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How to register your cattle

All cattle must be registered on the central database (CTS). We will send you a cattle passport that shows the details we have recorded for that animal.

3.1 Different ways to apply for a passport

By law you must apply to us for a cattle passport, and we must receive it, within a total of 27 days from birth (except for bison, see section 2.2b). If you are late with your application, we will not send you a passport.

You can apply for a passport in the following ways.

- On the internet using CTS Online at www.bcms.gov.uk.
- On the internet using CTS Web Services, which works with farm management software.
- Using an agent.
- By e-mail on the Standard Interface Specification System (SIS).
- Using the application for a cattle passport form (CPP12) sent after you have ordered ear tags. The application forms will have the same numbers as your ear tags, so you need to match them. You can choose not to receive paper application forms. Please contact us by phone or email if you do not wish to receive them.

3.2 How to apply

a CTS Online

You can apply for a cattle passport using our website, CTS Online. It is one of the quickest, easiest and safest ways to apply. See section eight for more details.

The ear-tag numbers you have are automatically entered under your holding details, so you choose the identity number you want. You need to give us information about the animal, for example, breed, sex and date of birth. You can also print off a receipt for the information you send us.

We aim to send your passports within three days of applying.

b CTS Web Services

You can report your cattle births using an internet link from your farm management software package. You can also print off a receipt for the information you send us.

We aim to send your passports within three days of applying. See section nine for more information.

You can choose not to receive paper application forms. Please contact us by phone or email if you do not wish to receive them.

c Using an Agent

You can now use someone else (an agent) to act for you, and they report your cattle births using CTS Online. See section 8.3 for more details.

d Paper application

When you order new ear tags, we will send you matching passport application forms. These are called application for a cattle passport (form CPP12). They are preprinted with your ear-tag number and your holding details. You need to check the details in section 1, fill in sections 2 and 3, and return the form to us. If you report your cattle births electronically, you can choose not to receive paper application forms. Please contact us by phone or email if you do not wish to receive them.

It is important that you match the correct application for a cattle passport form to the animal with the same identity number.

The application for a cattle passport form is an important document, so you should think about getting proof of posting, for example recorded delivery, in case the document or documents go missing. We must receive it within 27 days of birth, so it is important to post in good time.

We aim to send your passports within five days of applying.

3.3 Death of an unregistered calf

If an unregistered but tagged calf dies, you must tell us about the death so we can update the Cattle Tracing System with the animal's details. You can report the death either by CTS Online, Agent Access or by sending us the application for a cattle passport form (CPP12), once you have completed sections two and three—the animal's details and section four—the death details.

You may not reuse the calf's ear tags.

You do not need to report the deaths of calves that have not been tagged.

3.4 Late applications

You must make sure that your application reaches us before the 27-day deadline. If we get your application after the deadline, we will not send you a passport. We will send you a notice of registration (CPP35), which registers your animal on the Cattle Tracing System – it is not a passport.

If we refuse to send you a passport, the animal may not move alive from your holding, except, under licence from us, direct to a knacker's yard or hunt kennel. It may not go into the human food chain under any circumstances. The animal may remain on your holding for its lifetime and you may apply for a passport for any calves the animal may have.

If you need a licence to move an animal, please call our helpline for a movement licence for cattle (form CPP1b).

If you are worried that you have not left enough time to apply for a passport, phone our helpline. They will help you to register the animal on time or tell you what you need to do.

a Appeals

If you have had a cattle passport refused because the application was late, you may appeal but you need to show that there were exceptional circumstances that stopped you from making the application in time.

You must appeal to us in writing and send evidence to support your appeal.

Exceptional circumstances which stopped you making the application on time include the following events.

- Those outside your control ('acts of God'). For example, major floods, regional or national power failures, or postal strikes.
- Personal circumstances including a death in the family, a sudden and serious illness, and theft of or damage to your farm records or computer.
- Unusual postal delay.
- Mistakes made by us or a breakdown of CTS.

The following are **not** grounds for appeal.

- A mistake, oversight or misunderstanding by you or anyone acting for you.
- Being too busy with other farm work.
- Financial difficulties.

You can send your appeal in writing to:

Appeals Section
BCMS
Curwen Road
Workington
Cumbria
CA14 2DD.

b DNA testing

We may be able to issue the passport based on a DNA test, which proves that the animal is the offspring of the dam shown in the application. As each case is considered individually, phone our helpline for more information on appeals and DNA testing, or see the BCMS pages on our website at www.rpa.gov.uk.