

FAQ about the Scrapie Program

How do I get Scrapie tags?

You can order Scrapie tags at any time simply by calling 1-866-USDA-TAG. Please keep in mind that the tags take two weeks to arrive.

How much do Scrapie tags cost?

There is no cost to the producer if you order the tags through our office.

Do Scrapie tags expire?

No, the tags are good for the animal's lifetime.

Where do I get the tag applicator?

When you order Scrapie tags through this office, they will come with a free applicator. Allflex, Premier, and Hasco tags all require their own applicators and are not interchangeable.

What is the difference between the mandatory and voluntary Scrapie programs?

The National Scrapie Eradication Program – This is a mandatory program that began in 2001 and remains in effect. This program requires sheep and goats to be officially identified before leaving the owner's property, even if just for a brief show or exhibition. There are a few exceptions to this requirement. The main purpose of this program is to provide trace-back capabilities in the event of a Scrapie outbreak. In addition to identifying the animals, producers are required to keep general records for five years (births, deaths, sales and acquisitions). Official identification includes a USDA Scrapie tag (available for free by calling 1-866-USDA-TAG). The tags take two weeks to arrive, so call ahead. Your order will include a free applicator. With certain restrictions, tattoos may be used as official identification, instead of tags. Call for further details about tattooing options. In either case, a Scrapie Premises Identification Number will need to be assigned, which is also available by calling the number above.

The Scrapie Flock Certification Program (SFCP) - This is a *voluntary* program that requires participants to maintain more detailed records than the program described above and have annual inspections conducted by a State or Federal animal health official, in addition to official identification of sheep and goats. Further requirements restrict the comingling of sheep/goats with animals outside the SFCP, and reporting all dead animals for possible Scrapie sampling. After five years, producers in the SFCP are eligible to become a Certified flock if all requirements have been met. There is also a special category within this program for producers who wish to export sheep or goats to another country. Participants in this program are listed, by state, on the following website: <http://scrapietag.aphis.usda.gov/reports/sisstate.php>. The voluntary Scrapie program is currently being reevaluated and there may be significant changes in 2012.

I acquired a sheep/goat that already had a Scrapie tag in its ear; do I have to add one of my tags?

No. If we did a trace-back on that animal, the tag would lead us to its original owner whose records would then lead us to you. That's why it's important for sheep and goat producers to keep records for five years detailing the births, deaths, sales and acquisitions of their animals.

I acquired a sheep/goat without a Scrapie tag in its ear; what should I do?

Sheep and goats that change ownership should not be sold without a Scrapie tag. In the event that this does occur, it would be the new owner's responsibility to put in one of their Scrapie tags. Be sure to document where/when you purchased the animal.

Can I have my farm name included on the tag or get a different color?

Free Scrapie tags order through this office only come in white. They include your Scrapie number and a unique animal identification number, along with the US shield. If you want a color other than white, or additional information included on the tag, you can order custom tags by contacting the tag manufacturer (Allflex, Premier, or Hasco) directly -- but you will have to pay for the tags, the applicator, and the shipping. The tag manufacturers will only process your order after you have been assigned a Scrapie premises identification number through this office.

If a friend needs a Scrapie tag can I give him/her one of mine?

No. Scrapie numbers are assigned to your premises. They cannot be shared.