



For Immediate Release
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USDA Bovine Animal Disease Traceability Rule Published

Visually and Electronically Readable Identification Required for Interstate Movement of Certain Cattle and Bison Classes

AUSTIN, TX – The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) published a final rule with requirements to enhance animal disease traceability (ADT) for bovine. The [updated rule](#), published in the Federal Register on May 9, 2024, goes into effect November 5, 2024.

New requirements include official identification (ID) ear tags be visually and electronically readable for official use for interstate movement of certain cattle and bison and revises and clarifies certain record requirements related to cattle. The final rule applies to:

- Sexually intact cattle and bison 18 months of age or older
- All dairy cattle
- Cattle and bison of any age for rodeo or recreation events
- Cattle or bison of any age used for shows or exhibition

“This long-awaited advancement in animal disease traceability requirements should come with minimal disruption to existing cattle operations in Texas,” said Dr. Bud Dinges, Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) executive director and state veterinarian. “We encourage Texas cattle and bison producers to take advantage of the no-cost radio frequency identification device opportunity offered by USDA and available through the TAHC. We are hopeful these advancements will continue to protect and strengthen the different segments of the Texas cattle industry many people around the world rely on.”

The TAHC received no-cost RFID ear tags from the USDA to distribute to Texans advancing animal disease traceability efforts for replacement breeding cattle. To receive RFID tags, contact the TAHC ADT department, by phone at 512-719-0733 or email at animal_id@tahc.texas.gov, and submit a request. TAHC staff continue to process requests and will distribute tags until the Texas tag allotment is depleted. Find out more about Texas ADT on the [TAHC ADT webpage](#).

At this time, the TAHC is not proposing additional changes to Texas ADT rules related to cattle and bison. All TAHC ADT rules are available to view in the [Texas Administrative Code, Title 4, Part 2](#).

This USDA rule enhances a rule finalized in 2013 for the official ID and documentation for certain interstate movement of livestock. Since this time, the USDA and TAHC have worked to transition bovine industries through established milestones with the goal to strengthen animal disease traceability in animal agriculture industries. Additional information and resources related to federal requirements are available through the [USDA ADT webpage](#).

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The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) was established in 1893 as the Livestock Sanitary Commission and charged with protecting the state's domestic animals “from all contagious or infectious diseases of a malignant character.” TAHC remains true to this charge while evolving with the times to protect the health and marketability of all Texas livestock and poultry. Learn more about the TAHC by visiting www.tahc.texas.gov.