EAR TAGGING REQUIREMENTS

This guide provides general advice, but please always check on the government website for the most up to date information –

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sheep-and-goat-keepers-how-to-identify-your-animals

Registered sheep must have two identifiers with the same unique identification number on both. One of the identifiers must be an electronic identifier (EID) and both the EID and conventional identifier (non EID) identifier should be printed with the same 14 characters comprising a European Country Identifier and species code (i.e. UK O) followed by the six digit unique flock number that indicates the flock where the animal was bred. The last five digits are the animal's individual identity number. The individual identification number is always five characters long even if the animal is the first identified in the flock. For example the seventh animal registered in flock 123456 would be labelled UK 0123456 00007. Ear tags for registered Jacobs must also include the breeder's membership number and may optionally also include the owner's prefix name for ease of identification.

Identifiers for unregistered sheep must not include the breeder's membership number. Unregistered lambs intended for slaughter (i.e. sheep that are less than twelve months old) can be identified with a single ear tag instead of two identifiers.. The single ear tag only displays the flock number. It doesn't display an individual identity number for the animal. Slaughter tags are labelled in the 8 character format, i.e. UK 123456, using the breeder's 6 digit flock number. From the start of 2015 the single ear tag on slaughter lambs has been a yellow EID that contains an individual identification number which can be electronically scanned but won't be displayed on the EID tag.

If you decide to keep a lamb that is identified by a single slaughter tag beyond a year old, you must replace its single tag with a pair of identifiers before it first birthday. If the lamb is no longer on the holding where it was born you can only do this if you can individually trace the animal back to its holding of birth.

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