



Register your newborn calves, lambs and game on a management system

By Rachelle Cloete

The calving and lambing season is imminent, and now is the time to plan how newborns will be identified and recorded. Nowadays no chances can be taken with the new consumer legislation and the liability risks that accompany it. Identifying new arrivals with their own unique eartag numbers, as well as recording the animals' details in your management programme, is the key to success.

Register the newborn

A worthwhile management system provides a simple, user-friendly process of recording information relating to the calf or lamb. There isn't always enough time to record full details when processing. Therefore it is convenient to select a condensed registration recording process on a management system that records information such as the animal's birth date, breed, gender and weight. More complete information, such as treatment and an illustration, can be added back at the office.

Important information and documentation such as a registration document and test certificates are added to the newborn's profile. The newborn may be linked to the mother and father, but it is not compulsory because not all producers know who the father is if more than one male was used to mate with the females.

This linking of the newborn to the mother or father helps the producer to select animals that possess better reproduction and production abilities. The system thus assists you to select animals with better genetic potential. This function may be achieved through simple day-to-day management and recording.

Animals with good production, reproduction and phenotypical traits can be identified in this way. In this way all animals – livestock, game, companion animals, birds, reptiles, etc. – can be typified via their DNA.

Data collection

When supervised animals are managed on behalf of a producer who isn't computer literate, it is convenient to record the animals' information on pre-designed data collection forms. The advantage of these pre-designed data forms is that the data is structured and the form is broken down in a chronological order. Therefore it is easy to enter the information in the programme at a later stage.

The producer can decide beforehand which processing actions will be performed and can prepare the relevant forms for the manager or handler. The forms indicate which information is needed, such as date of birth, birth weight, colour, type, breed, mother, father and other information.

Information included in the form can be entered into the management system

by the producer or even a third party. The parents must, however, already be registered in the management software. If a newborn isn't linked to a mother immediately, it may be done later, provided that the animal was marked with its own unique eartag. DNA may also be utilised to confirm the match.

Unique eartag

Good management practices include marking animals at birth or first contact with unique eartag identification and recording it in the management system. This process is the foundation of identification and traceability. The process can also largely contribute towards reducing livestock theft.

The owner's branding is added at the right time, as prescribed, and should be recorded in the management system. It facilitates the management of individual animals' information, which may be managed in groups at a later stage. Weight and breeding groups can be compiled and managed with ease, while accurate information can be recorded for each animal.

The producer's product warranty and risk management are completed in one action. This management process simplifies the future selection process when management decisions must be taken on animals' satisfactory performance and reproduction, or the culling of poor performers.



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