



## Details:

# What You as a Producer Need to Know About the National Scrapie Eradication Program

## The National Scrapie Eradication Program Needs Your Help and Participation

As a producer, you are the most important person in the effort to eradicate scrapie in our nation's sheep flocks and goat herds. You know your animals and you will be the first to see signs of the disease.

We recognize the fact that the eradication program requires time, effort and resources from you, but we hope you view the program as an investment in your future and the future of your industry.

Why do we ask you to make that investment?

- Scrapie is a difficult and dangerous disease because:
  - It is always fatal;
  - It can take up to six years or more to show clinical signs;
  - It is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE), in the same category of diseases as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, "mad cow disease") and chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer and elk. Although there is no evidence that scrapie or CWD can spread to humans, either through consumption of meat or dairy products or through handling of animals, our industry may be subject to the same negative **public perceptions** that affect other species with TSEs.
- Scrapie is a disease of both sheep and goats so the program includes both species.
- It is estimated that the annual cost of scrapie to producers is \$10-20 million. That figure does **not** count losing export opportunities on the international market to two key competing countries, New Zealand and Australia, which are the only countries generally recognized as scrapie-free.

The National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP) is a joint effort between the states and federal government. On the federal level, it is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)/Veterinary Services (VS). At the state level, coordination is usually done by the state veterinarian's office.

- The prevalence of scrapie in the United States cull ewe population was determined in 2003 to be 0.2 percent according to the Scrapie Ovine Slaughter Surveillance program. This is a relatively small percentage, so eradication efforts now are less costly than if the disease were to be left unchecked. As of July 2008, there have been only 19 diagnosed cases of scrapie found in goats since 2002.
- A fair, workable indemnification program has been established to minimize producers' financial losses. The indemnification program is based on current commercial market prices, with a premium added for registered animals.
- National Genetics Based Flock Clean-Up Plan is available to assist producers with flocks infected by classical scrapie to eliminate the disease. These plans provide for genetic testing of sheep in infected flocks and allow producers to keep genetically resistant sheep. NOTE: At this point there is relatively little information on scrapie genetics of goats so there is not a similar tool for this species. Also, genetic selection will NOT prevent Nor98-like, non-classical scrapie. (See Power Point presentation, "Genotyping: A Tool for Controlling Classical Scrapie" at [www.eradicatescrapie.org](http://www.eradicatescrapie.org).)

## General Information

The purpose of this brochure is to provide you, as a sheep and/or goat producer with details you'll need to help eradicate scrapie. The goal of eradicating scrapie is big and the process is complicated and will take time.

Why is it complicated? There are several reasons. One is because the disease takes so long to manifest itself with clinical signs. Further, routine testing of live animals is impractical since the test requires a lymphoid tissue biopsy of the third eyelid or the lining of the rectum rather than a simple blood or urine test commonly used to identify many other diseases. Also, the tests are only useful in animals over 14 months of age. Because of these limitations, live animal tests are used primarily to evaluate scrapie exposed flocks and the majority of scrapie surveillance testing is done on tissues collected at slaughter plants.

Most importantly, the eradication process requires an identification (ID) system, which allows diseased, exposed and high-risk individuals to be

traced back to their flock/herd of origin and to flocks in which they reside or have resided, so that the spread of scrapie within and from these flocks/herds can be prevented.

In setting up the eradication program, planners considered several options for identification programs, including requiring individual identification of every sheep and goat in the United States. In the end, they chose a more practical approach by eliminating the requirement for individual identification of non-breeding sheep (feeder/slaughter lambs) under 18 months of age and goats of any age moving into slaughter channels. However, as exceptions were made, the rules and regulations of the program became somewhat complicated.

For that reason, to achieve the goal of telling you **what you need to know**, a fair amount of detail is needed. Toward that aim, we have arranged the compliance information into eight steps supported by charts and illustrations.

**November 2008**

**Step #1: Determine if your sheep or goats need official ear tags or other official identification (ID) when they are moved off your premises regardless of whether they are being shipped in-state or out-of-state.**

Below are the federal requirements. Many states have additional requirements so be sure to check with your state officials and with officials of states to which you may be shipping your animals for their rules and regulations.

