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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NO. R. 7993 **6 October 2026**

ANIMAL IMPROVEMENT ACT, 1998 (ACT NO. 62 OF 1998)

REGULATIONS RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION OF ANIMALS

The Minister of Agriculture intends, in terms of section 28 of the Animal Improvement Act, 1998 (Act No. 62 of 1998), to make the regulations in the Schedule.

Interested persons are invited to send written comments on the proposed regulations within 90 days from the date of publication of this notice to the Minister, for the attention of the Director-General: Department of Agriculture, 600 Lilian Ngoyi Street, Pretoria, 0001; Email: *JoelM@nda.gov.za.*

SCHEDULE

Definitions

1. In these regulations, any word or expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the Act shall have that meaning, unless the context indicates otherwise-

"animal" means an animal as defined and declared as such in terms of the Act;

"**identification device**" means a device approved by the Registrar for identification of declared animals;

"INTERGIS" means the Integrated Registration System and Genetic Information System as defined in the Act;

"owner" means the person in whose name an animal is recorded and registered; and

"**the Act**" means the Animal Improvement Act, 1998 (Act No. 62 of 1998).

Identification of animals

2. (1) The owner of a declared animal must identify the animal or cause the animal to be identified by means of an identification device.

(2) The identification device referred to in sub-regulation (1) must-

(a) contain information relating to ownership of the animal;
(b) provide provincial unique identification number which must be alpha-numeric and the farm of origin or holding; and
(c) be effectively applied or attached to and retained by and not be harmful to such animal.

(3) The identification device and information contained therein must be integrated into and be secured onto the INTEGRIS.

Registration of animals

3. (1) The owner of an animal shall register or cause an animal to be registered with the Registrar.

(2) The Registrar shall keep and maintain a record of all registered animals on INTERGIS.

(3) The following information with regard to an animal shall be recorded:

(a) owner's identification number;

(b) its sex and age;

(c) identification device and analogue tag number;

(d) the brand and its positioning;

(e) the animal holding;

(f) Its health status;

(g) the province and magisterial district where it is kept;

(h) the date of registration or tagging of the animal; and

(i) its the colour in any official language.

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(4) Ownership of an animal for purposes of registration shall be determined by the Registrar or any other designated official using a brand mark on such animal, and where applicable, the brand mark shall be confirmed by the Registrar using a brand certificate.

Registration of owners

4. (1) The owner of an animal shall register as such with the Registrar.

(2) The Registrar shall-

(a) keep and maintain a register of owners on INTEGRIS;

(b) record the owner's personal details and the number of animals owned;

(c) provide the owner with an identification number relating to the animal owned; and

(d) issue the owner with a Stock Register card.

(3) The owner shall keep the following information on an on-farm record for animals:

(a) the date of birth of any animal;

(b) the date of death of any animal;

(c) the date of arrival of such animal in the holding;

(d) the date of transfer or departure of such animal from the holding.

(e) any medical treatment of such animal, such as vaccinations, de-worming or dipping; and

(f) any withdrawal periods associated with the medical treatment of such animal.

Identification of animals

5 (1) An animal shall be identified as follows:

(a) in relation to cattle, by placing an animal identification device on the animal at birth or before such animal is six months old; and

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(b) in relation to an ostrich, by the use of a registered holding of origin and an approved individual animal identification.

(2) The Registrar shall develop an animal identification system for any other animals as and when it is required.

(3) The owner shall not move an animal from one holding to another without having tagged such animal.

(4) The owner shall not tag or present an animal for identification if-

(a) the animal is not branded;

(b) the brand mark of the animal is not the same as the one on the brand certificate of the owner;

(c) the brand mark of the animal is not clear or is obliterated;

(d) the animal is branded with an unauthorised mark;

(e) the animal is already identified with an animal identification device; or

(f) the animal is identified with the particulars of a different owner.

(5) The owner of an animal shall not move an animal from one holding to another unless the animal has been tagged using an approved identification tag or device.

Identification Devices

6 (1) An animal shall be identified:

(a) with a pair of tags made up of a digital and an analogue tag, both of which shall have a male and female unit; or

(b) if inserted with a microchip with an analogue ear tag.

(3) The owner of an animal shall tag an animal by placing in the centre or middle of each ear an analogue ear tag on the right ear and a digital ear tag on the left ear.

(4) The identification device which is a microchip shall be tagged with an analogue ear tag on the right ear;

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(5) An analogue ear tag or digital ear tag for-

(a) an animal born in South Africa shall be yellow in colour;

(b) an animal imported into South Africa shall be green in colour; and

(c) an animal resident on a holding which is located in a foot and mouth disease sensitive area shall be marked with red ear tags.

(6) The owner who loses any ear tag shall—

(a) report the loss of the ear tag to the nearest department of Agriculture office or the nearest police station within seven days of the loss; and

(b) present evidence to the Registrar or any delegated officer or a police officer that the animal was previously identified with an ear tag.

