

## How do I order ear tags or rumen boluses?

There are several manufacturers of NLIS-accredited ear tags and rumen bolus. For information about manufacturers, equipment, costs and subsidies, call your **NLIS State Contact**, or visit the website of your State Department of Primary Industry or Agriculture.

The NLIS Equipment Compatibility Guide also contains information about accredited devices and applicators.

To see the guide, go to the NLIS website at [www.nlis.com.au](http://www.nlis.com.au)

Click [▶ Help tools](#) at the top of the screen.

Scroll down and click [NLIS Equipment Compatibility Guide](#)



## NLIS State Contacts

For information regarding the rules governing NLIS, contact your local State Department:

### New South Wales

Department of Primary Industries  
NSW Hotline: 1300 720 405

### Northern Territory

Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries and Mines  
Phone: 08 8999 2034

### Queensland

Department of Primary Industries  
DPI Call centre: 13 2523

### South Australia

Primary Industries & Resources of South Australia  
NLIS Hotline: 1800 654 688

### Tasmania

Department of Primary Industries & Water  
Phone: 1300 368 550

### Victoria

Department of Primary Industries  
Helpline: 1800 678 779

### Western Australia

Department of Agriculture and Food  
Phone: 08 9780 6100

## NLIS Database Helpdesk

1800 654 743  
[nlis.support@mla.com.au](mailto:nlis.support@mla.com.au)  
[www.nlis.mla.com.au](http://www.nlis.mla.com.au)



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National Livestock  
Identification System  
Cattle

## A guide to using NLIS approved ear tags and rumen boluses



**safe**meat



## Introduction

The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) identifies individual cattle through the use of an approved NLIS device, in the form of either an ear tag, or a rumen bolus/visual tag combination.

Once an NLIS device is attached properly, it should remain with the animal for life. If you purchase cattle that are already NLIS identified, you do not need to apply another device.

A convenient time to identify your animals is at marking or weaning. It is important that you identify your animals correctly the first time as it avoids the cost and inconvenience of re-identifying the animal.

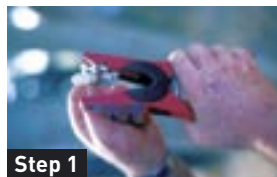
## Using NLIS approved devices

To uphold the integrity of the scheme, producers should abide by the following guidelines.

- Always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Use the correct applicator for the device being applied.
- If cattle are already identified with an NLIS tag or rumen bolus do not apply another NLIS device.
- Only apply devices issued to your property. Without specific authorisation from your relevant state authority, you cannot apply NLIS devices that are issued to another property with a different PIC, even if you own both properties.
- Ear tags (either RFID or visual to accompany a rumen bolus) must be applied to the offside (right) ear.
- Penalties may apply under state or territory legislation for improperly removing, selling or giving away devices without authorisation from your State Department.



## Applying NLIS approved ear tags



Step 1

Ensure you have the correct applicator for the tags you are using. Prevent damage to the tag's electronics by following the manufacturer's instructions when loading the female section of the tag into the applicator.



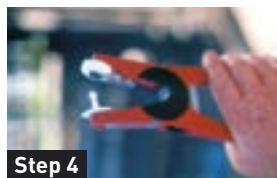
Step 2

Slip the male section onto the application pin, following the manufacturer's instructions.



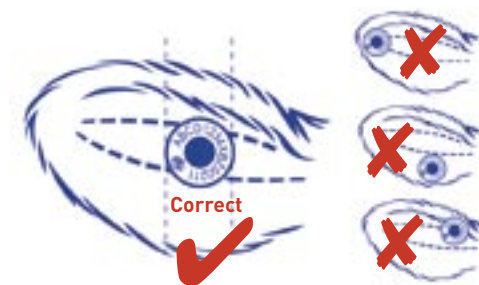
Step 3

Dip the end of the applicator with the tag into antiseptic or disinfectant solution before applying the tag.



Step 4

Locate the correct position in the right (offside) ear where the tag should be applied (see diagram). With the female side of the tag facing forwards, apply the tag firmly, always with the male tag entering from the back (outside) of the ear.



## Applying NLIS approved rumen boluses

Rumen boluses are used as an alternative to identifying cattle with NLIS ear tags. A rumen bolus is a capsule that is inserted into the animal from three months of age. After application, the bolus comes to rest in the reticulum for the life of the animal. The bolus contains an electronic transponder that can be read electronically, and is issued with a matching non-electronic ear tag for manual reading and/or visual confirmation that a bolus has been installed.

**Step 1** Load the rumen bolus into the applicator following the manufacturer's instruction.

**Step 2** With the animal restrained, insert the applicator in the mouth until past the base of the tongue. Then release the trigger on the applicator.

**Step 3** Remove the applicator gently from the throat of the animal, checking that the bolus was released.

**Step 3** You may want to confirm that the bolus is present by reading it. Then, apply the matching non-electronic ear tag to the offside (right) ear in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.



## Colour of ear tags

NLIS approved ear tags come in two colours:

- White breeder tag – for cattle you have bred and that are still on your property.
- Orange post-breeder tag – for cattle you have purchased that are not already identified with an NLIS device, or cattle that have lost their tag.