



News Release

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APHIS Issues Proposed Rule to Minimize Spread of Scrapie *Requires Facilities that Handle Sheep, Goats to Follow Procedures*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has issued a proposed rule to require livestock facilities that handle sheep and goats in interstate commerce to follow certain procedures to minimize the potential spread of scrapie. USDA has issued the proposed rule to ensure that certain uniform practices relating to the identification, record keeping and handling of sheep and goats are followed.

Scrapie is a degenerative and eventually fatal disease affecting the central nervous systems of sheep and goats. The proposed rule would affect stockyards, livestock markets, buying stations, concentration points or any other premises where sheep or goats are assembled.

APHIS is targeting approval of such facilities to ensure that they are constructed and operated in a manner that will help prevent the interstate transmission of livestock diseases. The agency's approval would be contingent on the facility operator meeting certain minimum standards and other conditions relating to the receipt, handling and release of sheep and goats at the facility.

Notice of the proposed rule was published in the Aug. 26 *Federal Register* (Docket # 00-094-1) and is available on the Internet in its entirety at www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html. Instructions for submitting comments are also available at this web site. Consideration will be given to comments received on or before Oct. 25.

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