

# ALBERTA SheepSmart

RESOURCES FOR PRODUCERS

Photo: THagedorn, AARD



Photo: Parker Stockfarm

## Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP)

Livestock traceability systems track individual animals through production to help protect animals, producers, livestock industries and the public. Animal identification is an integral part of traceability in Canada. The Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP) details the identification requirements for the sheep industry.

### Is CSIP mandatory?

Animal identification is mandatory for livestock under Canada's *Health of Animals Act*. Regulations are enforced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), and fines of up to \$10,000 may be incurred for noncompliance. Among other requirements\*, every sheep and lamb must be identified with an approved, uniquely numbered ear tag before it is moved from its farm of origin.

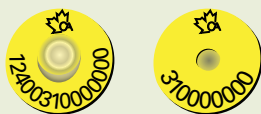
Everyone involved in the sheep industry must follow CSIP requirements, including producers, livestock dealers, auction marts, feedlot operators, transporters and processors. Any operation may be audited to ensure CSIP requirements are being met.

### Approved CSIP Tags: Single Tags

Shearwell Single Tag System (RFID loop tag)



Allflex Single Tag System (RFID button tag)



### Approved CSIP tags

Approved CSIP tags are yellow, are imprinted with the official CSIP logo and are radio frequency identification (RFID) enabled. Only tags approved for CSIP may be used (see 'Approved CSIP Tags' below).



Pink Ketchum Kurl Lock tags and pink plastic Allflex dangle are no longer available for purchase or legal for use.

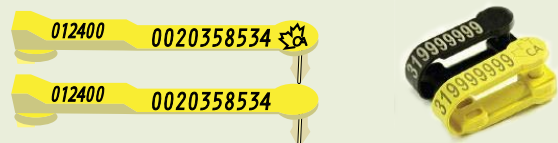
### Paired tags

Canadian Sheep Breeders Association members may use a paired tagging system as an alternative for tattooing registered sheep. Both tags of a set are imprinted with the same CSIP number and must only be applied to the same animal. It is illegal to transport animals bearing only the non-RFID tag.

\* For details of the regulations associated with the *Health of Animals Act*, go to [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca) or [www.ablamb.ca](http://www.ablamb.ca).

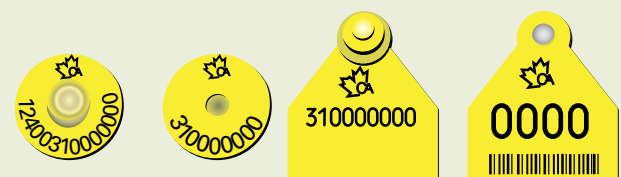
### Approved CSIP Tags: Paired Tags

Shearwell Paired Tag System: One RFID tag (yellow with logo) and one non-RFID tag (black without logo)



Note: Shearwell is transitioning from yellow non-RFID tags to black tags in 2018. Either coloured tag is acceptable during the transition.

Allflex Paired (Combo) Tag System:  
One RFID button, one non-RFID dangle tag



## Tag retention and readability

Proper tag handling and application helps to ensure tag function, animal welfare and reduce tag losses. Consider the following points.

### Store tags properly:

Tags should be stored in a warm, dry environment. Tags may become overly flexible if stored in damp conditions or brittle if stored in dry or very cold conditions. Returning tags to the correct environment may restore tags to a useable condition.

### Have the right equipment:

Only use the tag applicator (tagger) that is designed for use with the tags you have purchased.

### Apply tags correctly:

Carefully following recommended practices during tag application (including for cleanliness, animal restraint and tag placement) enhances animal welfare, tag function and tag retention.



Ear tag manufacturers provide full instructions regarding the use of their products. Visit [www.shearwell.ca](http://www.shearwell.ca) and [www.allflex.com](http://www.allflex.com) for details.

The Canadian Sheep Federation ([www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca)) and the Canadian Sheep Breeders Association ([www.sheepbreeders.ca](http://www.sheepbreeders.ca)) have developed step-by-step instructional videos detailing proper handling and application of CSIP ear tags.

Links to manufacturer's information and videos are available at [www.ablamb.ca](http://www.ablamb.ca). Contact the ALP office if you do not have internet access and would like to receive more information.

## Where to buy CSIP tags

The only approved distributor of CSIP tags is the Canadian Cooperative Wool Growers (CCWG) in Lethbridge. Call 800-567-3693 or visit [www.wool.ca](http://www.wool.ca) to order tags.

## CSIP tag assessment

Problems with CSIP ear tags should be reported to CCWG, and producers may complete the *Tag Assessment Form* available at [cansheep.ca](http://cansheep.ca) and [ablamb.ca](http://ablamb.ca). Feedback on tag function is valuable for future improvements.

## Increase productivity with RFID systems

All CSIP tags are RFID enabled. Having the ability to quickly and accurately identify animals greatly increases the efficiency of traceability. Easily tracking data on individual animals, also offers huge potential benefits for on-farm production.

Making use of RFID tags by integrating an electronic flock management system on your farm can enhance productivity through:

- Reduced handling time
- Decreased labour cost
- Improved animal welfare
- Easier data collection
- Increased data accuracy
- Increased handler safety
- Better health management and medication use



Basic system components include:

- RFID tags
- RFID reader to activate tags and capture data
- Computer to download reader information and run software
- Flock management software to analyze data and generate reports.

Supplemental equipment (e.g. weigh scales, drafting gates) may be added to a basic system.

Visit [www.ablamb.ca](http://www.ablamb.ca) for more information.