredited veterinarians may request official RFID or metal tags by contacting the USDA APHIS Veterinary Services office in Pierre, SD (605-224-6186). The tags will be shipped to the veterinarian from the USDA warehouse in Kansas City. The USDA warehouse currently has a limited number of white official RFID tags available for shipment. Orange RFID tags may be available on a limited basis as early as April 2020.

Veterinary clinics receiving official RFID tags must have a national premises identification number (PIN). Please contact the SDAIB (605-773-3321 or aibmail@state.sd.us) if you need a PIN.

Records must be kept of any official tags applied to client animals or redistributed. Please click on the following links for information about official tag distribution and recordkeeping:

- [Official RFID tag distribution](#)
- [Official metal tag distribution](#)

Please feel free to contact the SDAIB if you have any questions or visit the SDAIB website at <https://aib.sd.gov/>.

Private Treaty Change of Ownership

Most large animal or mixed practice veterinarians in South Dakota are familiar with the requirement that bred cows moving to another state be officially identified and listed on a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection prior to movement. Many who have served as auction market veterinarians either currently or in the past are also familiar with the requirement that bred cows selling through public auction must be officially identified and recorded on a “change of ownership” form. This form is then submitted to the Animal Industry Board where the information has proven invaluable in assisting the response of the Board to animal health events such as Bovine Tuberculosis or more historically, Brucellosis.

The rule for these activities can be found in SD Administrative Rule 12:68:29:09, which reads:

12:68:29:09. Identification of breeding cattle and bison in intrastate commerce. All cattle or bison, for breeding purposes and over eighteen months of age, shall have their official identification recorded when a change of ownership occurs. The official identification shall be by official eartag as defined in 9 C.F.R. § 86.1 (January 1, 2018), or by individual animal registration tattoos, if the cattle or bison are registered by breed associations recognized by U.S. Department of Agriculture, APHIS, Veterinary Services. Records of identification must be submitted to the board by a licensed and accredited veterinarian on forms provided by the board.

What many veterinarians and producers in the state do not realize is that this rule also applies to breeding cattle and bison which are sold privately between producers without the involvement of an auction market or, more specifically, the inspecting veterinarian at a market. All breeding animals over 18 months of age should have official identification reported to the AIB. Even though these private sales may not involve a veterinarian directly, at some point, veterinarians are usually called upon to assist with this process. This may be via pregnancy confirmation or normal herd health activities either prior to or after breeding.

Many producers in South Dakota have a thriving business of acquiring and breeding high quality heifers to be sold each spring as replacement stock. Veterinarians are urged to discuss this rule with their clients and assist them in meeting the requirements of 12:68:29:09. If you have questions about the rule or if it applies to the business practices of your clients, feel free to call us at 605-773-3321 for any clarifications that may be needed.