



# Canadian Cattle Identification Agency

## The Canadian Cattle Identification Agency: A World Leader in Animal Identification

Fully implemented on July 1, 2002 with a small budget of \$4 million, the CCIA has been successfully established as a world leader in animal identification. By creating National Standards on individual animal identification, tags, tag distribution, and data reporting, the CCIA has implemented a sustainable identification system that is fully supported by the Canadian cattle industry. Since 2002, more than 35 million unique numbers have been allocated, making the Canadian Cattle Identification Program one of the most comprehensive national animal identification systems in the world.

The Canadian Cattle Identification Agency, is committed to ensuring that all program components meet and exceed domestic and international requirements.

Currently under development are a variety of program enhancements including:

- Premise Identification
- Lot Identification
- Full Animal Movement Tracking
- Enhanced Record Keeping (Age Verification/Carcass Information etc.)

### AGE VERIFICATION:

The need for the association of birth date information with an animal tag or Lot Identification in a single database has been identified by the Canadian cattle industry. To ensure producers can log this information effectively, the CCIA has enhanced the national database to accommodate such information. In order to collect birth date information, the Information System must be able to validate the source of the information through a secured individual producer login and demonstrate that the data has not been subsequently modified.

The many benefits to submitting birth date information within the national database provide a potential for an increase in shares of domestic and international markets. The age verification website contains additional information on program updates, current industry news and the ability to submit feedback to the CCIA.



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## **The CCIA is led by the Canadian cattle industry, for the benefit of the Canadian cattle industry.**

The Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) is a non-profit industry-led organization incorporated to establish a national cattle identification program to promote beef consumption through the assurance of efficient trace back and containment of serious animal health and food safety concerns in the Canadian cattle herd. The agency is led by a Board of Directors made up of representatives from all sectors of the cattle industry – the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association, Livestock Marketing Association of Canada, Canadian Meat Council, Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, Dairy Industry, The Canadian Bison Association, Alberta Cattle Commission, Alberta Cattle Feeder’s Association, Livestock Order Buyer’s of Canada, Manitoba Cattle Producer’s Association, Ontario Cattlemen’s Association and ATQ. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada are ex officio members.

### **How Does It Work?**

- A CCIA approved tag is applied to the ear prior to leaving the herd of origin.
- All tags are visually and electronically imbedded with a unique identification number that is allocated from the national database and then distributed to producers through authorized tag dealers.
- The national tag distribution network securely reports all tag issuance records directly to the national database.
- The unique number of each individual animal is maintained to the point of export or carcass inspection where the animal is either approved for human consumption or condemned.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) provides full regulatory enforcement for animal identification as defined in the Health of Animals Regulations. All herd of origin information associated with each tag number is maintained within the national database and is only accessed by authorized CFIA personnel in the event of an animal health issue.

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## The CCIA and Radio Frequency Identification

“RFID technology will ensure that the Canadian cattle industry can continue to meet and exceed domestic and international requirements for animal health and food safety through an efficient trace back and age verification process.”

In 2003, the Canadian Cattle industry committed to the transition to RFID technology to ensure Canada’s Cattle Identification Program continues its role as an internationally recognized efficient and effective trace back system. The use of RFID tags in the Canadian Cattle Identification Program assists the Canadian cattle industry with the automation of data collection and the ability to maintain the integrity of all information. In addition, RFID tags can function in extreme climates and through other environmental contaminants that can impede tag retention, readability and overall effectiveness.

The benefits of RFID include; exceptional tag retention and readability, increased data integrity, ability to read at a distance without line of sight, and future capabilities of full animal movement tracking.

### How RFID works:

A transponder consists of an encoded chip and antenna. A reader transfers electromagnetic waves, charging the transponder. The transponder then transmits data to the reader and the reader receives the response from the transponder. RFID tags are designed to function without battery power. They have the capacity to perform for the lifetime of the animal.



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## CCIA Approved Tags

CCIA approved tags are required to have demonstrated excellent retention characteristics. In order to meet all requirements defined in the CCIA Standards, Procedures and Testing Document, all tags must pass a series of extensive trials to test visual, mechanical, physical, electrical, readability, and environmental capabilities. The CCIA is continuously testing tags for potential approval for use in the Canadian Cattle Identification Program.

All CCIA approved RFID tags have the following attributes:

- A CCIA identification number unique to the individual animal
- CCIA Trademark (3/4 Maple Leaf and “CA” letters)
- Are yellow in color with a yellow backing stud (unless otherwise approved)
- Meet all requirements in the Canadian National Standards for RFID technology

The unique CCIA identification number follows the ISO (International Organization for Standardization) code structure for identification.

Reads Electronically as:

Displayed Electronically As:

|        |          |       |         |                  |
|--------|----------|-------|---------|------------------|
| LA     | 00000    | 0     | 124     | 000299999999     |
| ↑↓     | ↑↓       | ↑↓    | ↑↓      | ↑↓               |
| Animal | Reserved | Count | Country | Unique ID Number |



Verified Readers:

The CCIA has verified several readers for use with CCIA approved RFID tags. Although readers are more often used in the program by packing plants, dead stock operators, pathology labs, and live cattle exporters, there are also many farm management related technological capabilities that are readily available.