

## Ear tagging small ruminants

### Category

3. Minor conscious intervention

### Objective

To permanently identify individual animals

### Alternatives to animal use

There are no practical alternatives.

### Drugs, chemicals or biological agents

Nil

### Procedure

Place small ruminants in a race, or for individual application, restraint by holding is acceptable. Adequately restrain the head and using the appropriate applicator, insert the tag in the centre of the ear so that the longitudinal ridges of the ear are not punctured. Check that the tag is correctly inserted. Applicators should be sharp, and in efficient working order. If a hole already exists in the ear due to previous tagging, new tags should also be inserted in this place. Release small ruminants.

### Animal Wellbeing

Handling by experienced operators will minimise any impact.

### Pain Relief

Not needed.

### Animal Care

Insertion of ear-tags causes pain during application of the tag. The procedure will be conducted quickly to allow release of small ruminants from the race, minimising distress. There is no need for special care after release.

### Reuse and repeated use

It is mandatory for all sheep and goats to be ear-tagged with the Property Identification Code (PIC) on the property of birth, and if small ruminants are sold to another property. Where possible management tags (to identify individual small ruminant) should incorporate the PIC number. Unique tagging should only be required once during an experiment.

### Qualification, experience or training necessary to perform procedure

Competence in handling small ruminants.  
Understanding of the procedure.