The following groups need **no** ID and have **no** movement restrictions:

- Lambs (ewes, ram lambs and wethers under 18 months of age) moving into slaughter channels.
- Goats (wethers, does and bucks of any age) moving into slaughter channels.

NOTE: Sexually intact lambs and goats require an ID when sold at an unrestricted sale because such sales are not defined as a slaughter channel.

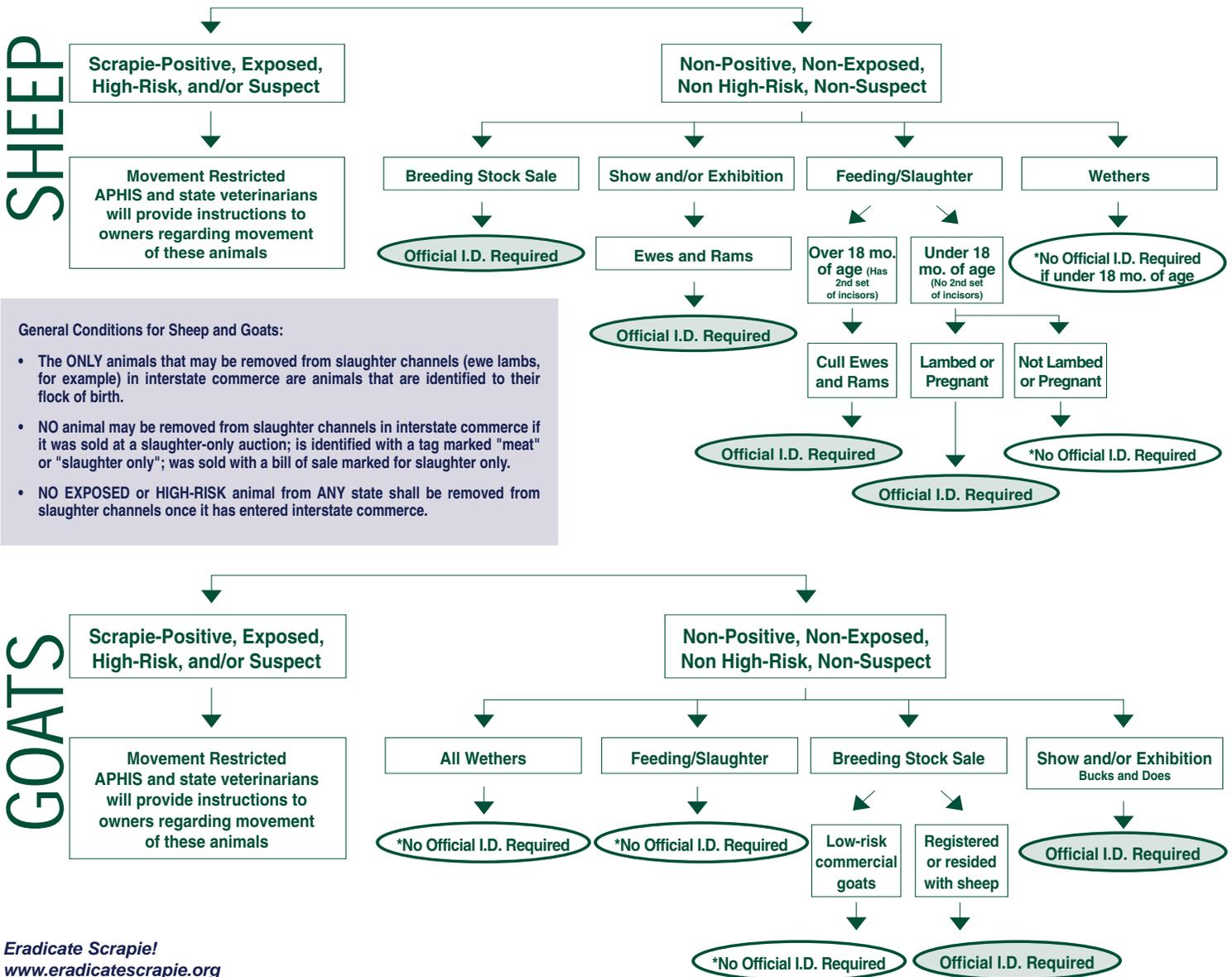
- Low-risk commercial goats, which are defined as those:
  - raised for fiber and/or meat;
  - not registered or exhibited;
  - which have not been in contact with sheep;
  - not scrapie-positive, high-risk or exposed animals;
  - not from an infected or source herd;
  - not commingled with other goats at premises that do not meet these criteria.
- Wethers for exhibition.
- Animals moving for grazing, if no change in ownership occurs.

