



Notice for New York Cattle Producers: Questions and Answers

Beginning November 5, 2024, there will be only one USDA-official tag type approved for cattle. [USDA's final rule](#) for cattle ID requires all official tags applied to cattle after November 5, 2024 to be both RFID and visually readable. New York State will no longer be supplying silver metal National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES or 'brite') tags for use in cattle or swine when our current supply is finished.

What does this mean for you as a producer?

If you apply eartags as official identification to cattle, you need to use RFID tags starting November 5, 2024. Cattle born in the USA will need 840 eartags.

What are RFID tags?

RFID tags are electronic identification tags that can be scanned from a distance, as well as read visually. They come in several different shapes, all of which are RFID capable. They all have 15-digit identification numbers, which are printed on them and may also be read electronically. RFID tags may also have a bangle with a shorter management number on them. Currently, these tags can be privately ordered, customized, and purchased through approved tag manufacturers.



Do all cattle need official eartags?

The new USDA final rule does not change which cattle receive official eartags; it only changes which eartags that are considered official. If you do not currently need official tags in your cattle, they still do not require official tags.

Some examples of cattle that currently require official identification: cattle going to a livestock dealer or through a market, cattle moving out of state on a CVI, cattle coming to your New York farm, all animals traveling to a New York sponsored fair. Please note that this includes all young calves that arrive at markets for sale as feeders (which currently are receiving metal NUES tags at markets).

What about cattle that already have a NUES or other official eartag?

All cattle (including dairy, beef, heifers, and steers) that already have a NUES tag or another grandfathered form of official ID in their ear by November 5, 2024, will be considered officially tagged for life. These cattle will not require an RFID-capable 840 tag applied. You can choose to add an 840 RFID tag to them, but it is not required. Grandfathered tags (i.e. – 12-digit F.A.I.R. tags, truncated AIN tags, tags starting with 982- or 985-) applied before March 11, 2015, will also continue to be considered official ID for the animals that have them.

The aforementioned tags applied after March 11, 2015, and any NUES tags applied after November 5, 2024, will not be considered official identification.



What if I choose to sell cattle without official eartags as slaughter-only animals?

Not putting an official identification on these animals restricts who can buy them.

At auction, or off the farm, these animals must be sold to an USDA-recognized slaughter facility per federal requirements. The yellow slaughter-only tag will be applied to the animals as identification to allow traceback.



What should you do with your old silver metal or white plastic NUES tags or non-RFID 15-digit tags that are no longer official in cattle if applied after November 5, 2024?

You can return those tags to the Department. You can also continue to use them as official tags in deer. They may also be used in swine, although the Department recommends using 840 RFID tags in swine as well as cattle.



How do I tell if my 840 tags are RFID capable?

Visual-only 840 tags can look very similar to tags that have an RFID capability. The images below show an RFID tag on the left and a non-RFID on the right. If you cannot tell whether your tags are RFID capable, ask your veterinarian to test them with a reader.



How do I get 840 RFID tags?

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets received a limited supply of 840 RFID-capable ear tags for distribution to New York Producers, Dealers and Markets through USDA Traceability Funding in Federal Budget year 2024-2025. We have distributed all of these tags for this federal year in advance of the November 5, 2024 implementation of the new USDA cattle traceability rule. We anticipate additional supply in April 2025 and will update our order forms when we have tags available.

Producers should reach out to the suppliers of 840 tags to order sufficient tags to cover their needs. You will be responsible for ordering these directly from a supplier. USDA lists all manufacturers online. Visit vsapps.aphis.usda.gov/aims/AllProductNew.do, choose "Program Approved," and "Cattle" as the species to see a comprehensive list of manufacturers. Only RFID capable devices will be approved starting November 5, 2024.



Where do I buy USDA approved RFID-capable 840 eartags?

You can buy these tags from manufacturers or distributors. As of October 30, 2024 approved manufacturers on the USDA website include: [All Data Tags LLC](#), [Ailflex USA, Inc.](#), AniTrace, Inc., [Datamars Inc.](#) (Including Temple Tags and Zee Tags), Digital Angel Corp., Eriginate Corp., Global Animal Mgmt., Leader Products, [Shearwell Data Ltd](#), [Y-TEX](#)

Can I cut out a NUES or other official tag that was grandfathered in?

No. New York State law (Article 5 § 95-a) prohibits removal of official ear tags or other identification without authorization by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets.

What about brucellosis tags for cattle?

Orange metal NUES tags, as seen below, are approved Brucellosis tags per USDA. However, these will not be considered official ID if applied after November 5, 2024.



What do I do about Canadian cows that lose their tags?

If you have cattle that have been imported from Canada or Mexico that lose their official ID (aka a '124' or a '484' tag), you can obtain replacement tags from the Department or from your local Category 2 accredited veterinarian. These tags are green-blue bicolor, have "IMP" on them, and begin with '964' as seen below. These tags may only be applied to foreign-born animals that have lost their original ID. You will be required to record the original animal ID and replacement ID and keep this information for traceback for at least five years per [9 CFR 86.3](#). We are happy to provide assistance with record management if you need these tags.

Do not put 840 RFID tags into cattle born in another country. Do not apply these bicolor tags to cattle born in the USA.



Can I still order NUES tags for my farm?

No. We will no longer carry these tags. They cannot be independently printed.

Can state metal tags still be used in pigs?

Yes.

Can 840 tags made for cattle be used in sheep, lamb, and goats?

No. Do NOT use cattle RFID tags on small ruminants. These animals have their own RFID tags.



Can backtags still be used?

Yes, backtags can still be used. Cattle that are going direct to a USDA inspected slaughter facility can move on **only** a USDA backtag. All other cattle that need official identification must be identified with an 840 RFID tag.

What about the large bulls that go to slaughter?

They can go direct to slaughter on a USDA backtag.

What is the monthly limit for our farm on RFID tags from the State?

We are currently out of stock of 840 RFID tags. Please reach out to Dr. Rebecca Mitchell directly at Rebecca.Mitchell@agriculture.ny.gov in April 2025 about future free 840 RFID tags.

In the case that you have placed an order with a manufacturer or distributor and the delivery is longer than anticipated- emergency supplies may be provided on a case-by-case basis. Call the office at 518-457-4066 for assistance.

Is the State also notifying dealers and veterinarians that they will need to use 840 RFID tags as of November 5, 2024?

The State is conducting outreach to stakeholders through multiple platforms. Please feel free to give our outreach information to any producers that have questions.

Where can I go to learn more about official identification types for cattle?

Please reach out to go over this information with us directly: email Rebecca.Mitchell@agriculture.ny.gov or call (518) 457-4066.