



# Notice of Change

## Revised Workbook and Reference Manual

**Announcement:** Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) is issuing a revised proAction® Workbook and Reference Manual in September 2023. The documents will be available on the proAction website ([www.dairyfarmers.ca/proaction/resources/overview](http://www.dairyfarmers.ca/proaction/resources/overview)) and will replace the July 2021 versions. This Notice of Change outlines the revised requirements and provides farmers with advance notice to make any necessary adjustments on their farms.

**Effective Date:** The effective date of the changes is September 1, 2023.

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### Reminders:

a) **Animal Care (AC): Cattle assessments (AC14):** DFC published a Notice of Change for the cattle assessment requirement in March 2023. The Notice of Change explained DFC re-evaluated the expectations for corrective action and continuous improvement for the cattle assessment requirement, which resulted in the following changes:

- The Dark Red Zone and its continuous improvement requirements will be maintained (i.e. not combined with the Red Zone).
- No additional continuous improvement requirements will be added to Red Zone results in 2023.

As a result, the continuous improvement requirements for cattle assessments are:

- Farms with results in the Dark Red or Red zone must still document and implement a corrective action plan in consultation with their veterinarian, dairy nutrition advisor or other dairy specialist.

- If a farm has one or more results in the Dark Red zone, the farm is due for the next cattle assessment in 12 months from its registration anniversary date, instead of the standard 24 months, and the number of cattle assessed will increase.
- If a farm has one or more results in the Red zone, the farm is due for the next cattle assessment in 24 months from its registration anniversary date and the standard number of cattle will be assessed.

Rationale: Early in 2023, only preliminary data was available on the third round of cattle assessments. Though results show steady improvement, DFC decided to not introduce additional continuous improvement requirements until the changes from March 2021 can be fully evaluated. This will also allow time to assess any new or revised requirements in the revised *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle* that may impact the cattle assessments.

The Animal Care Technical Committee started a holistic review of the cattle assessment requirement in January 2023, and is evaluating whether any changes should be made to this requirement for 2025 or later.

For more information:

- Section 4.1, Chapter 4 and Appendix II in the Reference Manual, July 2023
- Notice of Change for Animal Care Module, March 2023

**b) Livestock Traceability (LT): Tagging (LT2):** DFC published a Notice of Change for changes to the Traceability module in September 2020. The last item was advance notice that in September 2023 DFC would phase out the use of the yellow button tags on calves born on dairy farms.

Therefore, as of September 1, 2023, calves born on a dairy farm destined for purposes other than dairy must be identified with approved white dairy tags (i.e. single button RFID tag or dual tag set), and the exception allowing these animals to have a yellow button tag applied at birth will be fully phased out. This also includes no longer allowing yellow button tags for cull cows if the original tag is lost.

There is no change for the province of Quebec, as dual tagging of all dairy animals remains a provincial requirement.

As a result, LT2 is changing to:

LT2: are your dairy cattle double-tagged with approved dairy tags (DairyTrace/Attestra)?

\*Calves must be tagged within 7 days of birth or before the animal leaves the farm of origin, whichever occurs first.

\*Any calves born on farm and destined for purposes other than dairy production may be identified with a single RFID ear tag

(approved dairy tag) except for provinces that require double-tagging.

Rationale: Using the single white button tags will keep these animals' information within the national dairy traceability database enabling more effective emergency response and value-added opportunities, and keep the tag revenues within the dairy industry, ensuring a financially sustainable system.

For more information:

- Farmer Hand-Out (Tag Requirement Changes) appended to the end of the Notice of Change
- Chapter 3 in the Reference Manual, July 2023
- Notice of Change for Traceability Module, September 2020

## Revised Requirements:

**a) Biosecurity (BIO): BIO Risk Assessment (BIO1):** DFC has updated the Dairy Farm Biosecurity Risk Assessment Questionnaire (Record 6b) to reflect current practices, expand questions to provide clarity and change the scoring categorizations to help guide farmers and their veterinarians in more accurately answering the questions. The categories have been expanded to: never or no, rarely, sometimes, almost always, always or yes, and not applicable, with each category including a percentage range.

Farmers and veterinarians need to use the new version (July 2023) starting in September 2023.

Refer to the Workbook, July 2023, Record 6b, for the revised version.

**FUTURE NOTE:** DFC is planning to require farmers to complete the Dairy Farm Biosecurity Risk Assessment Questionnaire electronically (e.g. via computer software) starting in September 2025. The aggregate data will help DFC make informed decisions to improve animal health and also improve the questionnaire. Some veterinarians already use computer software programs to complete the questionnaire with farmers and have reported it significantly reduces the time required.

