

DPI Primefact

NLIS: buying and selling pigs

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Livestock Traceability, Animal Biosecurity, NSW DPI

There are NLIS requirements when buying, moving and selling pigs in NSW

Introduction

The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) underpins access of Australian livestock products to international markets. NLIS allows for traceability of livestock through a combination of permanent identifiers, movement documents and database records.

The NLIS database holds information on livestock movements from birth to slaughter. It is an important tracing tool in Australia's biosecurity framework allowing effective management of livestock diseases, which in turn protects and enhances Australia's reputation as a producer of animal products that are free of chemical residues and exotic diseases.

In NSW the NLIS is supported by the Biosecurity (NLIS) Regulation 2017.

The NLIS Regulation includes mandatory identification and traceability requirements for pigs in NSW including:

- Property Identification Codes (PIC)
- Permanent identification of pigs
- Information requirements for stock transactions and movement
 - Movement document (PigPass NVD)
 - Reporting pig movements (PigPass database)

Rapid identification and tracing of pigs in the event of an emergency disease or a detection of chemical residues maintains consumer confidence and ensures a return to normal operations along the supply chain as soon as possible.

The NLIS helps governments to protect human health through knowledge of the source and production of food that is safe and free from contamination.

What does this mean for me?

To sell pigs either direct to an abattoir, through a saleyard, or direct to another producer you must:

- Have a property identification code or PIC

- Have a registered swine brand and/or NLIS accredited ear tags which include your PIC
- Ensure all pigs are correctly identified with your registered swine brand or accredited NLIS ear tag
- Be registered for [PigPass](#)
- Correctly complete a movement document - PigPass National Vendor Declaration (NVD) to travel with the pigs
- Keep a record of the PigPass NVD for 3 years

To purchase pigs, you must:

- Have a property identification code or PIC
- Provide your PIC to the selling agent at a saleyard or selling pig owner
- Be registered with PigPass so you can record movements onto your property within 2 days
- Keep a record of the PigPass NVD for 3 years

What is a PIC?

A property identification code is a 2-letter 6-number sequence that is assigned to a property, for example, NA471234. This code is unique to that property.

You must have a PIC if you keep one or more pigs on your property, even if they are pets.

If you run other livestock on your property and already have a PIC, use this PIC when buying, moving and selling your pigs.

Apply to your [Local Land Services](#) (LLS) to obtain a PIC for your property if you don't yet have a PIC.

How do I correctly identify my pigs?

Pigs must be identified before they move from a property to a saleyard, another property or to an abattoir.

Pigs that weigh 25 kg or more must be identified with either a registered swine brand or an NLIS accredited ear tag that includes the PIC of the property they are leaving.

Pigs weighing less than 25 kg must not be branded; they must only be identified with an accredited NLIS ear tag.

Swine brands

A swine brand is a tattoo slap brand that consists of the 6 digits of the PIC and is applied to the shoulder of pigs weighing more than 25 kg on that property (Figure 1). For example, if the PIC is NA471234 the swine brand is 471234.

Application for a registered swine brand can be made through your [LLS](#) office.

As swine brands are associated with the PIC and the property they are registered to, they cannot be used on pigs originating from a different property.

Pigs weighing more than 25 kg should be branded on one shoulder using carbon-based ink or paste. If moved to a subsequent property to grow out, they may be branded on the other shoulder.

Pigs greater than 25 kg live weight may also be identified with an NLIS accredited ear tag if a brand is not available.

Pigs weighing less than 25 kg live weight must only be identified with an accredited NLIS ear tag. Pigs less than 25kg must not be branded in NSW.

LLS can advise where to purchase swine brand or tattoo equipment.



Figure 1. Pig branded on the shoulder with the 6 digits of the PIC

Branding and brand maintenance

To ensure clear, legible branding of pigs:

- Never use another owner's brand
- Ensure the brand is maintained in good operating conditions; it is clean, and needles are sharp and straight and not clogged with old ink or hair
- Use carbon-based branding ink or paste so the brand will still be readable after the pig is slaughtered and dehaired. Do not use boot polish, stock sprays or bale stencilling ink.
- Press the tattoo into an ink-impregnated pad to ensure needles are covered with ink.
- Strike the tattoo flat onto the pig's shoulder with enough force for skin penetration of all needles. Never strike the pig over the backbone.
- Re-ink the tattoo before branding each pig.
- If pigs are excessively dirty, wash the shoulder area before tattooing.
- Replace brands that are worn, broken or have damaged needles.
- Brand pigs on one or both shoulders within 7 days before leaving the property.

Use of Crown Brands

If you don't have a brand, there are provisions for special or crown brands to be applied by LLS authorised officers. This brand is applied to pigs over 25 kg for a small fee if a brand for the property is not available. The crown brand is applied over the pig's rump.

