



**OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE**

Protect. Promote. Prosper.

Animal Health Program

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MESSY EARS ARE BEAUTIFUL

The ears of cattle and bison tell us a lot about them and their history.



THE IMPORTANCE OF EARS

Official Identification (ID) for cattle and bison is very important. It is permanent ID that follows the animal for its whole life. It allows state and federal animal health officials to track where that animal has been throughout its life, which is important in controlling animal disease.



All official ID tags have the US Shield on them, indicating that they are approved by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

**IT IS A FEDERAL CRIME TO REMOVE OFFICIAL
IDENTIFICATION**

June 2026

Official ID Types

OFFICIAL ID COMMONLY FOUND ON CATTLE AND BISON INCLUDE: RFID 840 TAGS, NUES TAGS, AND REGISTRATION TATTOOS.



RFID 840 TAGS

Also called AIN tags. These are the only form of official ID tag allowed to be applied to cattle and bison after November 5th, 2024. The number always starts with 840 and has 15 digits. These tags can be read visually or with an RFID reading device.

REGISTRATION TATTOOS

Tattoos can be used as official ID for cattle and bison but only if the tattoo is listed on their registration papers and those papers accompany the animal as it travels. Tattoos CANNOT be used for crossbred or unregistered animals. Many states limit the use of tattoos for import purposes.



NUES METAL TAGS

Metal NUES tags, also called metal clip tags, can be official ID for cattle and bison but only if they were applied to the animal **before November 5, 2024**.

NUES tags begin with the origin state code followed by 2 or 3 letters, then 4 digits. These tags are only visually readable.