**b) Food Safety (FS) and Animal Care: Shipping Cattle Standard Operating Procedure (FS40 (AC)):** The shipping cattle Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been updated to:

- Revise the required element on tagging to reflect transition to single white button tags: “Ensure all cattle intended for shipping are identified with dairy approved (DairyTrace) dual tags or single white button tags (calves born on a dairy farm outside the province of Quebec and destined for purposes other than dairy production may be identified with an approved DairyTrace single white button tag) or Attestra tags.”
- Add a required element to reflect traceability reporting requirements: “Ensure animal birth or tag activation information is reported to the national traceability database before animals leave the farm (particularly for bull calves).”

Rationale: The changes reflect the changes made to LT2 and reflect the reporting requirements farmers are already doing.

For more information, refer to Chapter 9, Section 9.2 in the Reference Manual, July 2023

## Clarifications and Minor Edits:

- a) Traceability records:** The records are revised to only require farmers to record the last 9 digits of an animal’s identification number (not all 15 digits) to simplify recording. The first 6 digits are standard for Canada and will be auto filled by DairyTrace during reporting. As a reminder, farmers can use the DairyTrace reports as their records.

Refer to the Workbook, July 2023, Records 1 to 5 for sample records.

- b) Record 7B: Cattle Assessment Corrective Action Plan:** Record 7B has been updated to a streamlined version.

Refer to the Workbook, July 2023, Record 7b for sample record.

- c) Record 12: Bulk Tank Temperature Log:** Added a place to indicate the “Year” in addition to the “Month” for farmers’ convenience.

Refer to the Workbook, July 2023, Record 12 for sample record.

- d) Record 14: Cleaning and Sanitizing Chart:** Added in “Number of washes done in a 24-hour period” to provide context for the wash system.

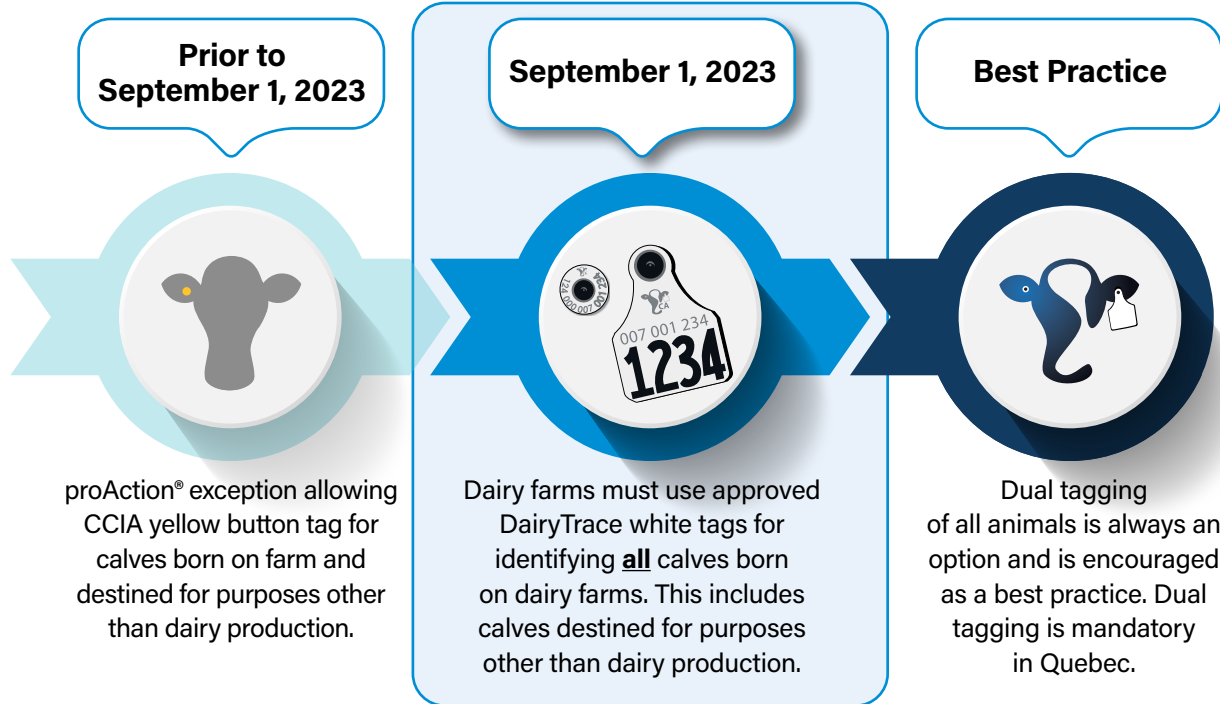
Refer to the Workbook, July 2023, Record 14 for sample record.

