



The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is dedicated to safeguarding food, animals and plants to enhance the health and well-being of Canadians, the environment and economy.

Livestock traceability is the ability to follow an animal or group of animals during all stages of its life. There are three main pillars to livestock traceability systems:

- Identification of livestock with an approved indicator;
- Identification of premises where livestock are kept, assembled or disposed of; and,
- Reporting events related to livestock such as movement of animals from one premises to another.

The goal of the livestock traceability system is to provide timely, accurate and relevant information to reduce the impacts of a disease outbreak, food safety issue or natural disasters originating from and/or affecting livestock.

The Livestock Identification and Traceability Program (TRACE) has been administered jointly by CFIA and industry since 2001. The program is regulated and enforced under Part XV of the *Health of Animals Regulations*, made under the authority of the *Health of Animals Act*.

Livestock Identification and Traceability Program (TRACE) – Regulatory Update. N° 4 February 1, 2019

Topic: Animal identification

The objective of the TRACE Newsletter is to provide an overview of progress on proposed amendments to Part XV of the federal *Health of Animals Regulations* (hereafter referred to the “Regulations”) that pertains to livestock identification and traceability. This fourth edition focuses on one of the key elements of the regulatory proposal: Animal identification.

Why are amendments to the *Health of Animals Regulations* being proposed?

The CFIA is proposing amendments to the *Health of Animals Regulations* to strengthen Canada’s livestock traceability system. The proposed federal traceability regulations would require, amongst other things, reporting the animal identification number to a responsible administrator for a location where, for example, an approved indicator (tag) will be applied to an animal, an animal has been received or slaughtered; or, a carcass has been disposed.

Why is animal identification important?

Animal identification allows for the tracking of individual animals or groups to specific land locations (or “premises”) and is critical for controlling animal diseases and managing animal health emergencies (e.g. diseases, fires, floods, etc.). Animal Identification along with Premises Identification makes it possible to trace an animal’s movements from one point to another throughout the supply chain, making it easier to control the spread of disease and minimize the impact on the industry. The proposed amendments are expected to strengthen Canada’s ability to respond quickly to health threats and other emergencies.

What would be the proposed requirements specific to animal identification?

The Regulations would refer to “indicator” instead of “tag” to reflect that indicators other than ear tags are approved under the TRACE program. The lists of approved indicators and of revoked indicators would be incorporated in the Regulations by reference and therefore would be subject to a greater consultation process during an annual review. Depending on species, approved indicators bear an identification number either unique to an animal (following an ISO standard) or to a group of animals originating from the same site (referred to ‘herd mark’).

A person who purchases approved indicators would be required to report the identification number of the premises where the indicators would be applied to the animals. However, the person would not be required to report the date at which the



[List of approved indicators](#)

[List of revoked indicators](#)

Where to purchase approved indicators:

[Beef cattle \(outside Québec\)](#)

[Dairy cattle](#)

[Pigs](#)

[Sheep \(outside Quebec\)](#)

[Bison](#)

For cattle, sheep, cervid within Quebec

[Agri-Traçabilité Québec \(ATQ\)](#)

Customer Service

Toll-free number: 1 866 270-4319

[Find a tagging site](#)

How to report issues with approved tags:

[Report to CCIA](#)

ATQ: 1-866-270-4319

approved indicator has been applied.

Cervid and goat: Ear tags, leg bands and tail-web tags would be approved means of identification for goat under the proposed regulations. Indicators bearing a herd mark instead of an ISO number would be approved for goat aged 12 months or younger (kids) and moved directly from the farm of origin to an abattoir. Indicators that would be approved for goat under the proposed regulations are already available through the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency.

The identification of farmed cervids (elk and deer) with an ear tag is already required in the four Western provinces, Quebec and Yukon. Those provincially-approved ear tags would be approved under the proposed federal regulations, noting that the approval of ear tags not bearing an ISO number would be temporary. Under the proposed regulations, cervids would be required to be identified with two approved ear tags before leaving the farm of origin; both tags would bear the same identification number. Indicators that would be approved for cervid under the proposed regulations are already available through Agri-Traçabilité Québec and through the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency.

Approved identification site: Bison and cattle that may cause serious injury to any person who attempts to identify it could continue being transported without bearing an approved indicator to an “approved identification sites” (formerly known as “tagging sites”) in order to be safely identified with an approved indicator. Only auction markets and assembly yards would be eligible in providing identification services as an approved identification site. The operator of the approved identification site would be required to report the application of the approved indicator to the animal.

Removal and replacement of approved indicators: Under specific circumstances and under the supervision of a CFIA inspector, it would be permitted to remove an approved indicator from an animal before it is slaughtered or after it's been found dead. The operator of a site that receives animals not bearing an approved indicator would still be required to apply an approved indicator to the animal. This requirement would be extended to those who receive caprine or cervids. If the animal arrives at an abattoir and is slaughtered at the abattoir, the operator of the abattoir would be exempted from this requirement provided that the receipt of the animal is reported to the responsible administrator.

When are the proposed regulations expected to be published and come into effect? The proposed regulations are expected to be published in spring 2019, at the earliest. Following the publication of the proposed regulations in Part I of the Canada Gazette (www.gazette.gc.ca), stakeholders will have 75 days to review and provide comment. The CFIA will review and consider all comments received prior to finalizing the regulation amendments and publishing them in Part II of the Canada Gazette.