The following animals **will** need ID (ear tags or tattoos):

- All breeding sheep and potential breeding sheep regardless of age.
- All sheep 18 months and older.
- All sheep and goats for exhibition except for wethers.
- All scrapie-exposed, suspect, test-positive and high-risk animals.
- Breeding goats, except low-risk commercial goats.
- Sheep under 18 months in slaughter channels that are:
  - females that are pregnant or have aborted; or
  - sexually intact animals from a scrapie infected flock/herd.

NOTE: Animals officially identified as part of the Scrapie Flock Certification Program (SFCP) will not need additional identification.

**Federal identification requirements for sheep and goats in the scrapie eradication program**  
(Further details listed in Tables 1-4 on reverse side)



General Conditions for Sheep and Goats:

- The ONLY animals that may be removed from slaughter channels (ewe lambs, for example) in interstate commerce are animals that are identified to their flock of birth.
- NO animal may be removed from slaughter channels in interstate commerce if it was sold at a slaughter-only auction; is identified with a tag marked "meat" or "slaughter only"; was sold with a bill of sale marked for slaughter only.
- NO EXPOSED or HIGH-RISK animal from ANY state shall be removed from slaughter channels once it has entered interstate commerce.

Eradicate Scrapie!  
[www.eradicatescrapie.org](http://www.eradicatescrapie.org)

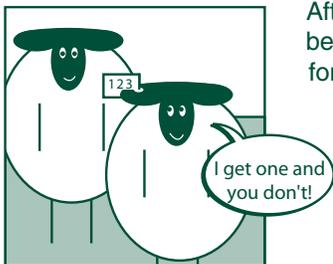
\*NOTE: States may have additional ID requirements so check with your state officials and also with officials of states to which you may be shipping your animals for their regulations.



**Step #2: Request a Flock/Herd ID Number.**

To obtain a flock/herd ID number or for additional information, call toll-free 866-USDA-TAG (866-873-2824). This number will reach the APHIS/VIS or State Veterinarian's office for the state from which you are calling.

**Step #3: Determine which of the approved ear tags or other approved ID systems work best for you.**



After receiving a flock/herd ID number, producers will have three options for official ear tags. The tags described in the first two options below will be provided free from USDA/APHIS to producers. (NOTE: Some states have decided to use only one type of USDA-provided tag. Please check with the administering office in your state to confirm the type(s) of USDA-provided tags that will be available in your state.) Tattooing is also permitted. Paint brands and ear notching may be used under certain limited conditions, as well as microchips in approved sites.

tags that will be available in your state.) Tattooing is also permitted. Paint brands and ear notching may be used under certain limited conditions, as well as microchips in approved sites.

**If you are using ear tags, you have the following options:**

- **Option #1** is a white metal clip-style or white plastic flap-type tag with the flock/herd ID number and a sequential individual animal ID number that can be selected by producers. They will have to be specially ordered by the administering office due to inclusion of the flock/herd ID number.

**Flock/Herd Tags with Individual Animal Identification Numbers**

**Plastic Flap Tags**

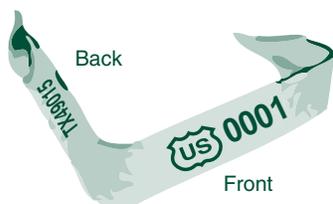
Male Part



Female Part



**Metal Tags**



- **Option #2** is a sequentially numbered alphanumeric (a combination of letters and numbers) white metal clip-style or white plastic flap-type tag. Blue tags may be ordered for "MEAT" or "SLAUGHTER ONLY". These will be sent directly from the administering office or tag manufacturing company to producers, veterinarians and markets.

