



Photographs: Manufacturers

The OptiReader scans an animal's eye to capture an image of the retinal vascular pattern.

Cattle ID tags and readers

Identify your herd with the latest technology

By Laurie Potter
New Products Editor

With a variety of cattle identification tags and readers available, tracking animals offers cattle owners many advantages. Producers can create a history of each animal in their operations, gather data for breeding and culling, document illnesses and treatments, and analyze data to improve herd management.

In addition, as the National Animal Identification System (www.usda.gov/nais) evolves, producers may be required to document more specific details about their animals.

According to Dale Blasi, professor and Extension beef specialist at Kansas State University, producers need to define what they want to gain from the



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ID system in their specific operations. Keep in mind that the industry is continuously evolving and changing.

Whether you are beginning to define what type of ID to use or are modifying an existing ID system, remember to register your premises for the National Animal Identification System through

your state's animal health department. Make sure any electronic tags you are currently using conform to the ISO 11784 or 11785 standards.

Manufacturers are continually improving and enhancing current systems to offer producers better, more reliable equipment. One increasing trend is the use of a combination visual tag and electronic tag. This system eliminates the need for two tags but still allows the producer to have a visual identifier with electronic capabilities.

Whatever type of tag and reader you choose, Blasi cautions that tag performance can vary considerably with different readers. So be sure to do your homework before you purchase a tag or reader. This guide lists companies that manufacture or distribute a specific type of tag, reader, or both. **SF**

Cattle ID tags and readers

	Manufacturer	Specifications	Price
	AgInfoLink USA Phone: 800/282-0570 Web: www.aginfolink.com GOagriculture.com/go/5738	AgInfoLink offers two types of readers. The BT3 radio frequency identification (RFID) reader is a rugged handheld unit that communicates wirelessly with a PC or palm device via Bluetooth technology. The Tag Tracker 2 is a handheld, wireless reader that reads RFID tags and communicates with a base station connected to a PC computer. Both units read full duplex (FDX) and half duplex (HDX) tags and comply with ISO 11785.	\$995 for BT3 reader \$1,295 for Tag Tracker 2
	Allflex USA Phone: 800/989-TAGS Web: www.allflexusa.com GOagriculture.com/go/5739	The HDX High Performance Ultra Tag and the FDX Lightweight Ultra Bovine EID Tag are single-use electronic identification (EID) tags. EID-Maxi Visual Matched Sets are a combination of an HDX High Performance Ultra tag and a Maxi Visual tag. The RFID compact reader is a handheld, battery-powered passive transponder. Panel readers are flat-panel antennas and integral passive transponder reading devices. Sick readers are handheld passive transponders that provide cable-free operation through internal rechargeable battery packs.	Contact your animal health supplier for pricing information. Tags and readers meet ISO 11784 and 11785 standards.
	Aleis International Web: www.aleis.com GOagriculture.com/go/5740	The 8050 and 9060 Series readers by Aleis have a 100,000 RFID storage capability. They can handle 1,000 sessions with a maximum of 4,000 RFID per session. The 8050 displays RFID count. The 9060 Series data entry has four fields with 16 characters per field, plus an RFID field. Both Series read and store for easy download at a later time or can be directly connected to scale indicator, laptop, or PDA.	\$2,620 for 8050 \$2,870 for 9060
	Avante International Technology Phone: 609/799-8896 Web: www.avantetech.com GOagriculture.com/go/5741	The elongated Avante RFID tag offers a small and large tag. Readers are available in handheld or hand- or belt-carried styles. The hand- or belt-carried reader feeds data into a separate computer module and is rechargeable. Depending on number of reads, the battery can last approximately seven days. The handheld reader is a stand-alone unit that can store up to 3,000 records. Readers are ISO 15693 compliant.	\$1.50 per tag for small volume order; \$1.00 per tag for orders over 100,000 \$3,000 for reader with antenna
	Beef Concepts, Inc. Phone: 800/504-4562 Web: www.beefconcepts.com GOagriculture.com/go/5742	Beef Concepts is a one-stop shop where cattle producers can purchase tags, readers, and the Bovitrak management program. Pricing is based on herd size. The average producer can expect to pay \$2.50 per head, which includes the Bovitrak cattle management program and EID tag. Beef Concepts also carries the Psion workabout reader. Items can be purchased separately.	\$2.50 per head for tag and program \$2,000 for Psion workabout reader
	Boontech Web: www.boontech.com GOagriculture.com/go/5743	Boontech's ISO HDX/FDX handheld wand reader is designed for quick, safe transponder readings with memory storage of up to 5,000 RF transponders and 999 pens per lot. The ISO Multi-Animal Alley Master RFID reader is a panel reader designed for larger operations. It can read FDX and HDX tags. Read range is 700 mm (single) and 1.15 meters (double).	\$3,200 for handheld wand reader \$40,000 for Alley Master installed

