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## *Boer Goats – 'Meating' the Market*

The correct identification of stud Boer goats has, for many years, been an area of confusion as there are BGBAA requirements and Government requirements, etc.

This document is designed to simplify the options for you and to explain the minimum requirements.

### WHAT IS THE FULL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER OF A STUD BOER GOAT?

The full identification number (ID) of a stud Boer goat is its identification as written on its registration certificate (e.g. ABCFH2345). This is a combination of letters and numbers and comprises the following:-

2 or 3 letter tattoo/stud prefix as confirmed by BGBAA	e.g.	ABC
1 letter for the grade	e.g.	F = full blood, R = red, etc.
1 letter for the year of birth	e.g.	H = 2012
3 or 4 numbers representing your paddock identification	e.g.	345 or 2345

*Please note: The registration system defaults to 4 numbers so if you use only 3 (e.g. 345), the certificate will show four numbers in the ID, e.g. 0345 as in the example below.*

### WHAT DOES AN OFFICIAL BGBAA REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE LOOK LIKE?

Below is a copy of a current BGBAA registration certificate.

**BOER GOAT BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA LTD**  
- REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE -

Name: AMANI F Y358

Ident: 5UBPT0358  
Tattoo: 5UB F Y 358  
Birth Date: 29 SEP 2003  
Sex: Female  
Grade: Fullblood  
Colour: White, Red Head  
Birth Weight: .0  
Birth Type: Twin  
Breeder: AMANI BOER GOAT STUD  
"FOGGY BOTTOM FARM"  
ASH ROAD  
CHIDLOW WA 6556  
(SUB)  
Owner: AMANI BOER GOAT STUD  
"FOGGY BOTTOM FARM"  
ASH ROAD  
CHIDLOW WA 6556  
(SUB)  
Issue Date: 02 SEP 2005

SIRE: AMANI LANCELOT 5UBPW1008  
DAM: AMANI 0038 (IMP SAF) (ET) 5UBPW0038

Grades listed: SOUTH AFRICAN 493/718, AMANI LANCELIN (IMP SAF) (ET) 5UBPW0023, SOUTH AFRICAN 493/736, SOUTH AFRICAN 256/931, AMANI 0040 (IMP SAF) (ET) 5UBPW0040, SOUTH AFRICAN 256/E753, SOUTH AFRICAN 762/GM-2829 GENTLEMAN, SOUTH AFRICAN 493/NAMAMJ208-96, SOUTH AFRICAN 762/L-3037, SOUTH AFRICAN 256/E646.

The information on this certificate has been provided by the breeder and the BGBAA cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions.

Detailed information on how to complete a registration request form is available on the website (Members / Forms / Important Notes of Animal Transfers and Registrations).

## GOVERNMENT IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In 2008 it became compulsory for goat breeders to identify all animals with approved NLIS (National Livestock Identification System) tags if they were moved from the property of origin (this includes slaughter goats). The acceptable tags change from time-to-time so it is important to keep up-to-date with latest requirements. We will attempt to update information here if we know of a change to the requirements.

These tags require the NLIS logo and the PIC (Property Identification Code), which represents the number of the property where the goat was born, to be clearly displayed on a tag. Some acceptable NLIS tags can also be printed with your animal's ID.

It is also important that the animals you purchase have an NLIS tag for traceability. To enhance the NLIS system, recording the movement of mobs of sheep or goats between properties on the NLIS database commenced from July 2010. However, this is not compulsory for all states and further information is available at <http://www.mla.com.au/Meat-safety-and-traceability/Livestock-identification/NLIS-sheep-and-goats>.

There are a number of acceptable NLIS tags you can choose from and, in most cases, it is a matter of preference for the individual stud owner. A full list of accredited and conditionally accredited tags can be found at <http://www.mla.com.au/Meat-safety-and-traceability/Livestock-identification/NLIS-devices>. Click on "Accredited Devices" on the right hand menu. There are also some colour choices but pink coloured tags are reserved for "post breeder tags". It is worth checking with your local DPI as sometimes what can be printed on the tags varies from state to state.

The following photographs are examples of Allflex tags, all are tamperproof, with metal pins and full accreditation status. They are used by numerous studs and have proven to work well with Boer goats:-

AllFlex lightweight RFID tags



Allflex (post-breeder)



Allflex small round goat tags



The following is an example of a tag with conditional accreditation status:-

Leader RFID tags



A tamperproof tag is one which cannot be used again, and is also known as a non-reusable tag.

All of the above tags are considered tamperproof and have an option to print the full ID number of your animal (e.g. ABCFH2345). Therefore, these make the tags compliant with the BGBAA's requirement under the double-tagging option (see below).

The following link provides contacts across Australia for NLIS and PIC information: <http://www.mla.com.au/Meat-safety-and-traceability/Livestock-identification/NLIS-contacts>.

## BGBAA STUD GOAT IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The BGBAA currently accepts two forms of animal identification. Regardless of which of the following methods you use to identify your animals, it is very important that they match the "Tattoo" description on the registration certificate exactly, and that the identification is traceable back to your written/computerised stud records.

Acceptable forms of identification:-

### 1. Tattooing

If you choose tattooing as your preferred form of identification, you will need to punch a combination of letters and numbers into both ears which match the animal's ID. Four and five digit tattooing pliers are available for purchase, and you will need to acquire a pair that suits your identification requirements.