**Tags with Unique Serial Numbers**

**Plastic Flap Tags**

Male Part



Female Part



**Metal Tags**



- **Option #3** is a custom-ordered tag. These tags will be ordered and paid for by producers from approved tag manufacturers. A list of approved tag companies is being maintained on the APHIS scrapie web page, [www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/animal\\_diseases/scrapie/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/scrapie/). In addition to the flock/herd ID number, these tags can have flock name, producer-selected animal ID numbers, and selected colors (except red and yellow metal tags, which are reserved for official state and federal use - see below.)

**Flock/Herd Tags with Individual Animal Identification Numbers**

**Plastic Flap Tags**

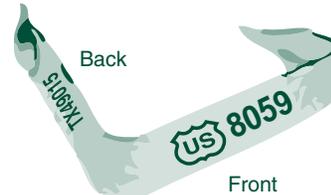
Male Part



Female Part



**Metal Tags**



**What do the different Official Tag colors represent?**

- **White tags** commonly known as "free tags" are the standard program tags. The original plastic rotary tags ordered prior to June 2002 by producers have often proved to be unsatisfactory due to difficult application and poor retention. Producers who still have a supply of these tags are encouraged to obtain new tags by contacting their state scrapie program office at 866-USDA-TAG (866-873-2824). Either return unused tags to the USDA/APHIS area office or completely destroy them.
- **Blue tags** marked "MEAT" or "SLAUGHTER ONLY" may be applied by producers or livestock market operators to animals that are for slaughter only. Only blue tags may be applied to animals whose flock of origin is unknown.
- **Yellow metal tags** are for use by state and federal personnel to identify scrapie-exposed animals.
- **Red metal tags** are for use by state and federal personnel to identify scrapie-positive animals.

**Producers who request USDA-provided tags will receive one pair of tag pliers with their first order from USDA. Additional pliers may be purchased by the producer.**

**If you are using tattoos, you have the following options:**

- **Option #1:** Legible registration tattoos may be used to identify animals in interstate or intrastate commerce when their registration certificate or a health certificate listing the tattoo number accompanies the animal. Some states may require the herd prefix portion of your tattoo to be recorded in the National Scrapie Database.
- **Option #2:** Request a flock/herd ID number by calling your local area Veterinary Services Office at 866-USDA-TAG (866-873-2824). If you have a tattoo prefix assigned by a registry, such as "CBA", you will be assigned the state postal abbreviation followed by your existing prefix when possible. So if you live in Arkansas, for example, your number would be "ARCBA". If you tattoo your animal with this number in one ear and use a unique individual number in the other ear, the animal (i.e. a culled sheep or goat) does not need a registration certificate or certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI, also known as a health certificate) to further identify the animal to move interstate; however, a CVI is still required if the animal is not in slaughter channels.

Ears should be used for tattooing when possible. If there is no space in the ear, the flock/herd ID number and unique individual number can be tattooed on the flank or tail fold. Electronic Implantable Devices (EID) may be used for registered animals or for animals in the SFCP program with certain restrictions see [www.eradicatescrapie.org](http://www.eradicatescrapie.org), click on "Educational Resources", then go to "Goat Identification: Visual & Electronic (PPT)" for the addendum for detailed information concerning EID (same rules apply for sheep).

Registered ear notches or paint brands may be used for animals from low-risk commercial sheep flocks moving directly to slaughter when accompanied by a brand inspection certificate, owner's statement, and veterinarian's statement (See Tables 1 and 3). They may also be used for animals that have not been exposed to scrapie moving for grazing without change of ownership when permitted by the states.

**The above ID choices are federally approved ID options. Many states have other requirements so be sure to check with your state officials for their rules and regulations regarding identification and interstate/intrastate movement.**

#### **Step #4: Set up a system to record ear tags or other official ID, which are applied.**



If you apply tags to animals which were born in your flock/herd or were used for breeding purposes in your flock/herd, your records must contain the following information:

- Flock/Herd ID number or serial numbers applied;
- Date applied;
- Number of animals identified.

