

Animal Disease Traceability: A Guide to Identifying Swine for Interstate Movement

Q. Are swine required to be officially identified as part of the new traceability rule?

A. The traceability rule will not change the current requirements for the identification and movement of swine interstate. Swine that are moved interstate must currently meet identification requirements (Title 9, Part 71.19 of the Code of Federal Regulations). The official identification requirements in the existing regulations will be maintained.

Q. When are swine required to be identified during interstate movement?

A. There are no new requirements. Existing regulations require that, with certain exceptions, swine must be identified at whichever of the following comes first:

- The point of first commingling in interstate commerce with swine from any other source;
- Upon unloading in interstate commerce at any livestock market;
- Upon transfer of ownership in interstate commerce; or
- Upon arrival in interstate commerce at their final destination.

Q. What forms of identification may be used for swine moving interstate?

A. The proposed rule does not include any additional methods of swine identification or modify any of the existing methods.

Current regulations provide for flexibility in the way that swine can be identified. Any form of swine identification approved by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) Administrator may be used for interstate movement. Swine identification methods approved by APHIS' Administrator include:

- Official eartags for any swine;
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) backtags for swine moving to slaughter;

- Official swine tattoos for swine moving to slaughter, when their use has been requested by a user or State animal health official;
- Tattoos of at least 4 characters for swine moving to slaughter, except sows and boars;
- Ear notching of any swine, if the ear notching has been recorded in a purebred registry association's book of record;
- Tattoos on the ear or inner flank of any swine, if the tattoos have been recorded in a swine registry association's book of record;
- An eartag or tattoo for slaughter and feeder swine that bears the premises identification number assigned by the State animal health official to the premises on which the swine originated; and
- Any other official identification device or method that APHIS' Administrator approves.

Q. When can I use group identification for swine moving interstate?

A. Existing regulations specify that group identification can be used for interstate movement of swine if:

- They were born on the same premises; they were raised on the same premises where they were born; they are moved in a group directly to a slaughtering establishment from the place where they were raised;
- They are not mixed with swine from any other premises between the time they are born and the time they arrive at the slaughtering establishment, and
- They are slaughtered one after another as a group and not mixed with other swine at slaughter; or approved identification is applied to the swine after entry into the slaughtering establishment.

In addition, swine may move as groups within a production system where the movements between locations are routine and part of a valid swine production health plan, in which both the sending and receiving States have agreed to allow the movement.

The proposed rule does not change any of these provisions.

Q. What kinds of records must I create and maintain for interstate movement of swine?

A. No new records need to be created or maintained as a result of the proposed rule. Current regulations require that persons assigned serial numbers of

USDA backtags, official swine tattoos, and official eartags must record:

- All serial numbers applied to the swine;
- Any other serial numbers and approved identification appearing on the swine that are needed to identify the swine to its previous owner and location;
- The street address (including the city and State, or the township, county, and State) of the premises where the approved means of identification were applied; and
- The telephone number, if available, of the person who owns or possesses the swine.

For general interstate movement, records must be maintained for at least 2 years after the person has sold or disposed of the swine and must be made available for inspection and copying during ordinary business hours upon USDA request.

In addition, traceability records must be maintained at premises involved in a swine production system in which swine move interstate without individual identification. These records must be maintained for 3 years from the time the records were created. Each premises must (1) maintain records that will allow an APHIS representative or State animal health official to trace any animal on the premises back to its previous premises and (2) maintain copies of all swine production health plans signed by the producer, all interstate swine movement reports issued by the producer, and all reports issued by the swine production system's accredited veterinarian(s) that document the health status of the swine on the premises.

Q. May I remove official identification devices from my swine?

A. Official identification devices are intended to provide permanent identification of livestock and to ensure the ability to find the source of animal disease outbreaks. Removal of these devices, including devices applied to imported animals in their countries of origin and recognized by APHIS' Administrator as official, is prohibited except at the time of slaughter, at any other location upon the death of the animal, or as otherwise approved by the State or Tribal animal health official or an area veterinarian in charge when a device needs to be replaced.

If an animal loses an official identification device and needs a new one, the person applying the new official identification device must record the following information about the event and maintain the record for 5 years: the date the new official identification device is applied; the official identification number on the device; and the official identification number on the old device if known.

Eartags may be replaced for reasons other than loss when a State or Tribal animal health official or an area veterinarian in charge authorizes it for reasons that include, but are not limited to:

- Deterioration of the device such that loss of the device appears likely or the number can no longer be read;
- Infection at the site where the device is attached, necessitating application of a device at another location (e.g., a slightly different location of an eartag);
- Malfunction of the electronic component of a radio frequency identification (RFID) device; or
- Incompatibility or inoperability of an RFID device's electronic component with the management system or unacceptable functionality of the management system due to the use of an RFID device.

Any time an official identification device is replaced, as authorized by the State or Tribal animal health official or area veterinarian in charge, the person replacing the device must record the following information about the event and maintain the record for 5 years:

- The date on which the device was removed;
- Contact information for the location where the device was removed;
- The official identification number (to the extent possible) on the device removed;
- The type of device removed (e.g., metal eartag, RFID eartag);
- The reason for the removal of the device;
- The new official identification number on the replacement device; and
- The type of replacement device applied.

Q. Where can I find more information on swine identification requirements for interstate movement?

A. More information is available at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/> or from your State animal health official's office.

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