

Check list for keepers of sheep and goats

This check list includes legal requirements concerning the keeping of sheep and goats. The requirements related to the keeping of animals must be complied with, regardless of the number of animals or the length of their keeping. The requirements aim to safeguard animal welfare and ensure that animals do not pose a risk of disease to other animals or to humans.

It is also important to remember that the skills of the keeper and knowledge of the needs of the species in question also have an impact on animal welfare. Before acquiring animals, it is necessary to learn about the behaviour, care, and the nutritional needs of sheep and goats and the requirements for the place where they are kept. It must also be taken into account that sheep and goats are social animals and it is not recommended to keep them alone.

The owner is responsible for the health and welfare of his animals throughout their lifetime.

1. Register as a keeper of sheep or goats with the rural administration department of your own municipality
2. In a town plan zone, contact the health protection authority and, if necessary, the construction supervision department of your municipality
3. Follow the regulations related to registering and keeping of a list of animals
4. Find out about animal protection legislation concerning sheep
5. Animals from abroad? Remember the import requirements!
6. Take care of animal health and the prevention of animal diseases
7. Keep record on medicines given to animals
8. Learn about the slaughter and killing requirements for sheep and goats
9. Find out how to destroy a dead animal and by-products of home slaughter

1. Register as a keeper of sheep or goats with the rural administration department of your own municipality

All keepers of sheep and goats must be register with the rural business department of their municipality. The holdings where animals are kept must also be registered. The requirements also concern the keeper of even one animal, regardless of the purpose or time of keeping. When keeping of the animals ends or is on hold for more than six months, information needs to send to the register.

[Registrations forms \(in Finnish\):](#)

Registration as sheepholder (Rekisteröityminen lammaseläinten pitäjäksi)

Registration as goat holder (Rekisteröityminen vuohiseläinten pitäjäksi)

Registration of holding (Eläinten pitopaikat, rekisteröinti-/muutosilmoitus)

(www.evira.fi> tietoa Evirasta> lomakkeet ja ohjeet> eläimet> eläinten merkitseminen ja rekisteröinti)

Contact details for the rural administration of the municipal partnership areas are available on the [Mavi website](#). (www.mavi.fi>Tietoa meistä>Hae yhteistoiminta-alueesi)

2. In a town plan zone, contact the health protection authority and construction supervision department of your municipality

Further information about keeping animals in a town plan zone can be requested from the health protection authority of your municipality. When the use of buildings changes or new buildings are constructed, please contact the municipal construction supervision, if necessary.

3. Follow the regulations related to registering and keeping a list of animals

The keeper of sheep and goats must take account regulations concerning the marking and registration of animals. The regulations oblige all keepers of animals, regardless of the extent or purpose of the activities. It is required that each individual animal can be identified and its location is known and that

transfers from one location to another can be traced throughout its lifetime. It should be verified already when getting a sheep or goat that the animal is registered – ear tags alone are not enough! This verification can be made by calling the customer services of the Sheep and Goat Register (tel. 09 85 666 002) and providing the EU code Flxxxxx displayed on the ear tag of the animal in question.

Removals and transfers of animals must be notified to the Sheep and Goat Register within 7 days of the event (6 months with lambing/kidding notification) in addition to keeping up-to-date records of events on site. The records must be kept for at least three years from the latest entry. When registering as a keeper of sheep or goats, the municipality will provide you with user rights to an application for submitting the required notifications to the register. When keeping of the animals ends the removal information needs to be input into the sheep- and goatregister.

Information about the requirements is available on the [Evira website](#), and from the Act on the Animal Identification System (238/2010).

(www.evira.fi> eläimet> merkitseminen ja rekisteröinti> lampaat ja vuohet)

4. Find out about animal protection legislation concerning sheep and goats

The keeping, care, treatment and handling of animals are governed by the Animal Welfare Act (247/1996) and the Animal Welfare Decree (396/1996). The requirements of keeping sheep and goats and their holding sites are also regulated by the following government decrees (in Finnish): Government decree on the welfare of sheep (587/2010). Government decree on the welfare of goats (589/2010).

Animal welfare legislation concerning the keeping of sheep and goats is summarised in the Finnish and Swedish-language brochures “[Eläinsuojelulainsäädäntöä koottuna](#)”.

(www.evira.fi> tietoa Evirasta> julkaisut> eläimet> oppaat)

5. Animals from abroad? Remember the import requirements!

The import of animals is subject to restrictions concerning animal diseases in order to protect the health of humans and animals. In order to meet these requirements, the importer needs to acquire information and address the issue well in advance before carrying out the import. If the import-related requirements have not been complied with, it is a question of illegal import. If you suspect illegal import of animals, you must report it to the municipal or provincial veterinary officer. Further information about import requirements is available on the [Evira website](#).

(www.evira.fi/en/ > animals > import and export)

6. Take care of animal health and the prevention of animal diseases

Before you get the animals, find out the location of the nearest veterinarian. If an animal falls ill, it must receive appropriate treatment.

Owners of animals play a key part in the prevention and spread of contagious animal diseases. If you suspect a contagious animal disease, you must report it to the municipal veterinarian.

The feed and drinking water used in the feeding of animals must be suitable, safe and of good quality in order to prevent the spread of animal diseases. For example, it is forbidden to feed to food producing animals any food waste from institutional or domestic kitchens if the food has been on display and animal- and plant-based products have therefore been mixed. The risk of animal diseases is particularly related to the use of animal-derived products in the feeding of animals. For example, the use of meat and bone meal and blood meal is prohibited in the feeding of sheep and goats. Animal holding sites and equipment for feeding and drinking must be kept clean. For example, an animal can get salmonella from contaminated feed or drinking water.

7. Keep record on medicines given to animals

The owner or keeper of food producing animals must keep a record of medicines given to these animals. Medicine records must be kept for at least five years from the end of the year of the last entry concerning an animal.

Only medicines authorised for producing animals may be used on them. Further information about legislation concerning the medication of animals and the requirements of record keeping is available from the veterinarian.

8. Learn about the slaughter and killing requirements for sheep and goats

Killing or slaughter of an animal must be carried out as quickly as possible and in the least painful manner. An animal may only be killed by a person with a sufficient knowledge of the killing method and technique suitable for the animal species in question, as well as with sufficient skills to perform the procedure. The permitted stunning and killing methods are presented in the [Council regulation on the protection of animals at the time of killing](#) (EC) No. 1099/2009. A link to the regulation is available on [Evira's website](#). (www.evira.fi/en/ > Animals > Animal welfare and identification)

Religious slaughter method is permitted only in slaughterhouses in the presence of the inspection veterinarian. In addition to this, only such method of religious slaughter where bleeding is started simultaneously with the stunning is permitted in Finland. Slaughter without stunning is completely banned in Finland.

9. Find out how to destroy a dead animal and by-products of home slaughter

Legislation on the disposal of production animals must be complied with in the disposal of dead sheep and goats and the by-products produced in their home slaughter. With respect to disposal, Finland is divided into two parts: the remote area and the collection area. An animal that has died in the collection area, as well as the by-products of home slaughter, must be taken to carcass collection (Honkajoki Oy, tel. 010 834 6460). Their burying is permitted in remote areas. Burying must not pose a risk to human or animal health. More detailed instructions on the burying or disposal of a carcass in other ways are available from the municipal veterinarian and the environmental protection authorities.

More information in Finnish from [Evira's website](#).

(www.evira.fi > eläimet> eläinsuojelu ja eläinten pito> kuolleet eläimet)