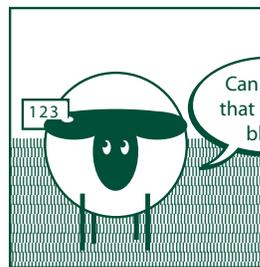
For animals not born in your flock/herd that are not already identified to their flock/herd of origin, you must record the individual number applied and their flock/herd of origin ID number or the name and address of the flock/herd of origin owner.

While there is no official form for this information at this time, on the reverse side are sample formats you may wish to use. Pocket-size booklets containing these forms may be ordered from the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) by visiting [www.eradicatescrapie.org](http://www.eradicatescrapie.org) or calling 270-782-9798.

If you purchase animals for resale, and apply tags to animals that are not part of your flock/herd, your records must contain the following information:

- The date tagged and address where the official identification was applied;
- The person from whom the animals were received: name, address, and telephone number;
- The flock/herd of origin: owner's name, address, and telephone number if different;
- Official individual ID numbers applied;
- Number of animals identified.

#### **Step #5: Apply official ID before sheep/goats leave your premises.**



For most producers, the most practical time for applying ID is shortly before shipment. Of course, some prefer to tag at birth or shortly thereafter. You may also make arrangements to have the ID applied when your animals are first off-loaded after leaving your premises at a USDA approved livestock market. You may do whatever is practical so long as it complies with movement regulations.

#### **NOTE:**

1. Scrapie Flock Certification Program (SFCP) identification is official identification for interstate and intrastate movement.
2. Flock/Herd-only ID is allowed for limited uses such as grazing and low-risk commercial flocks that use registered brands.
3. Individual registry tattoos issued by breed associations may be used as official ID. Holders of registry assigned tattoo prefixes should have these linked to their premises in the Scrapie National Database through their local APHIS/VS personnel.
4. If a sheep or goat loses an official ear tag, the person in possession of that animal should re-tag it and record all possible flocks/herds of origin.

#### **Step #6: Get a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI, also known as health certificate.)**

All breeding and sexually intact exhibition animals must have a CVI, issued no more than 30 days before interstate shipment. (See NIAA brochure "Requirements for Going to the Show" which is available at [www.eradicatescrapie.org](http://www.eradicatescrapie.org).)

#### **Step #7: Retain ID records, CVI, and any business records regarding the acquisition or disposition of sheep or goats such as bills of sale for five years.**

You are required to keep all ID records and CVIs for **five** years after the individuals have been slaughtered, have died from other causes or have changed ownership.

#### **Step #8: Call for help if needed. 866-USDA-TAG (866-873-2824)**

APHIS/VS and state officials can answer your questions and to help you comply with this important program. Call toll-free for help **866-USDA-TAG (866-873-2824)** or refer to the Internet at [www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/animal\\_diseases/scrapie/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/scrapie/) or at [www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/area\\_offices.htm](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/area_offices.htm). Numbers for state officials can usually be found in the blue pages of your local directory or at [www.eradicatescrapie.org](http://www.eradicatescrapie.org), then click on state and federal contacts.



## Attached Tables

For your convenience, we have attached the following tables, which summarize in one place identification requirements by type of animal. Again, please call 866-USDA-TAG (866-873-2824) if you have any questions or need help. Also, check with your local veterinarian or state officials to find out what additional rules may apply to your state.

NOTE: States are reviewed annually for compliance with the federal requirements for implementation of the National Scrapie Eradication Program. As the result of these reviews, states are classified as “Consistent” or “Inconsistent”. Presently all 50 states are “Consistent”. If a state is reclassified as “Inconsistent”, there will be additional restrictions on movement of sheep and goats from that state.

