

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SUMMARY OF CHANGE TO FORMAT OF CATTLE EAR TAGS

Why is the format of ear tags changing?

EU legislation has always allowed any number of characters to be used on cattle ear tags, provided this does not exceed fourteen. However, for commercial reasons, some importers in other member States are now insisting that ear tags have 14 characters before they will accept our cattle. DARD is therefore introducing these changes in order to facilitate trade. This is not required for trade to GB.

When will the changes take effect?

From Saturday 15 September 2007, all new and replacement tags will be printed with fourteen characters.

Will my herd number change?

If your herd number is currently made up of less than six digits, then it will be changed to a six digit format by the addition of zeros e.g. the herd number 5834 will now become 580034. In all future correspondence with DARD, you must use your six digit herd number. DARD is writing to all those herd-keepers directly impacted by this change.

What will these changes mean for me?

Your herd number will change to six digits but you will not need to change the tags which have already been applied to your cattle. However, please note that any replacement tags ordered from Saturday 15 September will be printed in fourteen character format.

Can I use up existing supplies of ear tags?

Yes, DARD will allow herd keepers until the end of September 2008 to use up existing supplies of ear tags, which consist of less than 14-characters.

Will a Barcode also have to be printed on a tag?

This is optional, depending on whether you intend to export to a country which requires barcodes to be printed on the tag. Tag suppliers have indicated that they can facilitate a request for a barcode to be included but it will be a commercial decision for you to decide whether it is required.