

Lambing

Information Sheet

Ear tagging lambs



National Advice Hub
T: 0300 323 0161
E: advice@fas.scot
W: www.fas.scot

It is a legal requirement to tag lambs within 9 months of birth, (6 months if housed overnight), or before they leave the holding. Lambs for slaughter should be identified using a single EID batch tag. Animals retained for breeding, or not slaughtered by 1 year of age, must be double tagged with one tag being electronic. It is recommended that EID tags should be yellow. More information is available at www.scoteid.com and www.scotland.gov.uk.

The requirement for EID and the possibilities that this opens up for recording flock data has led to increased numbers of young lambs being tagged. Done badly tagging can cause pain and infection with subsequent poor welfare and performance. There is also anecdotal evidence that it may lead to increased problems with joint ill due to the bacteria *Streptococcus dysgalactiae*. It is important that tagging is carried out correctly and particularly so in young lambs.



Only tag in hygienic conditions and not if lambs are wet, dirty, ill or have orf. Wearing gloves and keeping them clean will help reduce any spread of infection.

Single tags should be placed in the left ear around 1/3rd of the distance from the head.

Place the tag in the pliers and dip in a disinfectant solution. Replace with fresh solution if it becomes dirty.

Insert the tag in the softer middle part of the ear avoiding the cartilage ridges. The male part of the tag should be inserted from the back of the ear.

If loop tags are used allow space for the ear to grow.

Restrain animals firmly for tagging. Don't tag older lambs over the edge of a race as split ears result if they jump.

Follow the instructions given by the tag manufacturer and ask if further advice is required. Video clips on insertion techniques for different makes of tags are available on the Farmers Weekly website, (www.fwi.co.uk), and can also be accessed on YouTube. An internet search for "EID Insertion techniques" should direct you to the videos.



Visit www.fas.scot for further information or contact the helpline on 0300 323 0161, or by email at advice@fas.scot