FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Reminder: All-American Dairy Show, Keystone International Livestock Expo, PA Farm Show to Require 840-Standard RFID Tags on Cattle, Swine
New rules bring PA-sponsored shows in line with federal traceability standards

Harrisburg, Pa. – The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture today reminded anyone bringing cattle or swine to this year's three state-sponsored livestock shows that their animals must be identified with radio frequency or electronic identification (RFID/EID) tags that meet recently-tightened federal traceability standards.

The change, which was developed in 2013 and communicated in the premium books of the All American Dairy Show, Keystone International Livestock Expo, and Pennsylvania Farm Show for the past two years, is part of the commonwealth's ongoing effort to improve biosecurity measures and to make the shows operate more efficiently. Other leading exhibitions like World Dairy Expo and breed associations like Holstein USA have adopted stronger traceability measures.

"Traceability is integral to the safety of our global food supply, and the United States Department of Agriculture identification standards are a key component of that commitment," said Agriculture Deputy Secretary for Animal Health and Food Safety Gregory Hostetter. "The Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex is a crossroads for some of the best show stock in North America, and this move brings us in line with the strong traceability measures being implemented throughout the industry."

The new RFID/EID eartag requirements apply beginning with the 2015 All-American Dairy Show, the2015 Keystone International Livestock Exposition (KILE), and the 2016 Pennsylvania Farm Show. The tags must be approved for use in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Animal Identification System (NAIS) program. These tags bear the official USDA eartag shield and a 15-digit identification number beginning with 840 – the official United States identification prefix. Animals tagged and identified with other prefixes prior to March 11, 2015, cannot use those identifications to enter the show.

All requirements apply to breeding stock as well as market animals, and for the two shows hosted in conjunction with the All-American: the Pennsylvania Holstein Fall Championship Show and the Pennsylvania Junior Dairy Show. Animals brought to the shows solely for sale at auctions that take place at these shows must also have the 840-numbered tags.

"This decision makes animal check-in faster and safer and better aligns our shows with the Animal Disease Traceability Act," Pennsylvania State Veterinarian Dr. Craig Shultz. "Disease transmission is a real threat to the animal agriculture industry and for these high-value show and sale animals in particular. This is an extra level of biosecurity that benefits our industry."

Using wands to read the electronic tags allows veterinarians and others to work further from the animals themselves, saving time and making the work of check-in safer, as well as easier to

confirm the animals' identification versus reading visual ear tags or tattoos and to write a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) after sales.

RFID tags must correspond with the identification number recorded on the animal's CVI. The tags replace tattoos and the small metal state tags as the animal's official state and federal identification, although the metal state tags remain an acceptable identification for interstate travel for other livestock.

Tattoos are still required if the breed organization requires them for registration. Breed registration papers are still required for verification of animal information upon check-in at the show.

Each breeding animal's housing unit, whether a farm, farmette, or other small housing location, must have a federal premises identifier number (PIN) or state location identifier number (LID) in order to purchase the official tags. To obtain a premise identification number, contact the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services at 717-836-3235 or visit www.agriculture.state.pa.us and click on the Premises ID button.

Market animals for the 2016 Farm Show will not require a premises number, due to strong traceability measures in the show's current verification process. Tags will still be distributed through county Penn State Extension offices and FFA advisors.

Allow six to eight weeks to obtain your premises number and tag order. Any form of tag featuring the 15-digit number beginning with 840 and featuring the USDA shield is an acceptable form of tagging. Your state department of agriculture can assist with locating dealers of approved RFID/EID tags.

"Whether you're tagging a steer for next year's Farm Show, farrowing potential gilts for KILE this fall, or registering heifers with your breed association for All-American, now is the time to consider purchasing approved 840-numbered tags, complete with the USDA shield, to save re-tagging your show stock later," added Hostetter.

For more information on each show, contact the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex at 717-787-2905 or visit www.farmshow.state.pa.us, www.allamerican.state.pa.us, or www.keystoneinternational.state.pa.us. Tag information is available on the premium list page of each website.