**Table 1. Sale or movement of breeding, show and/or exhibition sheep and goats**

Animal Type	Required Identification
Sexually intact sheep/goats (except these specifically listed below in this table)	Official individual animal <b>identification (ID)</b> linked by records to flock/herd of origin and a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI, also known as health certificate.)
Low-risk commercial goats (of any sex) and wethers	None, except scrapie-exposed animals
<p>A low-risk commercial sheep is defined as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an animal from a low-risk flock/herd that is a commercial whitefaced, whitefaced cross or a commercial hair sheep with no known risk factors for scrapie including any exposure to female blackfaced sheep</li> <li>• identified with a legible, registered permanent brand or ear notch pattern (includes states that recognize brands placed on ear tags as official brands)</li> <li>• not a scrapie-positive, suspect, high-risk or exposed animal, and</li> <li>• not from an infected source or exposed flock/herd</li> <li>• existing in a state where scrapie has not been diagnosed in the previous 10 years in commercial whitefaced, whitefaced cross or a commercial hair sheep that were not commingled with female blackfaced sheep.</li> </ul>	<p>Official <b>flock/herd identification</b> that is a permanent legible brand or ear notch pattern registered with an official brand registry or an official flock/herd ear tag.</p> <p>A brand inspection certificate if brands or ear notches are used.</p> <p><b>Owner statement</b> dated within 30 days of movement stating that the animals were born in the flock/herd and that the flock/herd does not contain any animal exhibiting signs of scrapie, that to the best of his/her knowledge, the flock/herd has no known risk factors for or exposure to scrapie and has never contained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- any animal diagnosed as having scrapie;</li> <li>- any female blackfaced sheep; or</li> <li>- any female blackfaced crossbred sheep that were not born in the flock.</li> </ul> <p>An accredited <b>veterinarian’s statement</b> issued within 12 months of the date of movement indicating that, to the best of his/her knowledge, the flock/herd has no known risk factors for or exposure to scrapie, and that he/she has inspected the flock/herd and it does not contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- any animal exhibiting signs of scrapie;</li> <li>- any female blackfaced sheep; or</li> <li>- any female blackfaced crossbred sheep that were not born in the flock.</li> </ul> <p>These statements must include the owner’s name, address, and the flock/herd identification number and a drawing of the owner’s registered brand or ear notch pattern.</p>
Scrapie-exposed sexually intact animals and animals from an infected or source flock/herd that are <b>not</b> scrapie-positive, suspect, or high-risk animals	Movement restricted: The APHIS veterinarians and/or state veterinarian will provide instructions to owners of these animals.
High-risk, scrapie-positive, or suspect animals, or animals from noncompliant flock/herd	Movement prohibited: These animals are eligible for indemnity, except those from noncompliant flock/herd.

**Table 2. Slaughter sheep and goats that are under 18 months of age<sup>1</sup>**

Animal Type	Required Identification
Sexually intact sheep or goats that are <b>not</b> scrapie-positive, suspect, high-risk, or exposed animals and are <b>not</b> from an infected source flock/herd	None
Wethers that are <b>not</b> scrapie-positive or suspect animals	None
Scrapie-exposed and high-risk animals or animals from an infected or source flock/herd that are sexually intact animals and that are <b>not</b> scrapie-positive or suspect	Movement restricted: The APHIS veterinarians and/or state veterinarian will provide instructions to owners of these animals.
Scrapie-positive or suspect animals	Movement Prohibited: These animals are eligible for indemnity.

<sup>1</sup> Age determined by a lack of eruption of the second incisor. These animals are **not pregnant** and have **not lambed or kidded** and are being sold directly to slaughter, through slaughter channels to slaughter, or to feedlots for later movement to slaughter.

