

Upcoming tagging changes in the dairy industry



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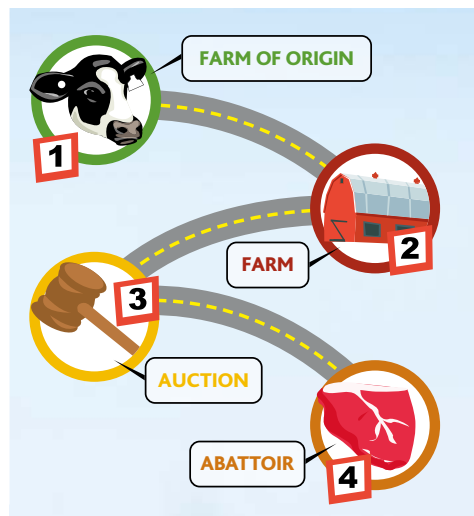
Did you know? DairyTrace and proAction® encourage dual tagging as the ideal practice for identifying all calves born on dairy farms across Canada. As an allowable exception, the white single button radio frequency identification (RFID) tag was introduced by DairyTrace in 2020 as an option for identifying calves born on a dairy farm but are destined for purposes other than dairy production. This exception does not apply in provinces where double tagging is required.

Since 2020, both the DairyTrace white single button RFID ear tag and the approved Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) beef tags were allowable under proAction® as an exception for identifying any calves born on a dairy farm and destined for purposes other than dairy production. However, as of **September 1, 2023**, this exception for dual tagging will now only allow the use of white single button RFID dairy tags and not yellow CCIA beef tags. *Note: these changes do not affect farmers in the province of Quebec as dual tagging is already required for all calves.*

Why?

The goal of our national dairy cattle traceability system is to follow the movement of all calves born on a dairy farm **from birth to end of life**. Even if calves leave the dairy farm early in life, the disease traceback system for dairy cattle will be most effective for both dairy and veal production sectors if the movement data on these animals is part of the DairyTrace database.

By knowing where animals come from and where they reside, consumers and suppliers alike can feel confident in their food supply chain – thanks to transparent livestock traceability. The transition to the white single button dairy tags from the yellow beef tags will keep the traceability information for dairy-born animals within DairyTrace to ensure a strong and responsive traceability system.



What does this mean to veal farmers?

As veal farmers, you have a choice and can either continue to purchase yellow CCIA tags or order the white single button tags for use on your farm in case of tag loss. Since veal producers and dairy farmers share such a close relationship, while not mandatory, we encourage the use of white single RFID button tags on veal farms.

Hint: When retagging an animal that has lost its ear tag, remember to report the cross-reference event with their previous and new tag number to a national traceability database

(DairyTrace/Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS)). If you are using the white single button tags, report these tagging events through DairyTrace.

How does this affect veal farmers?

As a result of this change, veal farmers and affiliates of the dairy industry will notice that all calves born on a dairy farm after September 1, 2023, will be identified with a white dairy tag (either dual or single) and should no longer be tagged by dairy farmers with a yellow CCIA beef tag. If an animal arrives at your operation with a white single button tag, this is an official tag and removal of this tag is prohibited by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

What is happening to the yellow CCIA beef tags?

The yellow CCIA beef tags will still be available for purchase for non-dairy producers. Starting September 1, 2023, dairy farmers will be required to apply a white dairy tag (either dual or single), rather than using CCIA beef tags to the calves identified in the exception.

Setting up a DairyTrace account

If you wish to set up a DairyTrace account to order dairy tags or to report traceability events you can contact DairyTrace Customer Services by email, info@dairytrace.ca or phone 1-866-558-7223 and request to set up a veal producer account.

Setting up an account can also help create a one-stop reporting of all required bovine traceability events for all calves on your veal operation directly to DairyTrace (including any that may have a yellow beef tag). In addition, upon creating an account and completing a move-in event, you can access birthdate certificates for dairy-tagged calves for age verification. Being a part of the dairy industry traceability system and working alongside Canada's dairy farmers maintains a strong partnership between our industries. ■