

# Animal Disease Traceability Requirements for Cattle and Bison Moving Interstate

## Q. What are the requirements for moving cattle and bison interstate under the final rule?

A. Unless otherwise exempt, cattle and bison will have to be officially identified and accompanied by an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection (ICVI) or other movement document.

Additional traceability requirements for this group will be addressed in separate rulemaking in the future, allowing more time for APHIS to work closely with industry to ensure the requirements are effective and can be implemented.

## Q. Are all interstate movements of cattle and bison included in the regulation?

A. No. All animals moved directly to a custom slaughter facility are exempt from the regulation. Likewise, regulations do not apply to the movement of livestock onto and from Tribal lands when the movement is across a State line. There are also exemptions specific to official identification and others specific to the movement documentation requirements. These are reviewed in more detail below.

## Q. What exemptions apply to the official identification requirements?

A. Cattle and bison will be permanently exempt from the identification requirements if they are:

- Moved as a commuter herd with a copy of the commuter herd agreement or other document agreed upon by both the shipping and receiving States or Tribes.
- Moved directly from a location in one State through another State to a second location in the original State.
- Moved interstate directly to an approved tagging site and officially identified before commingling with cattle and bison from other premises or by other practices that will ensure the identity of the animals' consignor is accurately maintained.

Additionally, cattle and bison moved directly to a recognized slaughtering establishment, or through no more than one approved livestock facility and then directly to a recognized slaughtering establishment, may be identified with a U.S. Department of Agriculture-approved backtag. However, these animals must be slaughtered within three days of leaving the ship-from premises in order to be eligible to use backtags.

Beef cattle under 18 months of age, unless they are moved interstate for shows, exhibitions, rodeos, or recreational events, are also exempt from the official identification requirement in this rule. Additional traceability requirements for this group will be addressed in separate rulemaking in the future, allowing more time for APHIS to work closely with industry to ensure the requirements are effective and can be implemented.

## Q. What are the exemptions that apply to movement documents for cattle and bison?

A. Cattle and bison moved interstate must be accompanied by an ICVI unless:

- They are moved directly to a recognized slaughtering establishment, or directly to a livestock facility approved to handle "for slaughter only" animals and then directly to a recognized slaughtering establishment, and accompanied by an owner-shipper statement.
- They are moved directly to an approved livestock facility with an owner-shipper statement and do not move interstate from the facility unless accompanied by an ICVI.
- They are moved from the farm of origin for veterinary medical examination or treatment and returned to the farm of origin without change in ownership.
- They are moved directly from one State through another State and back to the original State.
- They are moved as a commuter herd with a copy of the commuter herd agreement.

Additionally, cattle and bison of any age may be moved between shipping and receiving States or Tribes with documentation other than an ICVI, such as a brand inspection certificate, owner-shipper statement, etc., as agreed upon by animal health officials in the shipping and receiving States or Tribes.

**Q. What would be the official identification methods and devices for cattle moving interstate?**

**A.** Official identification for cattle would include:

- An official eartag.
- Group/lot identification when a group/lot identification number is applicable.
- Brands registered with a recognized brand inspection authority and accompanied by an official brand inspection certificate, when determined to be official by the receiving State or Tribal animal health authorities.
- Tattoos and identification methods acceptable to a breed association for registration purposes and accompanied by a breed registration certificate, when determined to be official by the receiving State or Tribal animal health authorities.

A complete listing of official eartags can be found at:  
[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/downloads/eartag\\_listing.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/downloads/eartag_listing.pdf)

The official identification requirement for cattle and bison will be phased in.

**Q. What types of records must I maintain for interstate livestock movement?**

**A.** While the person responsible for the animals leaving their farm or ranch for interstate movement is required to ensure that a copy of the ICVI or other interstate movement document accompanies the shipment, there is no requirement that the producer maintain a copy of the movement documents. However, it is highly encouraged that herd records with this information be maintained to assist animal health officials in the event that any of the animals are part of a disease investigation.

**Q. Where can I find more information on cattle and bison identification requirements for interstate movement?**

**A.** More information is available at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/> or from your State animal health official's office.

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