Application may be made to your LLS to use a crown brand in special circumstances.

NLIS accredited ear tags

NLIS accredited ear tags are either yellow or orange in colour and are printed with a property's unique PIC, the NLIS logo and a P in a circle. These ear tags are used to permanently identify pigs less than 25 kg live-weight and may be used as an option for pigs greater than 25kg instead of

branding.

Breeder tags are **yellow** (Figure 2) and must only be attached to pigs bred on the same property as the PIC on the ear tag. A pig must only have one breeder tag.



Figure 2. Yellow breeder NLIS ear tag

Post-breeder tags are **orange** (Figure 3) and are used on pigs that were either born on a different property or whose property of birth is unknown. The PIC on the tag must belong to the property on which the pigs are being tagged. More than one post breeder device may be attached to a pig, as a different tag is attached each time the pig moves from a different property (PIC).



Figure 3. Orange post-breeder NLIS ear tag

tag

Pig NLIS movement documents

The **PigPass National Vendor Declaration** (NVD) meets all NLIS requirements for movement documents and records for pigs. It also meets industry and processing standards for product integrity under the Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance Program (APIQ).

You can register with PigPass and obtain an NVD at www.pigpass.com.au/register.

The PigPass NVD must accompany pigs for all movements and be provided to the buyer or person receiving the pigs (where applicable) including:

- Movement to another property for normal management or after sale
- Movement to saleyards or abattoirs
- Movement to agricultural shows or to any other property for any other stock event purpose, even if ownership of the pigs doesn't change.

Information on the PigPass NVD must be accurate and complete and include:

- Owner of the pigs

- The PIC and address of the where the pigs were dispatched from (From PIC)
- The date movement commenced
- The number and type of pigs being moved
- The destination address and PIC the pigs are moving to (To PIC)
- The brand or ear tags applied to the pigs
- The NVD unique serial number

It is an offence if any of this information is false or misleading, for example an incorrect PIC or brand.

Responsibility for the accuracy and completion of the PigPass NVD rests with the owner of the pigs.

A Travelling Stock Statement (TSS) may also be used as an NLIS movement document for movements between properties if a PigPass NVD isn't available.

TSSs can be obtained from your regional LLS office.

Recording pig movements

It is the responsibility of the person receiving any pigs onto their property to record the movement in the PigPass database within 2 days of the movement, unless they have been bought at a saleyard.

This includes pig owners, selling agents, saleyard operators, stock event operators (shows and other events) and abattoir operators.

Agents, saleyard and abattoir operators must keep records of movement documents for 3 years. Pig producers (vendors and purchasers) and stock event operators must keep records for 3 years.

NLIS – other requirements

Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance (APIQ) program

Pigs moved between PICs where there is no change of ownership (e.g., between breeder and grow-out units) do not need to be identified or accompanied by a PigPass NVD if:

- The properties are both accredited in the APIQ program, and
- The movement is recorded in the PigPass database within 2 days.

Unweaned piglets

Unweaned piglets that are sold with their dam do not need to be tagged if:

- The piglets remain with their mother,
- The numbers of sows and piglets are included on the PigPass NVD, and
- A permit has been obtained from LLS to move the piglets without identification.

If the piglets are separated from the sow, they must be tagged with an NLIS accredited ear tag.

Whole suckling pigs

Suckling pigs that move directly to an abattoir for market should be identified with an NLIS ear tag and be accompanied by a PigPass NVD.

Penalties

Under the *Biosecurity (NLIS) Regulation 2017*, penalties can be applied if a person fails to:

- properly identify pigs,
- provide a correctly completed movement document, or
- record a movement of pigs in the PigPass database within 2 days.

Meat inspectors at abattoirs may prevent slaughter or processing of any pigs which are not branded or are branded illegibly, or which are not accompanied by a completed PigPass NVD or other movement document.

It is an offence for an agent to sell pigs that are not identified, or for any person to buy pigs without a brand or NLIS ear tag. The owner of any pigs at a saleyard which are not correctly identified is guilty of an offence.

Not providing a PigPass or TSS is also an offence. A NLIS movement document must accompany all pigs when they are moved to any other property. An agent must only sell pigs if they are accompanied by a PigPass or TSS.

Producers, including vendors and purchasers, must keep a record of the movement document (PigPass or TSS) for three years. Agents as well as saleyard and abattoir operators must also keep a record of the movement document for three years.

Where can I go for more information?

PigPass: 1800 001 458 (Helpdesk) or email: helpdesk@pigpass.com.au

See: website: <http://www.pigpass.com.au>,

NLIS accredited pig devices: <https://pigpass.australianpork.com.au/faq>

PICs and swine brands - Local Land Services: 1300 795 299 or see: <https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/i-want-to/contact-my-local-office>

NSW DPI NLIS Enquiries: enquiries.nlis@dpi.nsw.gov.au

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