

# Sheep Quick Guide



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**

[www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)

## Rules for identifying sheep from 31 December 2009

### Key Points

What to do?	When to do it?
Identify your sheep	Before 9 months of age (6 months if normally housed overnight) or before they leave the holding of birth, whichever is sooner.
Replace lost tags	Within 28 days of discovering the lost or unreadable tag.
Complete your flock register	Record date of tagging, movement on and off, and death within 7 days; but within 48 hours for movements to a Central Point of Recording or "CPR" (for example, an approved market or meat plant).
Complete movement documents	Movement documents must accompany sheep in transit. The buyer must send a copy to DAERA within 7 days, unless the movement is from a market.
Return your Annual Inventory	Complete an inventory between 1 and 5 December each year, and return the result to DAERA by 5 January.

### Identification

- New sheep (born after 31 December 2009) Apply two identifiers with matching numbers. One must contain an electronic identification (EID) device. EID tags must be yellow.
- Older sheep (born before 31 December 2009) If moving on or after 1 June 2010, upgrade to EID by applying two identifiers as above. EID tags must be yellow. Record the new tag number, but there is no need to cross-reference to the old tag number. If moving before 1 June 2010, and if one old green tag remains in place, no new tags are needed.
- If a tag is lost in a new sheep Apply either (i) a specially made tag with the same number, or (ii) your next set of tags in sequence and cut out any remaining tag. If on the holding of birth (or if you register the details on APHIS-Online) apply a yellow EID tag set, if not, apply a red EID tag set. Record the new tag numbers in your flock register, and cross-reference the old and new tags if required.

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### Identification (cont)

- If a tag is lost in an older sheep If not yet upgraded to EID, and if at least one green tag remains, no action is needed. If no tags remain you must upgrade to EID. However, if the sheep had already been upgraded to EID, apply the same retagging rules as for new sheep.

### Flock Register

- Keep an up-to-date flock register by recording:
  1. births (date of identification of newborn lambs and the tag numbers applied);
  2. movements on and off your holding (by recording the movement document serial number);
  3. replacement tag details (new tag number, and old tag number, if required);
  4. deaths (including the tag number where possible); and
  5. annual inventory result.

### Movement Documents

- Complete a movement document each time you move sheep, including to common grazing not adjacent to your holding.
- If moving to a CPR, you do not need to record tag numbers, but you must retain the CPR tag list.
- If moving to a farm, or premises not approved as a CPR:
  - record tag numbers of sheep born after 31 December 2009 (manually or with an EID reader); and
  - record tag numbers of older sheep from 1 January 2012, unless they are moving to slaughter.

### Annual Inventory

- You must complete and return an Annual Inventory to DAERA by 5 January each year.

### Retention of Records

- You must keep your holding register, movement documents and CPR documentation for at least 3 years.
- The sheep identification and movement rules are a statutory Cross-Compliance requirement. You may be subject to inspection and non-compliance could lead to a reduction in your Single Farm Payment.