

CATTLE MOVEMENT AND TAGGING

All cattle in the European Union, and in many other countries, are individually identified and their movements traced throughout their lives. This is important for two reasons:

- It supports control and eradication of bovine diseases such as Tuberculosis (TB), Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) or foot and mouth disease.
- It protects consumers by ensuring that products going into the human food chain are fully traceable and safe.

Maintaining a healthy cattle herd and supporting consumer confidence in milk and beef are essential for the industry to be successful. For these reasons regulations are laid down in European and UK law, which place responsibilities for cattle identification and tracing on all cattle keepers.

The Scottish Government (SGRPID) is responsible for these issues in Scotland.

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA), through the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS), runs Great Britain's Cattle Tracing System (CTS) database on behalf of the Scottish, English and Welsh Ministers.

A holding is a place where cattle are kept or handled. Farms are holdings, so are livestock markets, calf assembly centres and slaughterhouses. Most keepers will have only one holding. However, some keepers may have more than one holding and some holdings may be used by more than one keeper. A business is not a holding. Many businesses may be made up of more than one holding.

A holding is identified by its CPH (county, parish, holding) number. This is also how it is identified on the CTS.

A keeper is a person who is responsible for cattle on a permanent or temporary basis. It is his or her duty to make sure that all legal requirements are met. The keeper is not always the owner of the animals or the owner of the land where animals are kept.

If you are a **new cattle keeper** you must do the following:

- First register your holding with your local Scottish Government, Rural Payment and Inspections Directorate (SGRPID) office. They will give you a CPH number. You cannot be registered as a cattle keeper until you have a CPH number.
- You must tell your nearest Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) office, who will give you a herd mark for your holding. This herd mark means you will be able to buy ear tags.
- You must then tell the SGRPID office that you are going to keep cattle. They will register your details on the Cattle Tracing System and send you information.
- You need to keep a record of animals born, arriving, and leaving or dying on your holding.

Cattle born on or after 1 July 2000 must have an approved ear tag in each ear. Numeric tags were introduced on 1 January 2000 but made compulsory on 1 July 2000. Animals must be double tagged with both tags showing the same unique number. The unique identity stays with the animal for all its life.

Every newborn calf must have an ear tag in each ear showing the same unique identity number. This number is made up of:

- a herd mark; and
- an animal number.

Calves must be tagged within the following deadlines.

- Dairy farmers – one ear tag must be fitted within 36 hours of a calf's birth. You are allowed up to 20 days from the calf's birth to fit the second tag.
- Beef farmers – you have up to 20 days from the calf's birth to fit both tags.

Both tags must be fitted before an animal moves off the holding where it was born, even if that is before it is 20 days old. Animals that have died before these deadlines do not need to be tagged.

The tags used for double tagging are known as the primary and secondary tag.

- The '**primary**' tag may be put in either ear. Primary tags are yellow, distance-readable tags.
- The '**secondary**' tag must have the same information as the primary tag, but may also contain management information. The secondary tag must be in the other ear from the primary tag.

There are many different secondary tags that you can use, for example, metal, plastic and button tags.