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Cattle ID tags and readers

Manufacturer	Specifications	Price	
	<p>Digital Angel Corporation Phone: 800/328-0118 Web: www.digitalangel.com GOagriculture.com/go/5744</p>	<p>Digital Angel manufactures Destron e.Tag. The electronic tag utilizes the Fearing Duplex ear tag system with Infecta-Guard on each rivet. Tag is permanently laser-marked with an entire sequence of numbers on the surface that correspond to programmed ISO number in a microchip. The Combo e.Tag is a visual and electronic tag in one unit. D-Tech is a handheld wireless reader that incorporates Bluetooth technology.</p>	<p>\$1.90 to \$2.00 for tag \$2.60 to \$2.75 for Combo e.Tag \$850 for D-Tech reader</p>
	<p>EIDAP, Inc. Phone: 417/847-2677 Web: www.rfidtagsforcattle.com GOagriculture.com/go/5745</p>	<p>EIDAP offers an RFID stud ear tag made of nylon to resist stretching and tearing. The stud has a mushroom shape that allows it to fit flush against the back of the animal's ear. This design helps prevent snagging. The tamper-evident retention button is shaped to fit between the ribs deep in the ear. This shape helps alleviate excessive pressure on the ear surface preventing pressure necrosis and damage to the animal's ear.</p>	<p>For pricing information, contact EIDAP.</p>
	<p>EZ-ID, LLC Phone: 877/330-3943 Web: www.ezidavid.com GOagriculture.com/go/5746</p>	<p>EZ-ID offers USAID-conformant AVID Rumen Bolus, AVID transponder implants, and RFID ear tags for identifying/tracking cattle. In addition, they have several patented, multimode AVID readers with PC interface capability. Choose from handheld, portable, or alleyway readers. The AVID Dual-Mode reader offers simple, dependable operation that can read FDX and HDX ISO-compliant RFID devices.</p>	<p>Depending on quantity and delivery system, implant and bolus range in price from \$4.50 to \$7.00. Contact EZ-ID for reader pricing.</p>
	<p>Farnam Companies, Inc. Phone: 800/511-4744 Web: www.farnamits.com GOagriculture.com/go/5747</p>	<p>The Z No-Snag Tags are available in a one- or two-piece design. They also carry high-performance, FDX RFID tags. Choose from two styles of readers. The EID Panel Reader is designed to work with any ISO-approved EID ear tag. The Bluetooth Wand Reader works with Bluetooth-enabled PDAs, peripherals, desktop, and laptop computers. It allows for extended reach into tight or dangerous areas.</p>	<p>For pricing information on tags and readers, contact Farnam.</p>
	<p>I.D. ology Phone: 800/395-5585 Web: www.id-ology.com GOagriculture.com/go/5748</p>	<p>The ISO-Cane Reader features a longer read distance coupled with wireless Bluetooth communication of data in real time. The Lookup Cane Reader will accept a list of cows to be worked and notify the operator as each one is found. LightningROD reader is a lightweight, watertight ISO reader that provides a vibrating read response at a double-digit read range while communicating via a Bluetooth wireless connection.</p>	<p>Prices range from \$695 to \$1,395.</p>
	<p>Optibrand Ltd., LLC Phone: 970/490-6022 Web: www.optibrand.com GOagriculture.com/go/5749</p>	<p>The OptiReader Device is a handheld computer and digital video camera that captures and stores an image of the animal's retinal vascular pattern. The GPS receiver in the device determines the latitude and longitude and, along with a time-date stamp, encrypts it in each record. Other animal ID equipment, such as RFID readers or bar code readers, can be connected wirelessly or through the OptiReader device's USB port.</p>	<p>\$2,520</p>

