



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES COMMISSIONER ADAM H. PUTNAM

September 3, 2014

Dear Industry Leaders and Interested Parties:

The Cattle Identification Rule (Chapter 5C-31, Florida Administrative Code) has been published with an **effective date of September 4, 2014**. This rule is intended to improve our ability to respond to serious disease outbreaks and to help the industry maintain out-of-state markets. **The rule will require cattle 18 months of age or older moving within the state to be tagged with Official Individual Identification. Cattle moving to Approved Tagging Sites for tagging, cattle moving directly to slaughter, and cattle moving between pastures under normal ranching operations, without changing ownership, are exempted under the rule.**

Cattle owners can apply Official Identification Tags themselves or have their cattle tagged at an Approved Tagging Site. A variety of Official Identification Tags can be purchased through an animal health product supplier or USDA, National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES) tags can be obtained, at no charge, through the Division of Animal Industry by calling 850-410-0900 or by contacting the local district office. A list of our district offices and Approved Tagging Sites is available at the Florida Cattle Identification Web page on the Division of Animal Industry's Website, <http://www.FreshFromFlorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Animal-Industry>.

The Department will provide a 60-day period of continued education and outreach prior to commencing enforcement actions on November 4, 2014. During this 60-day educational period, the Department will offer training sessions at livestock markets and producer meetings, distribute summary information at the Agricultural Interdiction Stations, and provide access to a PowerPoint presentation with audio on our Website. Once enforcement begins in November, eligible cattle moving within the state must be Officially Identified or the cattle will be quarantined until the rule requirements are met. Subsequent violations will result in quarantine and administrative fines.

This rule has been discussed for a number of years in over 60 public meetings with our cattle industry, and producers and markets are now working to prepare themselves to fully comply with the identification requirements.

For more information about premises registration, official tags, or Approved Tagging Sites, please contact Stephen Monroe, Program Manager, at (850) 410-0944.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Short
State Veterinarian/Director

MAS/amv