

Official Swine Ear Tags

Swine Identification 101: Understanding Swine Ear Tag Requirements

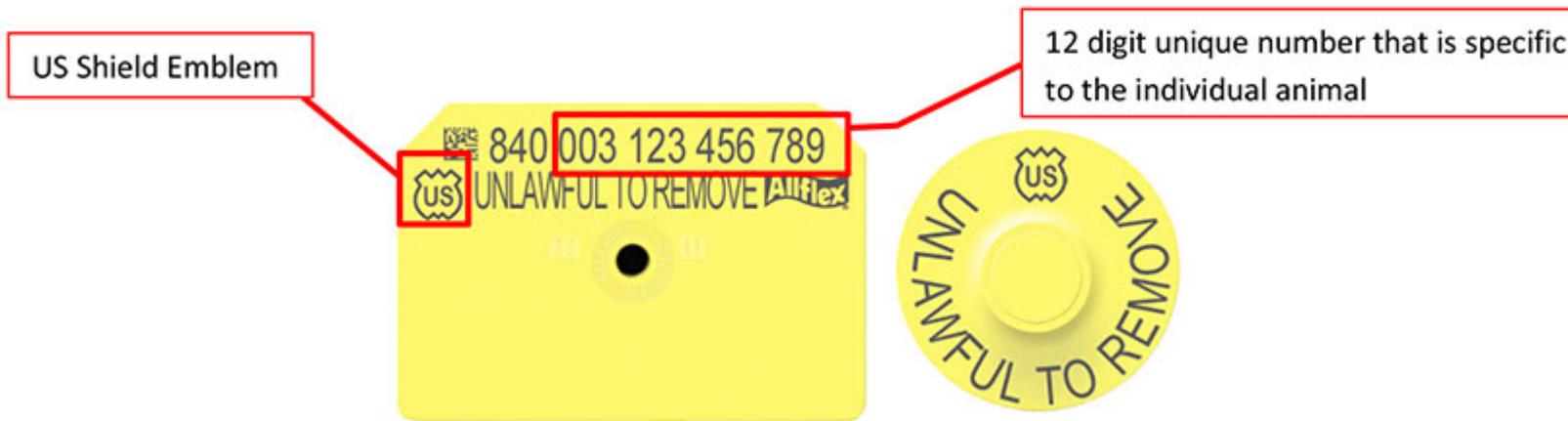
Due to a continued emphasis on livestock traceability within state and federal agencies and the livestock industry, the American Berkshire Association (ABA), Certified Pedigreed Swine (CPS) and Team Purebred (TP) now requires all animals being exhibited at ABA/CPS or TP events be identified with an official, permanently-numbered ear tag. The following information is designed to help answer questions about what is considered an official ear tag and how to obtain these tags.

1. What is a federally approved ear tag?
 - An official ear tag is a source of animal identification that, with accurate movement records, provides the ability to trace animals to their origin.
 - This capability is critical in the event of an animal disease emergency to help locate what points the animal has been in contact with.
 - Anyone who purchases federally approved ear tags will be required to submit their premises identification number when ordering.
 - The premises ID number will then be recorded in a database and associated with the ear tag numbers from this purchase.
2. Why are the ABA/CPS/TP requiring all animals to be tagged with federal ear tags?
 - The ABA/CPS/TP work diligently to comply with swine health regulations for shows and sales hosted across the United States.
 - Each state in which the ABA/CPS/TP hosts events has regulations for animal health and the identification of swine that move across state lines to come to shows
 - Some states may also have additional regulations for swine being transported for shows and sales.
 - These regulations vary from state to state.
 - Federally-approved ear tags allow swine exhibitors at ABA/CPS/TP shows as well as purchasers of hogs at ABA/CPS sales to best meet the needs of these diverse requirements for each state.
3. What is Premises Identification?
 - Premises identification (premises ID) is part of the Animal Disease Traceability Framework (ADT) that is designed to help identify animals to the locations they have been raised on or passed through during their lives
 - This number along with accurate movement records can serve as a critical piece of information in quickly tracing back an animal to a location in the event of an animal health emergency.
 - When registering a premises ID, the producer's contact information (name, address, phone for primary and secondary contacts) will be recorded.
4. How do I obtain a premises ID number?
 - Obtaining a premises ID number is typically a very simple process that involves contacting your state animal health agency.
 - Individuals can find their respective state's contact information by [clicking here](#) and accessing the list of state contacts.
5. What should be on my official swine ear tags to be able to show at an ABA/CPS/TP show?
 - Although there are a few different options for federally approved swine ear tags, the key components required are listed below and tags should be USDA approved:
 - A. **A unique number for each animal:** This would mean that each tag you purchase ends in a different number so that each animal has a tag that is unique to them. Think of this as the animal's first name.

