

## **Attention all Goat showmen and Goat Leaders of Kent County:**

I have recently become aware of some changes in the USDA official Identification requirements for goats. All goats need to be officially identified for any movement from their home premises. The new policy basically sets requirements for registered and unregistered goats, separately. You will need this information to complete declaration forms in June, and for goat check-in at the fair.

**Registered Goats:** registered goats may be tattooed with the registry-assigned number. The USDA requires that goats be tattooed in the ear. The registry prefix must be tattooed in the right ear and the unique individual production number in the left ear or both prefix and production number in both ears. (example: MIABC 0001- Right ear would have “MIABC” and the Left ear would have “0001”). Tattoos must be legible. The registration certificate with tattoo number must accompany the animal!

**Unregistered Goats:** goats that are not eligible to be registered can be identified by using **Scrapie eartags**. White metal or white 2x plastic eartags can be obtained free of charge from the USDA by calling 1-866-USDA-TAG. (Your first order of tags does come with a tagging gun.) Other colors or plastic shapes that have been approved by USDA can be ordered directly from USDA-approved manufacturer after the producer has obtained a premises ID number. Premises IDs need to be requested by calling 1-866-USDA TAG. (Only earless goats may be tagged in the tail web.)

If those that own unregistered goats do not want to use tags, the only other option is **Scrapie flock ID tattoos**. The flock ID must be tattooed in the right ear and the unique individual production number in the left ear or both prefix and production number in both ears. (example: MIA1000 0001-Right ear would be “MIA1000” and the Left ear would be “0001”) Goats may be tattooed in the tail web. All tattoos must be legible. Even if you choose not to use the tags, you still need to request the tags from the USDA by calling 1-866-USDA TAG, so you can tattoo the number from the tag onto the goat. The tag (with the attachment prong broken off) needs to accompany the goat.

In the past, we have allowed goats to be identified with microchips, however the new information from the USDA reads: “Microchips may be used in registered goats and the chip number must be on the registration certificate as it was issued by the association (not handwritten). The registration certificate and a microchip reader must accompany the goat for this to be considered official identification. **Other microchips such as those used for tracking pets are not official identification.**”

So... as far as microchips are concerned, we will allow goats that have been shown in past years at the KCYF with microchips as their form of ID, to use the microchip as their form of ID for declaration and check in at the fair this year. Any new baby kids, or new goats for this show year (2009), should comply with the new guidelines. Also, just a reminder for those purchasing goats from breeders or auctions, **it is the sellers responsibility, and the law, to officially tag or tattoo a goat before it is sold and taken off the premises. Please make sure that you do not purchase a goat that is not officially ID'd.** If you have questions (and I expect to get many) please call me at 616-866-5105 or e-mail me at [GJGLB@aol.com](mailto:GJGLB@aol.com) ☺

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