



Sheep and Goat eID Saleyards Frequently Asked Questions

What is an eID?

An eID is an electronic identification device that has an internal microchip and is printed with a unique serial number, which is attached to individual sheep and farmed goats generally in the form of an ear tag, or leg band for some goats. The eID can be scanned and the individual electronic data is uploaded to the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) database. The NLIS is Australia's system for the identification and traceability of cattle, pigs, sheep and goats.

Why is eID being implemented?

NLIS (Sheep and Goats) as a mob-based system was fully implemented in mid-2010. The NLIS has matured, and our markets are more stringent in their traceability requirements. Hence the need to introduce a more accurate and efficient traceability system for sheep and goats.

The introduction of eID will:

- Provide more accurate and timely traceability of animals
- Reduce time delays to manage an emergency disease or residue incident
- Reduce the number of animals and producers impacted (including animals destroyed) in response to an emergency disease
- Reduce the time that Australia is restricted from export markets following an emergency disease or residue incident

Why can't eID be introduced on a voluntary basis?

The key reason for introducing eID is to improve traceability of individual animals and their cohorts in the event of an emergency disease incursion. If eID is introduced on a voluntary basis, then the ability to undertake accurate and timely traceability will be negatively affected by those producers who are still using a visual tag under a mob-based system. Running two traceability systems in parallel is inefficient, more complex and costly, and less accurate.

This would mean that delays in tracing animals negatively impact the whole sheep and goat sector, leading to disease spread, more animals and producers impacted and more time out of our key export markets.

What Government assistance will be provided to offset the costs to implement eID?

\$38 million has been allocated by the NSW Government to support the sheep and goat industry transition to implement eID. This includes the \$7.2 million Australian Government contribution.

Eligible saleyards, processors, primary producers and stock and station agents in NSW can apply for a rebate on the purchase and installation of eID systems and equipment.

Sheep and Goat eID

Factsheet

Applications for the NSW Sheep and Goat eID Infrastructure Rebate Scheme open on

- 1 August for saleyards and processors.
- 3 October for producers and stock and station agents.

Information about the rebate, including program guidelines and FAQs are available on the RAA website: www.raa.nsw.gov.au/grants/eid.

What is the benefit of having mandatory sheep and goat eID in NSW if there is a disease outbreak?

The recent 2020 SAFEMEAT Traceability Evaluation Exercise reported that within 24 hours, 70% of sheep slaughtered using visual tags were traceable back to the vendor or property of residence for the last 30 days, compared to almost 100% of sheep with eIDs accurately traced back to vendor or property of residence within the same time period.

Whilst eID does not prevent an exotic disease or residue incident, eID enables more accurate and timely traceability of animals, and their cohorts. This is critical for managing disease outbreaks swiftly, and reducing the time Australia faces export market bans.

For example, the UK foot-and-mouth outbreak in 2001 took seven weeks to trace animals due to the absence of eID. The disease spread, which resulted in a seven-year export market ban. The implementation of eID in Victoria demonstrated that traceback can now take minutes instead of days.

Victoria has smaller saleyards than NSW. Is it even possible to scan the larger numbers in NSW saleyards prior to sale?

Ballarat has scanned 60,000 sheep in one day on numerous occasions. By comparison, the largest ever sale in NSW was 80,000 at Wagga Wagga.

This demonstrates the feasibility of scanning substantial numbers at NSW saleyards. Manufacturers are also offering a five-way scanner for saleyards, and Victoria presently employs only three-way auto drafters/scanners.

Will saleyards be required to do the two types of transfers between when they are required to scan eID and when all sheep and farmed goats must have eIDs?

Yes. From 1 January 2025, until 1 January 2027, sheep and goats with eIDs and those with visual tags will require distinct handling at saleyards. During this period, there will be two types of uploads to the NLIS database:

- Mob-Based uploads - between January 2025 and January 2027, movements to and from saleyards for older sheep and farmed goats identified with visual tags will be uploaded on a mob-basis, by the saleyard office.
- Individual uploads - from January 2025 any sheep and farmed goats with eIDs will be individually scanned, and their eID data uploaded to the NLIS database, by the saleyard office.

This transitional arrangement ensures that both types of uploads are effectively managed during this period.
