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Governor

**STATE OF MAINE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
**Division of Animal Health & Industry**  
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Seth H. Bradstreet, III  
Commissioner

**Information on Sheep and Goats  
Identification and Scrapie**

**To: Sheep producers  
Goat producers  
Livestock dealers  
Sheep/goat haulers**

**July 9, 2009**

As you are all aware Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of sheep and goats. There is no cure; there is no treatment.

*As of March 2007, identification requirements in Maine for sheep and goats have changed. In order to become consistent with the USDA scrapie eradication program, Maine needed to change its rules regarding the identification of sheep and goats upon change of ownership. **Identification requirements:** all sexually intact animals must be officially identified on change of ownership for movement within the State of Maine, except for those animals less than 18 months of age moving direct to slaughter or those animals less than 18 months of age moving in slaughter channels.*

**This program is mandatory.** As of October 19, 2009, it will be mandatory that all sheep and goats presented for sale at any auction in the State of Maine be officially identified according to these requirements. All sheep and goats must be officially identified upon change of ownership. Proper means of identification include: scrapie identification tags issued by the USDA or by the Department; breed registration tattoos accompanied by breed registration certificates or other tattoos approved by the Department; or USDA-approved electronic identification devices. As noted above, the exception being if they are under 18 months old and headed directly to a slaughter facility in the State of Maine. The auction facilities in Maine are not designated "slaughter only". If sheep and goats are being transported over State of Maine boundaries, official identification is required.

**Complaints have been received from out of state markets that sheep and goats originating in Maine are not properly identified. These markets are now contemplating adding an additional charge for unidentified animals.**

On the reverse side of this bulletin is a request form for **FREE** official ID tags. You may order by mail, email, fax or phone. *They will also answer your questions.* The call is toll free. **1-866-873-2824**

If your sheep/goats currently have identification tags, **do not remove** them when your animals leave the farm. This will require re-tagging and a possible charge at their destination. If you do not currently have identification tags, please order them as soon as possible to prevent additional charges being assessed at the auctions.

*Cindy Kilgore*

Cindy Kilgore  
Livestock Specialist