

6/1/06

Attention all Sheep and Goat Producers:

In an effort to control and eradicate scrapie from all United States flocks, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has introduced a new official identification system. Official identification consists of a special ear tag, or if the goat is registered a tattoo of the individual's registration number. At this point, all sheep and goats that are over 18 months of age are required to have the official tags or an official tattoo.

Situations which will require an official tag or tattoo:

1. Sheep or goats of any age that are being sold.
2. Sheep or goats of any age that are being exhibited (going to a show or to fair).
3. Sheep or goats greater than 18 months of age going for slaughter.
4. Sheep or goat herds that are being tested for various reportable diseases, such as Brucellosis, Scrapie, or Tuberculosis.

While Eastview Veterinary Clinic does have a limited supply of the official eartags, the USDA would like for producers to register directly so they can obtain a unique flock identification number. The official eartags can be obtained from the USDA at no cost to producers.

To get an informational packet with a tag request form, give Anna Draisey a call. She is the Scrapie Program Coordinator for New York's USDA office. Her number is 518-858-1424, and email is anna.draisey@aphis.usda.gov. Please be sure to leave your full name (including spelling), address, and telephone number so a packet can be forwarded to you. Turn around time for receiving the eartags after the request forms have been sent is about three weeks, so don't delay if an event is coming up for which you will need an eartag.

For more information about the National Animal Identification System and various diseases such as Scrapie, go to the USDA website at www.aphis.usda.gov/vs.

