

## Premises IDs: What to Know

As show season gets underway across Arkansas, many livestock owners, especially those new to 4-H, FFA or county fairs, find themselves navigating a maze of requirements and paperwork. One area that often causes confusion is the Premises Identification Number (PIN). Whether you're tagging animals for the first time, preparing for interstate travel or simply trying to meet fair entry guidelines, understanding what a premises ID is and why it's important can save you time and stress.

The PIN system applies to a wide range of species, including cattle, swine, sheep, goats, poultry, equine and other livestock commonly raised in Arkansas. Whether you're a commercial operator or a small-scale hobby farmer, a PIN can be a vital part of your animal health plan.

The main function of a PIN is to support animal disease traceability. During outbreaks such as avian influenza, bovine tuberculosis or swine fever, animal health officials can quickly trace the movement of animals. This speeds up containment efforts, limits the spread of disease, and helps protect both public health and the agriculture economy.

In addition to disease control, registered premises can also play a key role in emergency preparedness, such as during floods, tornadoes or other disasters. When animals must be evacuated or relocated, having your premises already in the system can speed up response efforts and direct assistance where it's needed most.

A PIN is also required to purchase official U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) 840 RFID ear tags. These tags are commonly needed for interstate livestock movement, youth livestock exhibitions (4-H, FFA, etc.), and compliance with federal animal ID and traceability rules.

While the program is voluntary in Arkansas, many individuals and organizations either require or benefit significantly from having a PIN:

- **Livestock producers and ranchers** – Needed to purchase USDA-approved RFID tags and often required for animal transport across state lines.
- **Veterinarians** – Must use a PIN or Non-Producer Participant Number when ordering official tags on behalf of clients or when issuing Certificates of



Veterinary Inspection.

- **Youth livestock exhibitors** – Many county, state and national 4-H and FFA programs require a PIN for animals entered in shows or fairs.
- **Livestock markets and auction barns** – Often must register their facilities to comply with federal traceability regulations.
- **Animal health officials** – Use the system to conduct investigations, manage disease incidents and coordinate response efforts.
- **Tag distributors** – Required to verify a valid PIN before shipping official USDA identification tags.

Even small farms, backyard flocks and hobby operations benefit from registration; especially if animals are shown, sold or moved off the premises. The system is designed to support operations of all sizes, not just large-scale producers.

Some livestock owners are concerned about privacy. It's important to know that your premises information is used only by authorized animal health officials for disease traceability and emergency response. It is not shared publicly, nor is it used for taxation, regulatory enforcement or any unrelated government purpose.

Registering for a PIN is free for Arkansas residents. To apply, contact the Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Division at (501) 225-1598.

To order RFID tags, reach out to Kory Jones at [kory.jones@agriculture.arkansas.gov](mailto:kory.jones@agriculture.arkansas.gov) or call (501) 823-1722. Be prepared to provide the following information:

- Your name and contact information
- The type(s) of livestock you manage
- The physical address of the premises

While participation in the Premises Identification System remains voluntary in Arkansas, it's important for livestock owners to understand when and why a PIN may be required. Whether for compliance with federal regulations, participation in youth livestock programs or preparedness during emergencies, having a premises ID can offer practical benefits. Ultimately, the decision to register is a personal one, and producers should consider their specific needs, activities and goals when determining whether a PIN is right for their operation.



*Analysis by Jared Garrett.*

*For more information, contact:*

*Jared at (501) 228-1537, [jared.garrett@arfb.com](mailto:jared.garrett@arfb.com).*