**Table 3. Slaughter sheep and goats that are over 18 months of age<sup>2</sup>**

Animal Type	Required Identification
Sheep over 18 months of age except these specifically listed below in this table	Official <b>identification (ID)</b> (Exception: no requirement for official individual animal ID or official <b>flock/herd identification</b> for these slaughter animals if the animals are kept as a group on the same premises on which they were born or used for breeding purposes and are not commingled with animals from another premises at any time, including throughout the feeding, marketing, and slaughter process.)
Low-risk commercial sheep (as defined in Table 1)	<p>Official <b>flock/herd identification</b> that is a permanent legible brand or ear notch pattern registered with an official brand registry or an official flock/herd ear tag or for animals moving directly to slaughter may be a legible paint brand registered with an official brand registry.</p> <p>A brand inspection certificate if a brand or ear notch is used.</p> <p><b>Owner statement</b> dated within 30 days of the movement stating that the flock/herd does not contain any animal exhibiting signs of scrapie, and to the best of his/her knowledge, the flock/herd has no known risk factors for or exposure to scrapie and has never contained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- any animal diagnosed as having scrapie;</li> <li>- any female blackfaced sheep; or</li> <li>- any female blackfaced crossbred sheep that were not born in the flock.</li> </ul> <p>An accredited <b>veterinarian's statement</b> issued within 12 months of the date of movement indicating that, to the best of his/her knowledge, the flock has no known risk factors for or exposure to scrapie, and that he/she has inspected the flock/herd and it does not contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- any animal exhibiting signs of scrapie;</li> <li>- any female blackfaced sheep; or</li> <li>- any female blackfaced crossbred sheep that were not born in the flock.</li> </ul> <p>These statements must include the owner's name, address, and the flock/herd identification number and a drawing of the owner's registered brand or ear notch pattern.</p>
Normal goats over 18 months of age with no history of scrapie	None, if direct to slaughter
Scrapie-exposed and high risk animals or animals from an infected or source flock/herd that are sexually intact animals and that are not scrapie-positive or suspect animals	Movement restricted: The APHIS veterinarians and/or state veterinarian will provide instructions to owners of these animals. These animals may be eligible for indemnity.
Scrapie-positive or suspect animals	Movement prohibited: These animals are eligible for indemnity.

<sup>2</sup> Age determined by eruption of the second incisor. These animals are either **pregnant** or have **lambded/kidded** and are for sale or other movement **direct** to slaughter, through slaughter channels to slaughter, or to feedlots for later movement to slaughter.

**Table 4. Movement of sheep and goats for grazing or other similar management purposes without change of ownership (federal requirements only)**

Animal Type	Required Identification
Sexually intact sheep or goats that are <b>not</b> scrapie-positive, suspect, high-risk, or exposed animals and are <b>not</b> animals from an infected or source flock/herd	None
Wethers that are <b>not</b> scrapie-positive or suspect animals and are <b>not</b> an animal from an infected or source flock/herd	None
Scrapie-exposed and non-high-risk animals that are sexually intact from an infected or source flock/herd but are <b>not</b> scrapie-positive, suspect or high-risk animals	Movement restricted: The APHIS veterinarians and/or state veterinarian will provide instructions to owners of these animals. These animals may be eligible for indemnity.
Scrapie-positive, suspect, or sexually intact high-risk animals	Movement prohibited: These animals are eligible for indemnity.



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**Important Information  
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**Bobbi Meritt  
6209 NW 10th St.  
Terrebonne, OR**



### **Summary: National Scrapie Eradication Program Identification Requirements**

#### **Step #1:**

Determine if your sheep or goats need official ear tags or other official identification (ID) when they are moved off your premises regardless of whether they are being shipped in-state or out-of-state.

#### **Step #2:**

Request a Flock/Herd ID Number and tags by calling 866-USDA-TAG (866-873-2824).

#### **Step #3:**

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

#### **Step #4:**

Set up a system to record the ear tags or other official ID, which are applied.

#### **Step #5:**

Apply official ID before sheep/goats leave your premises (or arrange for application elsewhere - i.e. at the market).

#### **Step #6:**

Get a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI, also known as health certificate).

#### **Step #7:**

Retain ID records and CVI and any business records for five years after change of ownership or the animal dies.

#### **Step #8:**

Call toll-free for help.

**866-USDA-TAG (866-873-2824)**

### **Clinical Signs of Scrapie**

One or more of the following signs may indicate scrapie:

- Weight loss despite retention of appetite
- Behavioral changes
- Itching and rubbing
- Wool pulling
- Biting at legs or sides
- Lip smacking
- Loss of coordination
- Increased sensitivity to noise and movement
- High-stepping gait of forelimbs
- Bunny-hop movement of rear
- Swaying of back end
- Tremor
- Down, unable to stand
- Death, possibly sudden

You may view a video of clinical signs of scrapie at [www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/animal\\_diseases/scrapie/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/scrapie/) as well as other information about the National Scrapie Eradication Program, visit [www.eradicatescrapie.org](http://www.eradicatescrapie.org) or call NIAA at 270-782-9798.