

EAR NOTCHING & VALIDATION

handbook



EAR NOTCHING 101

Ear notching is the universal form of permanent identification for swine. Ear-notching helps identify a pig's litter and which one of the litter it is, giving each pig a unique identity number.

LITTER NUMBER: The right ear is used for litter mark and all pigs in same litter must have the same ear notches in the ear. Right ear is on the pigs own right (your left when looking directly at their face).

PIG NUMBER: The left ear is used for notches to show the individual pig number in the litter. Each pig in the litter will have different notches in this ear. Left ear is on the pigs own left (your right when looking directly at their face).

HOW TO READ AN EAR NOTCH ID

1. *Identify the Ears:* Remember that the right ear denotes the litter number, and the left ear identifies the individual pig.
2. *Add the Values:* For each ear, add the values of all the notches present to get the litter or pig number.
3. *Combine the Numbers:* The final ID is written as (Right Ear Value)-(Left Ear Value).

RIGHT EAR (LITTER NUMBER):

The right ear contains five possible notch locations, each assigned a specific value:

81: Notch at the base of the ear near the head.

27: Notch in the middle-upper part of the ear.

9: Notch on the tip of the ear.

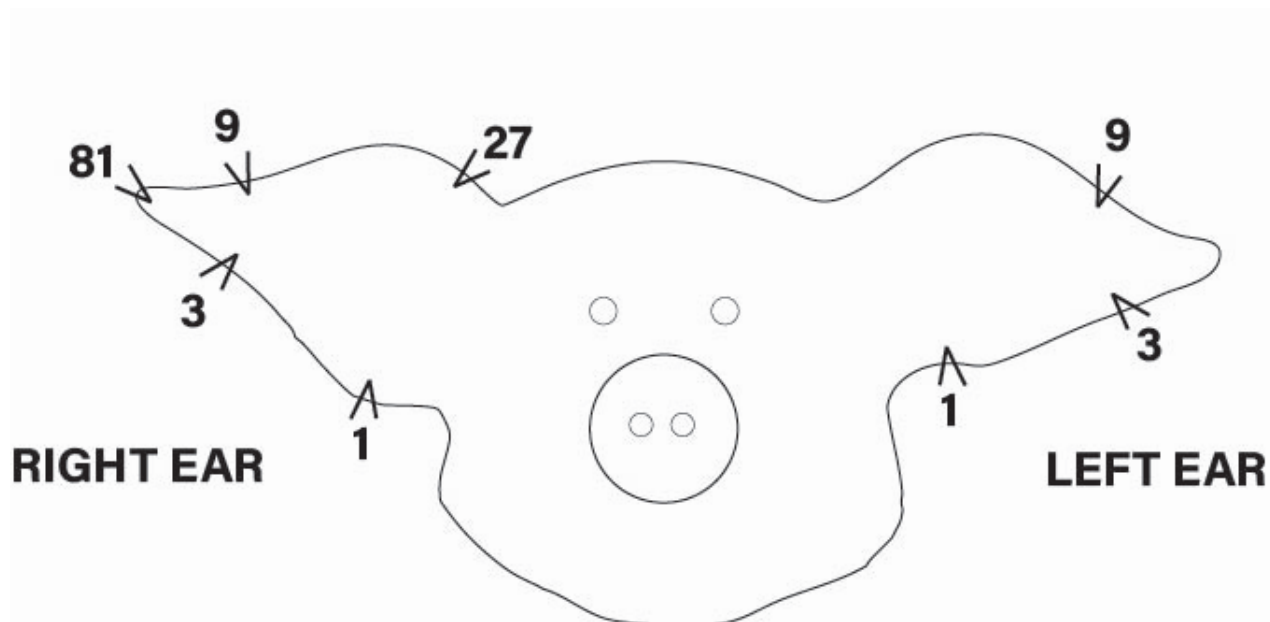
3: Notch in the middle-lower part of the ear.

1: Notch at the tip of the ear, but on the opposite side of the 9.

LEFT EAR (INDIVIDUAL PIG NUMBER):

The left ear has three locations for notches, assigned values of 9, 3, and 1.

This is the universal ear-notching system for pigs. Some breeders use a difference system (i.e. an 81 notch on the left ear) for their own identification purposes.



SWINE VALIDATION IN TEXAS

Correct notching allows show officials to verify that the pig being exhibited is the same pig validated months earlier. If ear notches are done incorrectly or recorded inaccurately, the pig's identity cannot be confirmed, which will cause issues for the exhibitor. For this reason, it's critical that notches are placed cleanly, match the official system, and are double-checked when recorded on validation paperwork.

Per the Texas Livestock Validation Guidelines: The Texas Livestock Validation Program, in collaboration with Texas AgriLife Extension, the Texas FFA Association, ATAT, and various Texas Major Livestock Shows, aims to provide essential education and leadership training for 4-H and FFA livestock project exhibitors across Texas. As part of the Texas 4-H/FFA Swine Validation Program, all market and breeding swine must be identified using an official Texas Swine Visual/Electronic (EID) tag along with a DNA Assay.

PARTICIPATING MAJOR LIVESTOCK SHOWS IN THIS PROGRAM INCLUDE:

- State Fair of Texas
- Heart of Texas Livestock Show
- Hill Country Grandstand Show
- Fort Worth Livestock Show
- San Angelo Livestock Show
- Texas' Elite Showcase
- San Antonio Livestock Show
- Houston Livestock Show
- Rodeo Austin
- Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show

TEXAS SPRING MAJOR LIVESTOCK SHOWS VALIDATION DEADLINE DATES:

September 1 to September 30

Tag orders open. Tags ordered during this time will cost \$15.00 each.

October 1 to November 7

Late tag ordering begins. Tags ordered during this time will cost \$18.00 each.

November 1 to November 30

Official validation period. Pigs cannot be validated prior to November 1 or after November 30th.

December 8

Deadline for payment, all required data input into the county, post mark date and deadline for returning all required validation materials to the Texas Swine Validation office.

January 6

Original gilt registration papers must be uploaded into the Texas FFA Swine Validation System

January 10

Deadline for all corrections to be returned.

TEXAS SPRING MAJOR LIVESTOCK SHOWS VALIDATION DEADLINE DATES:

April 1 to April 30

Tag orders open. Tags ordered during this time will cost \$15.00 each.

May 1 to June 7

Late tag ordering begins. Tags ordered during this time will cost \$18.00 each

June 1 to June 30

Official validation period. Pigs cannot be validated prior to June 1 or after June 30th.

July 15

- o Post mark date and deadline for returning all required validation materials to the Texas Swine Validation office.
- o Deadline for uploading registered gilt papers into the Gilt Registration portal. Deadline for all corrections to be returned.

August 30

Deadline for all required data input into the county portal.

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