- B. **Tamper proof and permanently numbered:** Tamper-proof, permanently-numbered tags will be produced with the numbers permanently printed on the tag during production, as opposed to receiving a blank tag and writing an identification number on the tag. They can only be used once and should not be removed.
 - C. **US shield emblem:** Federally-approved swine ear tags will possess a small US logo.
6. What kind of federally approved tag should I purchase for swine that will attend ABA/CPS/TP events?
- o There is a variety of ear tag options that meet all criteria required to be considered acceptable forms of ID for ABA/CPS/TP shows.
 - o The most common type of official ear tag used in animals shown at ABA/CPS/TP shows is an 840 ear tag.
 - o 840 Tags are also called AIN Tags which stands for Animal Identification Number
7. What is an 840 ear tag?
- o 840 ear tags are a great option for swine being shown at ABA/CPS/TP events.
 - o 840 tags comply with the requirements of the Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) framework for both visual and electronic identification.
 - o These tags are recognized in a standardized information system between federal, state and industry officials.
 - o Each tag contains 15 digits and will begin with the numbers 840 (the USA country code). The remaining 12 digits on the tag are unique to the individual animal.
 - o 840 tags come in a variety of shapes, sizes and colors (rectangular shape, round-button shape, etc) but each are accepted forms of official ID.
 - o Depending on the size and shape of the tag, additional information may be printed on the bottom of the tag, such as an additional management number for the animal or the producer's premises ID number.
8. How do I purchase 840 ear tags?
- o 840 ear tags can be purchased through authorized ear tag distributors. Many of these distributors have the ability for you to purchase tags through their online stores.
 - o When purchasing 840 tags, the purchaser will be required to submit their premises ID number.
 - o The tag distributor will then confirm that the premises ID number given is accurate. If there is an issue with the premises ID number, the producer will be contacted to correct the issue.
 - o Once the premises ID number of the tag purchaser is validated, the premises ID will be recorded in a database with the tag numbers that are being purchased. This is how the traceability component of the federal tags becomes effective.
 - o *Keep in mind, it may take several days for your tag order to be received, processed, shipped and delivered.*
9. Can I purchase 840 ear tags from my veterinarian?
- o Your veterinarian may be an option to obtain 840 ear tags. However they are not a stockable tag, meaning that each time you order 840 ear tags, you must provide your premises ID so that it is specific to the ear tags you are purchasing. This can only be done through an authorized ear tag dealer.
 - o Therefore, if you are purchasing ear tags through your veterinarian, your vet will follow the same process that you would, when purchasing tags through an authorized tag manager and dealer. Your veterinarian would require you to provide your premises ID number to make a purchase from the ear tag seller.
10. Does my premises ID have to be printed on my 840 ear tag?
- o Although some 840 ear tags do provide enough room to print the producers premises ID on the bottom portion of the tag, this is not a requirement for animal's being shown at ABA/CPS/TP shows.
 - o AN 840 Tag with a PIN is not equivalent to the Official PIN Tag that is being required a condition of sale by the majority of packers that harvest sow and boars

