

# RFID TAG

## DISTRIBUTION AND EQUIPMENT PROGRAM



### RFID Tag Distribution and Equipment Program

#### General Information

In July 2025, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) awarded Merck Animal Health a contract to supply RFID tags to swine producers at no cost over the next five years.

Through National Pork Board (NPB) cooperative agreements with USDA–APHIS, RFID equipment is also being made available at no cost. These funds support RFID implementation in cull sow market channels (such as sorting stations and processing plants) and swine exhibition sites. Equipment options vary based on facility type and operational needs, with up to four handheld RFID readers available for qualifying exhibition sites.

The program's goal is to enhance the speed and accuracy of swine disease tracking, assist State Animal Health Officials with risk-based decision making in disease outbreaks, help maintain and regain market access and support the economic stability of U.S. pork producers.

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

#### What type of RFID tags are provided through this program?

The program provides **Half Duplex (HDX) RFID 840 tags**.

#### How many tags can I order?

# Sows on Premises	Max # of Tags per Year
1-500	500
501-999	750
1,000-4,999	1,500
5,000-9,999	3,000
10,000+	6,000

The minimal tag order is 20 tags.

#### Can the equipment read both HDX and Full Duplex (FDX) tags?

Yes. Both **HDX and FDX tags** can be read by the handheld and panel readers distributed through the NPB program.

### HOW DO I REQUEST TAGS?

All eligible groups must apply using a web form: [840swinetags.com](https://840swinetags.com)



Questions can be submitted now through the link above or by emailing: [840swinetags@Merck.com](mailto:840swinetags@Merck.com)

### COMMON RFID 840 TAG QUESTIONS

Have more questions? Scan the code to find out more about RFID 840 tags!



## Will HDX tags work with Electronic Sow Feeder (ESF) systems?

Not in all cases.

- **HDX tags will not work with ESF systems** that are designed to operate only with **FDX** tags.
- Producers using ESF systems should confirm their equipment's compatibility before ordering tags.

## Who can request tags?

The following groups are eligible to request tags:

- **Sow farms** – Based on the number of sows per Premises Identification Number (PIN)
- **Exhibition groups** – Based on the number of swine exhibited
- **State Animal Health Officials (SAHOs)** – Up to 50% of the state's breeding sow population

### NOTE:

These tags do **not** replace official PIN tags required by packers.

They serve as an **additional tag** used prior to sows entering harvest channels.



## Tag Requirements by Audience



### For Sow Farms

You will need to provide:

- Total number of sows
- PIN
- Contact information
- Shipping address
- Quantity of tags requested

All specific questions about tag distribution should be directed to **Merck**.

[840swinetags@Merck.com](mailto:840swinetags@Merck.com)



### For Exhibition Groups

You will need to provide:

- Estimated number of pigs expected at the show for which tags are needed
- Quantity of tags requested



### For State Animal Health Officials (SAHOs)

You will need to provide:

- Breeding female population (as reported by USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service)
- Quantity of tags requested

# RFID Equipment and Distribution Assistance Available Through NPB

## RFID Equipment Support

### Who is eligible for RFID equipment?

This program, funded through the NPB cooperative agreement, supports:

- Cull sow markets (sorting stations and processing plants)
- Swine exhibition sites

### What equipment is available?

- **Cull sow markets:**
  - Up to 5 RFID reader panels
  - Up to 4 handheld RFID readers per PIN
- **Exhibition sites:**
  - Up to 4 handheld RFID readers per PIN

### Handheld Reader Models Available

- [Allflex AWR300](#)
- [Allflex APR650](#)

## For Exhibition Sites

### What do I need to qualify?

- Up-to-date PIN for the exhibition site
  - [Verify your PIN here](#)
  - [Apply or verify PIN here](#)
- Valid shipping address (no PO boxes)
- Estimated number of pigs passing through the site per year
- Number and style of readers requested (based on site needs)
- Site has not already received 4 handheld RFID readers through this program

A reference Excel document is available for sites preparing to order.

**Contact:** *Brent Pepin* for more information.

## For Cull Sow Markets

### How do I participate?

1. Contact **Brent Pepin** to confirm eligibility and discuss next steps.
2. Then, you will work with a Merck representative, who will schedule a site visit to determine installation needs.

### What does the funding cover?

- RFID panels
- Handheld RFID readers
- Panel installation

## Data and Traceability

### How is RFID tag data stored?

- Handheld readers transmit data via Bluetooth, WLAN, or USB connection and exports in spreadsheet (.csv) format.
- Panel readers connect directly to computer, external drive or cloud-based system for data extraction.
- Files include the full 15-digit 840 tag number and the timestamp of each read.

### Can I use AgView to store RFID data?

Yes! AgView remains a reliable industry tool for maintaining electronic traceability records.

National Pork Board also acquired funding in 2025 to enhance AgView's integration with individual RFID tag data. Development began in October 2025, and the enhanced features are expected to be completed in Spring 2026.



### NOTE:

Funding does **not** cover infrastructure changes needed for installation.



## REQUEST TAG READING EQUIPMENT OR SUBMIT QUESTIONS TO

Brent Pepin,  
NPB Director of swine health  
[bpepin@pork.org](mailto:bpepin@pork.org)

