



Sheep Industry Continues Towards Mandatory RFID Tags

20 June 2011 - Discussions around traceability for the Canadian Sheep Industry have been and continue to be a major focus of the Canadian Sheep Federation's Board of Directors and staff.

In June 2010, the Canadian Sheep Federation approved a motion to move the sheep industry towards mandatory RFID tags. This decision was given a great deal of consideration. Not only does an RFID system help sheep producers meet anticipated traceability requirements, it also gives producers an opportunity to move the industry forward.

Government continues to support a mandate to phase in the necessary infrastructure to allow for the tracing of products and food animals from the point of origin (the farm) to the consumer starting in 2011. As such, the sheep industry, in conjunction with other species that have either chosen to move forward and/or were considered one of the priority species with sheep (i.e. beef, swine and poultry), continue to discuss with government what mandatory traceability will look like. With the necessary infrastructure in place, identified commodities will continue to negotiate with government what the regulations will look like to facilitate a 'farm to fork' traceability system.

As such, the Canadian Sheep Federation still feels confident that a move towards mandatory RFID tagging will best position our industry to discuss with government what the future of traceability will look like for our industry, in addition to protecting our industry and remaining competitive with importing countries such as Australia, New Zealand and the United States. Currently, Canadian producers only supply 47 per cent of the lamb that Canadians consume. We have a market ready and waiting for Canadian lamb and an RFID system gives us one of the tools we need to increase production to fill that demand.

As primary producers, implementation of new technologies by those further down the value chain requires having animals equipped with RFID tags in order to test and use those technologies. In the end, all those along the value chain will be required to comply with new regulations once in place.

As we continue forward with the timelines that were approved by the CSF Board of Directors in June 2010 to move towards mandatory RFID tags, the Canadian Sheep Federation has felt it necessary to add some further clarification around the timelines to best address producer concerns and facilitate a smooth transition for the industry. As such, please note the following:

July 1, 2011

- Ketchum Kurl lock # 3 and Allflex dangle tags will no longer be available for sale from the manufacturers, Ketchum and Allflex, as Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP) tags;
- **Retailers will have until October 1, 2011 to sell any remaining stocks.**

January 1, 2012



- Producers **are encouraged** to tag all animals born or tagged after this date with CSIP approved RFID tags (Shearwell Data Ltd SET tag or Allflex RFID Button Tag).
- Producers need to carefully monitor their stocks and use up inventory of the Ketchum Kurl lock #3 and Allflex dangle tags before December 31, 2012.
- **If you tag an animal which will still be in the population as of January 1, 2013 (i.e. breeding stock) with a non-RFID tag, that animal will be non-compliant after January 1, 2013. As a result, you will be required to retag the animal with a CSIP approved RFID tag and cross-reference with the old identification number if the animal is to leave the farm after January 1, 2013.**

January 1, 2013

- Ketchum Kurl lock #3 and the Allflex dangle tags will be officially removed from the list of approved tags for the CSIP and will no longer be accepted from this date forward at sales, abattoirs or by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) for shipping, transfer or sale of sheep in Canada.

CSF remains committed to working closely with provincial organizations to provide them with timely communication, information and education required to make sure the RFID system provides a positive return for the industry.

We strongly believe that this continues to be the right decision for our industry. And we're confident it will play a key role in helping us realize our tremendous potential.

The funding for this initiative was made available under the Canadian Industry Traceability Infrastructure Program (CITIP), and will help the sheep industry address the federal government's initiative for mandatory traceability as one of the four priority species (Hogs, Cattle, Sheep and Poultry) identified by government.

The Canadian Sheep Federation is a national, non-profit organization that represents all Canadian sheep producers. Its mission is further the viability, expansion and prosperity of the Canadian sheep and wool industry. For more information contact the Canadian Sheep Federation at 1-888-684-7739 or info@cansheep.ca.

