

Livestock Ear Tag Identification Activity

Background Information:

- Parents identify their children by giving them a name at birth. Livestock producers identify their animals by using ear tags for identification purposes. The ear tag is given to a calf when it is born and worn its entire life.
- Ear tags can come in many different colors such as blue, green, red, yellow, pink, purple, orange and white. Some producers and ranchers use letters and/or numbers in tagging their livestock. A letter can correspond to the year when the cow was born while other producers use numbers to indicate the year born. Ear tags make it possible to track the progress of the herd and create an easy method of retrieving an animal's record.
- Each producer develops his/her own method of identification. Once an animal is given an identifier, that combination of letters and numbers stays with it throughout its lifetime, just like you have a name for life!
- Cattle are not the only animals identified by ear tags or other methods. Any herd or flock of animals raised can be marked similarly. Pigs, chickens, sheep, goats and rabbits are just a few examples.

Suggested Supplies Needed:

- Y Tex Cattle Large Ear Tags: Blanks
- Cable Ties (Zip Ties) ~ 6"
- Tag Pen or Sharpie Marker

***** If you don't have Cattle Ear Tags, you are welcome to copy, cut out, and use the templates attached and laminate them for the kids.

Can coordinate with school colors!

Activity:

1. Hand out (1) Cattle Ear Tag to each student. For this activity, don't use the Ear Tag Button backs.
2. Have the student write the first letter of the student's name on front of the tag (LEFT side) with a Tag Pen or permanent Sharpie Marker.
3. Have the student add a hyphen and write the last 2 digits of the current year on front of the tag (RIGHT side of hyphen) with a Tag Pen or permanent Sharpie Marker. (see image below)
4. OPTIONAL - Write a School Motto or Mascot on the back, or visit with the teacher about other options and ideas.
5. Attach Ear Tag to students backpack with Cable Tie!



