

National Vendor Declarations

National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) provide an important tool for tracking livestock for disease control, food safety and animal welfare purposes, and for providing confidence to consumers in domestic and overseas markets that Victorian-produced meat, milk products and fibre products are safe and wholesome.

WHAT ROLE DO NVDs PLAY IN LIVESTOCK TRACEABILITY AND FOOD SAFETY?

Livestock traceability is far more than the tagging of animals. Tagging is but one component in a series of parts that must be linked together to enable an animal or group of animals to be tracked from location to location.

To achieve the required level of traceability, Victoria's livestock traceability system has the following elements:

- a property registration system which involves the allocation of a unique identifying number known as a Property Identification Code (PIC) to premises, information on the species present, contact details for the person who is responsible for the animals and a mapping capability
- means of physically identifying animals such as ear tagging in cattle, sheep and goats, and tattooing in pigs
- prescribed movement documentation in the form of National Vendor Declaration (NVD) forms
- an official secure database, the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) database, on which tags are registered and where movement records, including details present on the NVD forms that accompany livestock, are stored

- NVDs also provide a mechanism that allows a producer to confirm that the animals he/she is selling are 'fit for purpose' and free from unacceptable chemical residues. Any false or misleading answers on a completed NVD may lead to prosecution and/or attract civil action by the purchaser.

Are NVDs required when selling or giving away livestock?

Consignors must provide an NVD when sending cattle, sheep, goats and pigs of any age to an abattoir or saleyard, or when moving them to another property (with a different PIC). NVDs are also required when cattle, sheep, goats and pigs are being given away or sold as pets.

NVDs are not required when dead livestock are being collected for processing in a knackery, however dead cattle destined for processing in a knackery must be identified with an NLIS (Cattle) ear tag.

NVDs are not required for livestock being consigned to an agricultural show or exhibition provided the livestock will be returned to the exhibitor's property immediately after the event.

How can I obtain NVD forms?

The NVD forms that accompany cattle, sheep and goats are supplied by the red meat industry's farm assurance program known as Livestock Production Assurance (LPA). NVD forms that accompany pigs are supplied by Australian Pork Limited through its PigPass program.

LPA and PigPass are voluntary on-farm quality assurance programs. Producers seeking LPA or PigPass accreditation must agree to abide by basic animal production and record keeping requirements focusing on food safety issues. LPA and PigPass conduct independent audits of accredited producers to ensure that the program's integrity is maintained. Further information on the respective audit programs is available on the LPA and PigPass websites.

NVD forms can be obtained by contacting the LPA Helpline on 1800 683 111 during office hours, or by visiting www.mla.com.au. Each LPA NVD booklet contains 20 LPA NVDs and costs \$40 (GST inclusive). This price includes all postage and handling.

To register to use PigPass NVDs visit www.pigpass.com.au or call the PigPass helpline on 1800 001 458. PigPass NVDs can be completed on-line free of charge. Producers also have the option of purchasing PigPass NVD forms.

What is an eDEC?

An eDEC is an electronic version of the LPA NVD. The eDEC offers producers a significant cost saving compared with the traditional printed version. The eDEC simplifies the completion process as it takes producers through the components of an LPA NVD step-by-step and is then printed once completed.

To validate the eDEC, three copies must be printed and signed with copies provided to the transporter, livestock receiver and one retained for your records.

LPA uses a token system that allows producers to pay for eDECs as they use them. eDECs that have been printed are valid for 30 days.

What is an electronic NVD (eNVD)?

An electronic NVD (or eNVD) is an electronic version of the NVD which is being developed by the red meat industry and is expected to be available in 2017 via tablet and smart phone apps, as well as web browsers. Once completed, an eNVD will be transferred electronically to the destination saleyard, feedlot or abattoir.

eNVDs are expected to be simpler to complete than paper based NVDs, and will reduce the cost of processing forms in saleyards and abattoirs.

Can NVDs be accessed from other sources?

Some Victorian abattoirs and scales operators also supply NVDs 'free of charge' to their cattle and sheep clients.

Such NVDs are an acceptable alternative to LPA NVDs provided they contain the following information:

- the PIC of the property from which the livestock are to be dispatched
- the date of dispatch of the livestock
- the number and description of livestock to be dispatched
- the name of the person creating the document
- the date the document is made
- a unique identifying number
- whether the livestock in the consignment were declared to have been bred by the owner or vendor

- the intended destination of the livestock, which may be the PIC of the destination property, the street address of the destination property, or in the case of a movement to a saleyard or abattoir the name of the saleyard or abattoir
- the signature of the person who completed the form and the date.

To obtain NVDs you will need a PIC

You will need a PIC before ordering NVD forms. To apply for a PIC you can:

Apply online at www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/pic. You can also use the online service to update your existing PIC details if they have changed.

Download an application form by visiting www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/pic.

Contact Agriculture Victoria's NLIS Helpline during office hours on 1800 678 779 to have a form mailed or emailed to you.

Which NVD/PigPass edition do I need to use?

Several LPA NVD and PigPass NVD editions are currently being used by producers trading livestock. All are acceptable from the perspective of Victoria's NVD legislation, however many buyers are only interested in purchasing livestock accompanied by a current LPA NVD or PigPass NVD respectively.

Am I required to obtain an NVD form from the seller or their agent when I buy cattle, sheep, goats or pigs?

Yes. For traceability, it is crucial to obtain the information provided on movement documentation such as an NVD.

Stock agents are required to provide a copy of the consignor's NVD or alternatively a post-sale summary within two working days of the purchase of store and breeding stock. The information that must be recorded on a post-sale summary includes the PIC of the property from which the animals were dispatched, the date of the movement, the number and type of animals, and in relation to sheep and goats, the PICs printed on all of the NLIS (Sheep) tags attached to animals in the consignment.

NVDs for purchased livestock must be retained for seven years to facilitate tracking of animals should the need arise. Sellers must also keep a copy of the NVD forms that they provide for seven years.

Contacts and more information

For further information, call the Agriculture Victoria's NLIS Helpline on 1800 678 779 during office hours.