



## Scrapie Factsheet

The University of New Hampshire- Cooperative Extension and 4-H Support the National Scrapie Eradication Initiative and the USDA Scrapie Regulations. Scrapie is a fatal, contagious disease affecting the brain and central nervous system of sheep and goats. It is most often transmitted through birth fluids to other sheep and goats during lambing season and can survive in the environment for an extended period of time. Affected animals usually show behavioral changes such as tremors, rubbing and scratching, loss of coordination, stumbling, lip smacking, weakness, weight loss, and eventually death. Signs progress over 1-6 months, and infected animals always die. There is no treatment. Scrapie is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE).

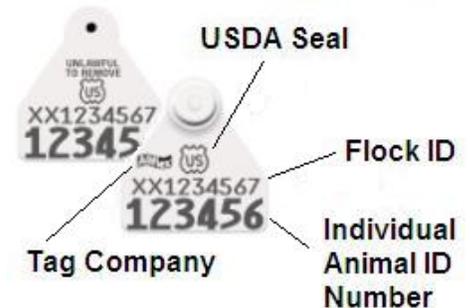


Sheep and goats need to be officially identified with an Official Tag or Approved Tattoo

when the following applies:

- 1) Change of ownership
- 2) Attending shows and exhibits
- 3) Going to sales or livestock auctions/markets
- 4) Going to slaughter (unless under 18 months of age)
- 5) Interstate movement

It is illegal to remove an official tag and the tag of origin should remain in the ear of the animal. Tags cannot be switched to another animal and a second tag cannot be put into the animals' ear. If the animal loses its tag, it should be retagged with another official ID and the change noted in your records. It is the flock owner's responsibility to keep records of animals and their applied scrapie tags.



Suggested records include:

- Animal ID (official and farm tags if any) and registration info
- Date of birth (when known)
- Sex, breed, other characteristics such as color or markings
- Date of acquisition / disposal with name of buyers and seller

Such records are an important part of good animal husbandry. Records including all unusual events, such as exhibition, exposure to other sheep, illnesses, etc., are also recommended. These records should be maintained for 5 years after the death or disposal of the animal. As a 4-H exhibitor, coach, or volunteer, it is essential that we hold ourselves to the highest ethical standard when it comes to animal identification and disease traceability.

***For more information, to order tags or to report an animal with clinical signs of scrapie***

Contact USDA/APHIS Veterinary Services at (508) 363-2290 / P.O. Box 787 Sutton, MA. Visit the web at <http://www.eradicatescrapie.org/>. You can also contact the USDA's NH Veterinary Medical Officer, Dr. Nicole Giguere, at 603-545-2560 or [Nicole.m.giguere@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Nicole.m.giguere@aphis.usda.gov).

In addition, the USDA offers free scrapie testing for many sheep and goats. Animals that qualify (based on age or illness) for scrapie testing are eligible for a free necropsy at the New Hampshire Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. Owners will receive a free gross necropsy, disposal of the carcass, and a necropsy report detailing any findings. This can be a useful management tool, even if the cause of death is known or suspected. For more information, contact Dr. Nicole Giguere.