(7) The owner shall, after reporting the loss of an ear tag to the Registrar or delegated officer or a police station—

(a) replace, where an animal has lost a pair of digital ear tags, with a new pair of the digital ear tags;

(b) replace, where an animal has lost an analogue ear tag, the ear tag with a blank ear tag on which he shall write the number of the lost analogue ear tag and tag the animal; and

(c) report the replacement and the new information on the pair of digital ear tags to the nearest Department of Agriculture.

(8) An ear tag shall be linked to a particular owner and holding at the time of buying or transfer of an animal.

(9) An ear tag that has not been accordingly applied and captured into a database at the end of 90 days after acquisition shall be deactivated.

Registration of manufacturers and distributors of identification devices

7. (1) A person intending to register as a manufacturer or distributor of identification devices shall apply to the Registrar for the approval of a device.

(2) The application referred to in sub-regulation (1) shall-

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(a) be made on an application form obtainable from the office of the Registrar; and

(b) be accompanied by-

(i) the relevant samples; and

(ii) application fee as determined by the Minister by notice in the Gazette.

(3) The Registrar may impose conditions on the approval of an identification device.

Identification of cattle

8. (1) The owner of cattle declared as animals must identify or cause to be identified such cattle by means of an identification device applied or attached such as ear tag, brandmark or tattoo.

(2) If identification is by means of brandmark, it shall be applied on any clearly visible part, except the neck of an animal to be identified.

(3) If the identification method is a tattoo, it shall be applied on the inside of the ear of the animal using tattoo plier and permanent ink.

(4) An animal shall be identified by the use of an animal identification device placed on the animal at birth or before such animal is six months old; and

Identification of sheep and goats

9. (1) The owner of a sheep or goat declared as an animal must identify or cause to be identified such sheep or goat by means of an identification device attached or applied to such animal.

(3) A lamb, kid or born into a flock or herd must be identified within 3 weeks from the date of birth or before it is moved from its place of its birth.

Identification of pigs

10. (1) The owner of pigs declared as animals must identify or cause to be identified such pigs by means of an identification device applied or attached to such animal or using mechanical methods such as slap mark or tattoo.

(2) A slap mark may be applied on each front shoulder of the pig using compressed air slap marking equipment or a tattoo may be applied on the ear of the animal.

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(3) A piglet born in the flock must be identified one week from the date of birth or before it is moved from its place of birth.

Identification of Ostriches

11. The owner of ostriches declared as animals must identify or cause to be identified such ostrich by means of an identification device applied or attached to such ostrich or using conventional methods such as brandmark.

Identification of Horses

12. The owner of horses declared as animals must identify or cause to be identified such horse by means of a device applied or attached to such horse or using a hot iron brandmark or freeze brand.

Identification of donkeys

13. (1) The owner of donkeys declared as animals must identify or cause to be identified such donkey by means of an identification device applied or attached to such donkey or conventional methods such as tattoes.

(2) Donkeys may be tattoed or identified using hot iron brand or free brand.

Identification of rabbits

14. (1) The owner of rabbits declared as animals must identify or cause to be identified such rabbit by means of an identification device applied or attached to such rabbit.

(2) Rabbits may be tattoed under the ear.

Identification of dogs

15. (1) The owner of dogs declared as animals must identify or cause to be identified such dogs by means of an identification device applied or attached to such dogs.

(2) Dogs may be tattoed under the ear, belly or inner thigh or using microchips inserted under the skin of the animals

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Identification of bee colonies

16. (1) Any person who keeps honeybees must register as a beekeeper.

(2) Beekeepers must identify hives with their brand and maintain records of where and when the hives are kept.

Identification of imported animals

17. (1) The importer of a declared animal must identify or cause to be identified such animal by means of an identification device as contemplated in these regulations.

(2) The animal referred to in sub-regulation (1) must be identified within three days from the date on which the animal is released from its point of entry.

Transfer of ownership

18. (1) For a transfer to occur, both the current and the new owner should have registered the animal onto INTERGIS.

(2) Any change of ownership require completion of application form for transfer obtainable from the Registrar.

(3) In case of death of owner, an animal can be transferred to the new owner if the executor of estate gives approval.

(4) If the owner is a company, evidence that the signatories are duly authorised members of the company will be required.

(5) the transfer of ownership must be registered onto INTERGIS within 7 days of change of ownership.

Offences

19. Any person who-

(a) contravenes or fails to comply with any provision or requirement of these regulations;

(b) uses an ear tag meant for one holding in a different holding;

(c) removes or cause to be removed, an ear tag of an animal from any infected area or place of isolation to a place outside such infected

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area or place of isolation,

commits an offence and if found guilty is liable to a fine or imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years.

Commencement of Regulations

20. These regulations come into operation on their date of final publication.

WILLEM ABRAHAM STEPHANUS AUCAMP
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
DATE: 10/09/2026

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