Ranching 101: Ranch Record Keeping

Terrell Miller
terrell@cattlemax.com

CattleMax

About CattleMax

- Company founded in 1999
- Headquarter in Bryan/College Station, TX
- Rancher-based team in TX, WY, MT, and IL
- Customers in 70+ countries

Cattle Identification

Why Tag Cattle?

- Inventory control
- Animal Management
- Compliance

What You'll Get by Identifying your Cattle

- Breeding Cattle Inventory

- Female Culling

- Carcass Data for Female Selection

- Premium beef programs

- Make the most of your production & mgmt processes

* Ideas based on: "Individual Cattle Identity Records for Cow-Calf Producers: Ways to Make Records Cost Effective" by James M. McGrann, Lawrence Falconer, and Gary Rupp.

USDA Animal Traceability Rules

"Livestock belonging to species covered by the regulations that are moved interstate must be officially identified and accompanied by an interstate certificate of veterinary inspection or other documentation."

"It is our view that recognizing any identification method agreed to by the shipping and receiving States or Tribes as official would expand the range of identification methods that would be so recognized to an unacceptable degree, thereby hindering traceability. However, in keeping with our goal of having a flexible traceability system, we will allow for the use of other options deemed adequate at the local level by retaining in this final rule the provision that the shipping and receiving States or Tribes may agree to accept any other form of identification in lieu of official identification. "

Complete details can be found at

http://www.aphis.usda.gov

Texas Animal Health Commission Rules

"All sexually intact cattle, parturient or post parturient, or 18 months of age and older changing ownership must still be officially identified with Commission approved permanent identification."

Various acceptable forms of official identification include:

- Official breed association tattoo or brand # (unique)
- RFID tags
- Visual tag printed with ranch name and mgmt number
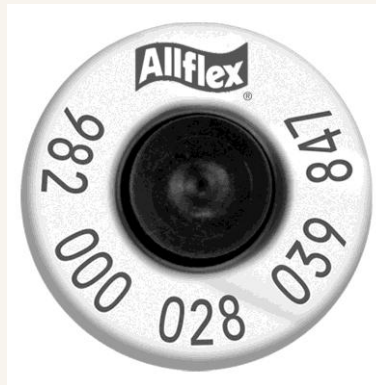
RFID tags (840/USDA) are highly recommended

Complete details at: http://www.tahc.state.tx.us

Types of Cattle Tags

Visual Tags

Electronic ID Tag
(RFID Tag)

Matched Pair Tag

Visual Tag Sizes

- Super Maxi (4 5/8" x 3")
- Maxi (4" x 3")
- Large (3" x 2 ¼")
- Medium (2" x 1 5/8")

Ear Tags by Size

Super Maxi Maxi Large Medium

Popular Layout Options

1255
Maxi Layout 1
Management code on front

LAZY G RANCH
210
Maxi Layout 3
Management code and line of text

MAY RANCH
535-345-9939
3210
Maxi Layout 4
Management code and 2 lines of text on front

1234
Maxi Layout 5
Management code and logo on front

Approximate Cattle Tag & EID Costs

- **Ear Tag: ~$1.45**

- **Electronic ID Tag: $2.20**

- **Matched Pair Tag: ~$3.75**

- **Tag Applicator: $24.00**

- **EID Reader: $325 - $1,375**

  LPR reader (compact 9" long, no screen): $325

  Stick reader (~ 24" long, has screen & addl features): $1,375

Cattle Numbering System Example

A	1969	U	1986	N	2003
B	1970	W	1987	P	2004
C	1971	X	1988	R	2005
D	1972	Y	1989	S	2006
E	1973	Z	1990	T	2007
F	1974	A	1991	U	2008
G	1975	B	1992	W	2009
H	1976	C	1993	X	2010
J	1977	D	1994	Y	2011
K	1978	E	1995	Z	2012
L	1979	F	1996	A	2013
M	1980	G	1997	B	2014
N	1981	H	1998	C	2015
P	1982	J	1999	D	2016
R	1983	K	2000	E	2017
S	1984	L	2001	F	2018
T	1985	M	2002	G	2019

In Practice
- Cow 100M is born in 2002
- Her bull calf 100P is born in 2004
- Her heifer calf 100R is born in 2005
- Heifer calf 100R is kept as replacement and retagged to 130R

Cattle Weighing

Why weigh cattle?