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Cattle ID tags and readers

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	<p>Osborne Industries, Inc. Phone: 800/255-0316 Web: www.osborne-ind.com GOagriculture.com/go/5750</p>	<p>Osborne distributes the e-DISC RFID ear tag made by Agrident. The e-DISC is a thin, washer-like RFID that is lightweight and adaptable for use with most standard visual ID tag and pin combinations. The tag uses ISO FDX-B technology. They also distribute Agrident RFID Stationary and Handheld Readers. The APR400 and APR450 handheld readers are completely ISO enabled and can read bar codes as well as RFID.</p>	<p>\$3.60 per tag (with discounts for large orders)</p> <p>\$1,460 for APR400</p> <p>\$1,580 for APR450</p>
	<p>Premier 1 Phone: 800/282-6631 Web: www.info@premier1supplies.com GOagriculture.com/go/5751</p>	<p>Premier offers a choice of five different RFID ear tags that are ISO compliant. The tags are available in different sizes, shapes, and colors. Read ranges vary depending on the tag chosen. Premier is currently contracted with USDA to supply approved tags for official programs.</p>	<p>Tags range in price from \$1.90 to \$2.75.</p>
	<p>RFID Technologies Web: www.rf-id-systems.com GOagriculture.com/go/5752</p>	<p>The portable reader, the Trolley Ponder portable scanner, and the Farntag ear tag are the components of RFID Technologies animal identification system. The reader can identify tags up to distances of 8 meters and is able to read up to 800 animals in the reading zone at one time at a rate of 70 animals per second. The system operates in the UHF frequency band (902 to 930 MHz). The reader is battery operated and will last 11 hours under normal use.</p>	<p>\$5.28 per tag</p> <p>\$2,080 for portable reader</p>
	<p>Temple Tag, Ltd. Phone: 800/433-3112 Web: www.templetag.com GOagriculture.com/go/5753</p>	<p>Temple offers the e.Tag using Destron Technologies, which is a tamperproof, FDX-B electronic transponder. The button-style tag is air-coil molded in a high-grade polyurethane material. All tags are identified with 15-digit numeric ID and a 2D bar code. Temple also carries a full line of reading devices including the Destron D-Tech Reader. This reader is Bluetooth enabled and has a read range of up to 8 inches at optimal tag orientation.</p>	<p>\$2 per tag</p> <p>Tags and readers are available through animal health distributors.</p>
	<p>VeriLogik, Inc. Phone: 770/427-7423 Web: www.verilogik.com GOagriculture.com/go/5754</p>	<p>VeriLogik provides a panel/visual RFID as well as a button-type RFID. The RFID is a 134.5 kHz, FDX-B and is ISO compliant. The Vac-Trac Verification System has a universal reader that reads all ISO-compliant tags and is fully integrated. It requires no additional hardware such as a laptop or PDA. It sells as a complete data collection, storage, and transmission unit (including wireless weight reception).</p>	<p>\$2.50 for RFID tag</p> <p>\$1,750 for Vac-Trac Verification System Universal reader; Veri-Host can be purchased separately for \$1,125.</p>
	<p>Y-TEX Corporation Phone: 888/600-YTEX Web: www.ytex.com GOagriculture.com/go/5755</p>	<p>The TechStar II tag is an ISO-compliant RFID tag that has FDX technology. Each tag contains its own unique code. Their two readers include the TagTracker II and TagTracker Bluetooth. TagTracker II is a rugged, handheld wireless RFID reader, which includes ISO-compliant RFID electronics as well as wireless communications. The TagTracker Bluetooth has all of the features of TagTracker II plus it incorporates Bluetooth technology.</p>	<p>Contact your animal health supplier for pricing information.</p>

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