

# Selling pigs? Remember your swine brand and PigPass

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## Swine brands

It is a legal requirement for all pigs greater than 25 kg to be branded with a registered swine brand before sale in a saleyard, or direct sale to a processor.

### How do I get a registered swine brand?

To register a swine brand you first need a property identification code (PIC). If you don't have one, you must apply for one to the Rural Lands Protection Board (RLPB) in your area. There is a small fee. Owners of small areas of land which are smaller in size than the RLPB minimum rateable area of land should also apply for a PIC, especially if they wish to raise and sell pigs from that land.

The PIC is a unique 8 character sequence assigned by the RLPB to a property with livestock. An example of a PIC is NG474162 where:

N = NSW;

G is a check character;

47 is the RLPB district;

4162 is the property number.

The registered swine brand for this property would be 474162.

The swine brand registration needs to be renewed every 12 months.

### What if I don't have a registered swine brand but my pigs are ready for sale?

If you don't have a registered swine brand or you have allowed the registration of your brand to lapse you can make application to your local RLPB to have the crown brand applied to your pigs *before* the sale. There is a fee for this service. Contact the RLPB a week before the intended sale date.



Figure 1. Swine brand in good condition – no bent or missing needles

Remember that it is an offence to buy or sell pigs that are not correctly branded. The primary responsibility rests with you the owner to see that your pigs are correctly presented for sale. However, stock and station agents and buyers for processors can also be held accountable if they are trading unidentified pigs.

Coloured pigs must be branded as well as the lighter coloured pigs. Green ink or paste is recommended for use on black pigs.

Keep your swine brand in good condition, with no bent or missing needles. Make sure that the tattoo is well inked, and brand pigs on each shoulder so that brands are legible on the carcass.

### Do all pigs have to be branded?

Pigs less than 25 kg do not have to be branded.

Pigs being moved directly between properties (not via a saleyard) do not have to be branded.

Pigs being sent to a show, exhibition or field day do not have to be branded provided they are not being sold by public auction.





Figure 2. Make sure the tattoo is well inked and brand pigs on each shoulder

## PigPass

### What is PigPass NVD?

The PigPass National Vendor Declaration (PigPass NVD) is a declaration by the producer on the husbandry practices existing on the farm from which the animals were sourced. The PigPass NVD must be completed at the time of consigning pigs for sale. PigPass NVD is similar to the NVD forms for sheep and cattle.

From 30 June 2007 all pigs sent for slaughter in any abattoir in NSW must be accompanied by a valid PigPass NVD. The information contained in the PigPass NVD is evidence that you are supplying a product that meets the quality standards demanded of abattoirs and processors by the NSW Food Authority. You are stating that the pigs supplied by you are safe for human consumption and free of residues or contaminants.

Farmers who utilise service abattoirs for private kills for their own consumption will also need to supply a PigPass NVD with these animals.

### Emergency PigPass NVD

A facility has been created within the PigPass system for people who do not have a PIC or a registered swine brand. They can approach their local RLPB for an emergency PigPass NVD and crown brand application for their pigs before sale or slaughter. Contact the RLPB at least 1 week before the expected slaughter date. There may be a charge for this service. Emergency PigPass is only valid for 5 days. The Emergency PigPass NVD facility is not for use on a regular basis. If you need more information please call the PigPass Helpdesk on 1800 001 458.

People who infrequently sell or slaughter pigs, or those waiting on delivery of their PigPass NVD book can also visit the PigPass website and download a PigPass NVD. You do need to be registered on the database as the number of the NVD needs to be associated with a PIC. Call the

PigPass Helpdesk on 1800 001 458 if you have problems.

PigPass NVD is an auditable document and must not be photocopied. Each PigPass NVD has a unique serial number and this is used to trace pigs or pork products in the event of an exotic disease outbreak or food safety incident.

### What information is needed to complete the PigPass NVD?

The information required for completion of the PigPass form includes:

- The source of the animals, including your PIC and swine brand.
- The destination of the animals, e.g. saleyard, abattoir.
- The period the pigs have resided on the farm.
- Whether you have a current certified quality assurance (QA) program.
- Whether the pigs being sold comply with withholding periods (WHP) and export slaughter intervals (ESI) (see Notes below).
- Your name and signature as the person responsible for the husbandry of the pigs.
- The livestock carrier should enter details including day, time, vehicle registration and signature of the person responsible for the pigs in transit.
- The person or company who receives the pigs should enter their details on receipt of the pigs.

### Notes

The term 'withholding period' (WHP) refers to the period of time which must pass between the time of administration of a chemical or antibiotic treatment, and the time of the slaughter of the animal for human consumption. WHPs are listed on product labels.



Figure 3. Swine branding should be carefully executed so that brands are legible on the carcass

The term 'export slaughter interval' (ESI) refers to the period of time between the administration of a chemical or antibiotic treatment and the time of slaughter of the animal for export for human consumption. ESIs are listed on product labels.

The key advantages for the producer (and the industry) of the PigPass NVD are:

- There are more market options for your pigs.
- It is evidence of your commitment to production of a quality product.
- You are helping the industry and Australian agriculture to maintain a sound reputation for producing wholesome product.

### What is PigPass QA?

PigPass QA has been developed by Australian Pork Limited (APL) in conjunction with the Australian pig industry to ensure that the integrity of Australian pork is maintained in all markets. Quality Assurance (QA) systems are becoming more common in the market place as processors, retailers and consumers demand to know that the food products they purchase are safe and free from contamination from disease, chemicals or antibiotics.

The aim of a QA system on-farm is to create a production system such that both the grower and the processor are satisfied with the quality and consistency of the pigs sold and that they are safe for human consumption.

The keeping of records on-farm is necessary so that the statements you make on the PigPass NVD can be validated. These records will include things such as:

- where you purchase your breeding stock from
- what you feed your pigs
- how you store your pig feed
- whether your pigs have been given any antibiotic or vaccination treatments
- how your pigs receive these treatments, for example in their food/water or via vaccination with syringe and needle.

A necessary part of a QA system is an independent audit. This is where a certified QA auditor checks your records against your management program to validate your system, to identify any failure in your system and to make recommendations for improvement of your system.

- In summary, quality assurance has 3 parts:
- a good production system
- a good records system
- an independent audit system.

PigPass QA was created by APL to provide a simple QA certification and auditing system. It is recognised and accepted by NSW abattoirs as the minimum level of QA to validate the statements on the PigPass NVD.

### How does the PigPass NVD and QA system work?

Farmers wishing to sell pigs for human consumption need to apply for PigPass NVD registration and Quality Assurance (QA) e.g. Humane Choice certification.

PigPass NVD forms are available in books of 10 forms (\$15), 20 forms (\$25) or 50 forms (\$50). These can be ordered from the PigPass Help Desk by telephoning 1800 001 458 toll free, available at any time. The books can be ordered on line at <http://www.pigpass.com.au>.

### Where can I get more information?

For more information on PigPass and the associated QA system, visit the PigPass website: <http://www.pigpass.com.au>

For more information on pig branding, see Primefact 116 *Pig branding in NSW*, available from the NSW DPI website: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au>

For more information on PIC and crown brands contact your local RLPB. Emergency PigPass NVD forms may be obtained from your local RLPB when the crown brand is used.

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