- e) Overall:** Edits were made throughout the Workbook and Reference Manual to correct errors, streamline information, add clarity or provide more information. Some examples are:

- Revised “third-party assessors” to “independent assessors” for cattle assessments.
- Noted that in Canada, all prescription drugs must be accompanied by written veterinary directions. In Quebec, all medications purchased for dairy animals must be accompanied by a written veterinary prescription.

# Tag Requirement Changes

## Effective September 1, 2023

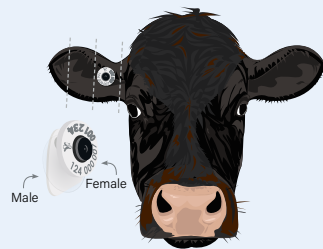
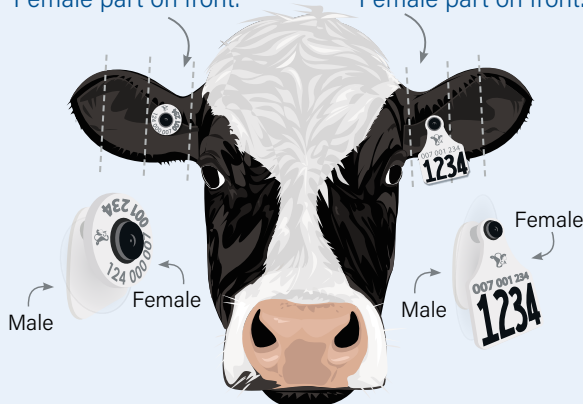


Federal regulations prohibit removal of official RFID tags, so animals currently tagged with a yellow button tag should not have their tags removed. **As a reminder, it is acceptable for animals in a dairy herd that were born before September 2017 (before dual tagging was required for dairy animals) to be identified using a yellow button tag.**

### Positioning Tips

**RIGHT EAR**  
Electronic set put on the **first third** of ear with Male part on back, Female part on front.

**LEFT EAR**  
Visual set put on the **first third** of ear with Male part on back, Female part on front.



While dual tagging is encouraged, DairyTrace offers a white single button RFID tag that may be used to identify calves born on farm and destined for purposes other than dairy production.\*  
\*not applicable in Québec



As per federal requirement, the RFID button must be front facing.

# Have questions? We've got answers.

## Why use white tags?

Using approved dairy tags results in more complete traceability data for the dairy sector. A traceability system is designed to protect dairy farmers and is much more effective when tag information and movements on and off dairy operations or other premises are fully traceable, which is not possible when yellow tags are used.

The dairy and beef industries have different traceability databases: DairyTrace and the Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS) of Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA). When dairy farmers use white dairy tags, all events reported on these tags, from birth to tag retirement, go to DairyTrace. Use of white dairy tags will ensure all animals born on a dairy farm are fully traceable through DairyTrace. When dairy farmers use yellow button tags, all reported events after the animals leave the farm go to the CLTS and are not captured by DairyTrace.

## How will this benefit farmers?

Having the most complete information on dairy animals from birth to end of life makes effective and rapid traceback possible in an animal health emergency, protecting farms and the dairy industry.

Keeping information from calves born on a dairy farm in the DairyTrace system provides the potential to gather more information on those animals as they move through the value chain, from birth to end of life. More information will lead to a better understanding of these animals and is the foundation for potential future value-added opportunities for dairy farmers.

Buyers may be willing to pay a premium if they receive records from the dairy farmer with age, weight and other information about the calves. **Watch this short video** for more information.

## Is this part of proAction? How will this be implemented?

Starting September 1, 2023, this will be a requirement in proAction's Traceability module and will be verified by proAction validators as part of the on-farm audit.

## Will using white button tags cost more?

The cost of purchasing the white single button RFID tags is competitive with the yellow button tags.

An advantage of using only white DairyTrace tags is they can all be ordered via DairyTrace Customer Services.

Based on an independent analysis of auction mart data available in various provinces, there is no evidence of bias in market price received for calves with white single button tags compared to those with yellow button tags.

## Want more information?

If you have any questions, contact DairyTrace Customer Services or your proAction provincial coordinator.

DairyTrace Customer Services: **1-866-55-TRACE (1-866-558-7223)** or [info@DairyTrace.ca](mailto:info@DairyTrace.ca).

Find your proAction provincial coordinator: [dairytrace.ca/traceability/how-it-works/](https://dairytrace.ca/traceability/how-it-works/).