○ **We sell by the pound (commercial operations)**

○ **Our customers sell by the pound (registered operations)**

○ **Identify efficient cattle for breeding**

○ **Identify inefficient cattle for culling**

"You can't manage what you can't measure"

- Peter Drucker, 1993

Where will you weigh your cattle?

Under a Squeeze Chute
(Permanent)

Under a Platform
(Portable)

How will you be recording weights?

Not at All

Pencil and Paper

Scale Indicator

What can you do with a weight?

- **Adjusted Weaning Weight (AWW, also ABW, AYW)**
- **Weight per Day of Age (WDA)**
- **Average Daily Gain (ADG)**
- **Percent Dam Weight**
- **Dam MPPA**
- **Ratios (Weight, ADG, WDA)**
- **Used in EPDs (registered cattle)**

Approximate Cattle Scales Costs

Portable

- Load bars: ~$1,100.
- Platform: ~$550.

Permanent

- Load bars: ~$1,700.

Scale Indicators

- Display weight only: $785.
- Download capability: $1,349 +

5% Rebate for TSCRA members on Tru-Test scales

Cattle Record Keeping

Why Keep Cattle Records?

How keeping good records can help increase your bottom line.

- **Learn which cattle are truly productive**
- **Identify cows for culling**
- **Demonstrate goal of running ranch as a business**
- **Track sales and purchases for taxes and accounting**

"You can't manage what you can't measure"

- Peter Drucker, 1993

"Investing" in a management system

Your time is the biggest investment you will make in cattle record keeping

Investment

- Money - Software, hardware, tags, reader
- Setup Time – tagging cattle, entering records, learning components
- Update Time – updating records with births, sales, treatments, etc

Returns

- Save Time
- Better organization
- Quality and Accuracy
- Understood by others
- Marketing
- Improved decision making

Cattle record keeping options

Several tools to get the job done

Benefit	Paper	Spreadsheets	Software
Easy to backup		Yes	Yes
Easily read by others		Yes	Yes
Time saving features		Limited	Yes
Data export capabilities		Limited	Yes
Data import capabilities			Yes
Equipment compatibility			Yes
Data validation and error checking			Yes
Flexible reporting			Yes

Key Cattle Records to Track

Organize all of your information in a single place

- **Production records**

  Breeding history, pregnancy checks, calvings

- **Performance records**

  Weights, BCS, hip heights, carcass

- **Health records**

  Medical treatments, notes, pasture movements

- **Financial/tax records**

  Purchases, sales, death loss, income & expenses

- **Seedstock records**

  EPDs, pedigrees, semen & embryos

Reporting

Makes a real difference in getting benefit of your record keeping time/effort

Types of Reports

- Inventory Lists
- Animal Performance Analysis on individual and herd level
- Financial summaries for analysis and tax needs

Report Options

- Sorting
- Filtering
- Grouping
- Exporting to Excel

"A record keeping system without reporting and analysis is simply an electronic file cabinet."

- Louis Martin

Exchanging data with breed associations

○ **Herd extract (inventory)**

Active animals, weights, EPDs, 3-gen pedigree

○ **Electronic registration**

Register cattle using information already in your records

○ **Performance data**

Report weights, heights, carcass data

○ **EPD updates**

Stay current with each sire summary

Trends in Herd Management

Increased collaboration across the ranch

- Data entry in the field

- Generational transition

- Owners, managers, employees, spouses

Bring your own device

- **Desktops and laptops for the office**
- **Tablets at home**
- **Smartphones in the pasture**

Streamlining data entry with technology

- Digital Weigh Scales

- RFID / Electronic ID Readers

- Matched Pair and Electronic ID tags

CattleMax cattle software

CattleMax software

- On-farm herd management and production records software

- Accessible from any web browser

- Herd sizes from 10 head in to the thousands

- Editions for Commercial and Registered Herds

- Pricing starts at $9/month

TSCRA Members receive
10% Discount

CattleMax™

CattleMax Editions and Pricing

Low monthly fee or pay yearly and receive one free month

Edition	Monthly	or Yearly
Commercial Small Herd – 100 active animals	$9	$99
Commercial Standard – 500 active animals	$14	$154
Commercial Large – 1,000 active animals	$24	$264
Registered Small Herd – 100 active animals	$15	$165
Registered Standard – 500 active animals	$25	$275
Registered Large – 1,000 active animals	$45	$495

10% TSCRA Member Discount

Unlimited Edition Available

See CattleMax in Action