#### **Option 1** (using 4-digit pliers)

If you have a 3-digit numbering system, one ear needs to display your tattoo/stud prefix and grade (e.g. ABCF) and the other ear needs to display the year of birth and number of the animal (e.g. H345). However, it is important that you complete your registration request details correctly to ensure that ABCFH345 is shown as the "Tattoo" number on the certificate. This option can also work if you only have a 2-digit tattoo/stud prefix (e.g. AB).

or

#### **Option 2** (using 5-digit pliers)

This option is if you have a 4-digit numbering system. One ear needs to display your tattoo/stud prefix, grade and the year of birth (e.g. ABCFH) and the other ear needs to display the number of the animal (e.g. 2345). Some studs prefer to have the tattoo/stud prefix and grade in one ear (e.g. ABCF) and the year and number in the other (e.g. H2345) - this is also acceptable.

**NOTE:** If you choose tattooing as your method of identification, you will still need to be tag them with an acceptable NLIS tag.

Below are photographs of a goat with an ideal tattoo. In this case, the breeder has only a 2-digit tattoo/stud prefix. The photographs clearly demonstrate the tattoo/stud prefix, grade and year in one ear (Photo A – in this case a 2 letter tattoo/stud prefix) and the number in the other (Photo B).



Photo A



Photo B

#### Tattoo application tips

- Wipe the inside of the ear clean with a bit of methylated spirits
- Smear some green tattoo ink onto the area where the tattoo will be placed
- Apply tattoo with tattoo pliers – note that a fair amount of pressure is required to ensure it punches through correctly
- Apply more ink to a toothbrush and work it into the holes
- It is preferable not to apply tattoos when the animals are too young as their ears are so soft. Application at weaning, or when required for showing, is preferable.
- In this case the number of the animal (e.g. 2345) is applied to the opposite ear as the NLIS tag (which also displays the animal's number). This is done as a precaution in case the NLIS becomes lost/missing. The other information is applied to the ear which contains the NLIS tag (e.g. ABCFH).

## 2. Double-Tagging

In 2008 the option of double-tagging was introduced as an acceptable alternative means of identification. Over the years it has proven to work well with more breeders opting to use this system over tattooing. If your animals are tattooed (as above) they do not need to be tagged in this way. However, if you choose not to tattoo your animals, then you do need to follow these guidelines.

The method of double tagging consists of 2 tags, one in each ear.

**Tag 1:-** This tag is referred to as the “breeder” tag and is a tag of the breeder’s choice. It may be hand-written or pre-printed and may comprise either the full ID (ABCFH2345) of an animal or the numbers only (e.g. 2345) or any combination thereof (e.g. H2345). It is important that the number written on the tag is traceable back to your written/computerised breeding records. Please note, it is preferable, but not compulsory, to have this tag pre-printed and containing the full ID of the animal. There is no requirement for this tag to be tamperproof.

**Tag 2:-** This tag is referred to as the “stud” tag and is the official BGBAA identification tag. It must be pre-printed (not hand-written) with the full ID (ABCFH2345) of the animal, must have a metal pin through the ear and be tamperproof.

IN ADDITION to the above, it is also compulsory to display an approved NLIS tag. There are a number of options:-

- a. pre-print the full ID (ABCFH2345) on the male button/other side of the approved NLIS tag (example photograph below) – this option meets both Government and BGBAA requirements as long as the NLIS tag is tamperproof; **or**
- b. attach your breeder tag (Tag 1) to an approved NLIS tag; **or**
- c. attach a third tag which meets NLIS requirements.

Examples of pre-printed, non-tamperproof breeder tags are below:-

- a) Breeder tag showing full animal ID on the front of the tag (e.g. ABCFH2345).



- b) As it is a requirement at some shows to tape over anything identifying the ownership/breeding of an animal (e.g. ABCFH), some studs have opted for displaying the number only on the front of the tag, and printing the ABCFH on the back. These tags are also acceptable. Example below:-



FRONT OF TAG



BACK OF TAG

Below are photographs of an ideal set of tags – A breeder tag showing full ID, with metal pin through ear, and a matching NLIS tag – tamperproof and showing full animal ID – complying to BGBAA and NLIS requirements and easy to read.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What happens if my animal loses a tag?

Occasionally a goat can lose one of its tags either through incorrect application or being caught on something, such as a fence. One of the benefits of double-tagging is that you will still know the identification of the animal by the other tag. The lost tag will need to be replaced and your supplier should be able to assist with this. However, if the animal was born on another property, it requires a special tag called a “post breeder tag” and is pink in colour. Again, your supplier can assist with the replacement.

### What happens if I purchase an animal without correct identification?

This should not happen, but may occur occasionally. The animal will require a “post breeder tag” (pink) and your supplier can assist with this.

### Where can I purchase tags?

Tags can be purchased from a number of different suppliers. You can contact the supplier (e.g. Allflex) directly, order through your local DPI or your local rural supplier. The MLA website contains a list of suppliers and their contact details - <http://www.mla.com.au/Meat-safety-and-traceability/Livestock-identification/NLIS-contacts>.

### What happens if an error is made in the tattooing of my animal?

Occasionally an incorrect tattoo number is applied in error. As a tattoo number cannot be changed, you need to contact Barb O’Shea, ABRI, and notify her of the error in writing. She will issue you with a letter confirming that the tattoo and the registration do not match but that the animal is, in fact, the same animal.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Board acknowledges and thanks the stud members who contributed information, hints, photographs and illustrations for the purpose of this document.

## CONCLUSION

These methods of identification are provided to give breeders a number of options to correctly identify their animals.

Emma Cabot

**Vice-Chairperson &  
Director for Membership Relations**