- The 840 ear tag will provide the capability of retrieving the premises ID associated with the animal in a national database, since this information is recorded when the tags are purchased.
11. What is the difference between a visual 840 ear tag and a RFID 840 ear tag?
- Visual 840 ear tags do not have any electronic capability and are only used as a source of visual identification. Visual tags may often be less expensive compared to electronic tags.
 - Electronic Identification tags, also known as Radio Frequency Identification ear tags (RFID ear tags) can be utilized to store and track information through a database using a readable scanner (wand). This provides more options for record keeping on performance records for producers.
 - 840 tags DO NOT have to be RFID capable to be accepted at NSR or NJSA shows. Both visual 840 tags and RFID 840 tags are acceptable forms of identification. The key is that the tag is an 840 tag.

Example 1: 840 rectangular ear tag without any management number or premises ID printed on bottom. This is the standard 840 ear tag layout. This would be an acceptable form of ID since each tag still possesses a unique 12 digit number for each animal.



Example 2: 840 ear tag with management number printed on bottom. In this case, the tag purchaser chose to add additional numbers to the blank section of the tag at the bottom for management purposes.



Example 3: 840 ear tag with premises ID number printed on bottom. Another option is to have your premises ID printed on the blank section of the tag.



Example 4: 840 round button ear tag



12. Will 840 ear tags also meet the new ear tag requirement put in place as of January 1, 2015 for cull sows and boars being shipped for harvest?
 - The answer is no. As of Jan. 1, 2015, official **Premises Identification Tags (PIN Tags)** are the only tags that meet packer requirement for identification of the sows and boars they purchase from market channels.
 - For more information on PIN tags, visit the National Pork Board resource by [clicking here](#).
13. What is the correct tag that should be used when culling breeding stock and shipping for harvest?

- The official PIN Tag is the only official ear tag that meets packer requirements for the identification of the breeding stock they purchase in market channels.
- *Not to be confused with 840 ear tags*, PIN tags are SPECIFICALLY designed for culled breeding animals that are going to be shipped for harvest only. Many producers use them as their management tag as well.
- PIN tags can be obtained by contacting an authorized ear tag dealer.
- When ordering PN Tags, the producer will be required to provide their premises identification number. This will be validated and printed on each tag. A management number can also be printed on the tag if a producer wants to use the tag for management purposes.

14. Can I use my PIN tags for my showpigs as a form of official identification?

Official PIN tags are not intended for use in showpigs that are going to be exhibited at ABA/CPS/TP events because they are specifically designed for use in breeding stock prior to them entering harvest channels. Official PIN Tags cannot be removed by law and are used to assist Animal Health Authorities in getting back to the farm the animal came from when an investigation is needed because of a residue or animal health issue. If this occurs, the person to whom the PIN Tag was registered will be contacted to assist in the investigation and production and sales records must be made readily available to Animal Health Authorities upon request¹ and must conform to applicable regulations.

¹ *Animal Health Protection Act, Section 10408*

Example 5: Premises Identification Tags (PIN Tag) are designed for use in breeding swine being shipped to enter harvest channels.



15. Can I continue to use the metal band ear tags (NUES ear tags) as official identification for hogs going to ABA/CPS/TP shows?

- The ABA/CPS/TP will still allow exhibitors to use NUES tags if they choose to.
- These ear tags often called “silver” or “brite” tags and are a part of the National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES).
- There are metal and plastic versions of these tags. Often times, exhibitors may obtain the metal “band” shaped tags for swine.

16. Where can I purchase NUES tags?

- NUES tags have historically been used for disease testing and interstate movement. State and Tribes administer the distribution of NUES ear tags. They may elect to restrict

their use to Accredited Veterinarians or make them available direct to producers as well as through veterinarians.

- Producers must contact their State or Tribe animal health official to find out if NUES ear tags are available in their area.

Example 6: Plastic NUES tag from Allflex.



Example 7: Metal NUES tag.

