



# Brand Marks vs

## HERD DESIGNATION MARKS

HERMAN LABSCHAGNÉ | SA Studbook

**T**he controls following the recent foot-and-mouth crisis have made everyone more aware of the importance of branding. However, this has led to confusion between livestock farmers and authorities about which brands are valid.

### THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ARE THE FOLLOWING:

#### Why is branding essential?

Brand marks are essential to prove the origin of an animal. The brand or herd designated mark is linked to an owner as well as his location and is registered on a database to enable traceability. This is especially

important regarding stock theft matters and for stud breeders it is important to know who the animal was bred by. The stud breeder can thus check the pedigree of an animal and see who bred the ancestor. Why is there so much confusion about brands? The control measures after the foot-and-mouth crisis have made everyone more aware of the brands as control is now better applied especially at auctions. Auctioneers are now checking to ensure if an animal is marked with branding or tattoos and if that mark is valid. This has led to confusion between livestock farmers and authorities about what brand or mark should be marked on their livestock. The authorities are also not always aware of the specific brands used by stud breeders.

Stud farmers use herd designation marks assigned by their breed Breeders' association and this can possibly be duplicated between breeds and is therefore at times not unique. Furthermore, branding is issued by DAFF to commercial livestock farmers and it can also duplicate stud brands between breeds. This leads to the greatest amount of confusion.

## **How should animals be marked?**

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The Animal Identification Act stipulates that a permanent mark must be applied, and it varies from hot iron branding to freeze branding to a tattoo. The Constitution of Stud farmers breeders' societies

determines how animals should be marked, with preference for tattoo or branded marks. Ear tags are not a permanent mark as they can be lost or worn out. Animals' ears are sometimes cut off due to stock theft and this can lead to further problems.

## **What legislation controls the marking and branding of livestock?**

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There are two laws that apply viz. The Animal Improvement Act 62 of 1998 for Herd designated marks for Stud Breeders and the Animal Identification Act of 2002 for branding and excludes the Animal Improvement Act in paragraph 15.2.

The Animal Improvement Act was promulgated before the Animal Identification Act and the herd designated marks had already been granted by the time the Animal Identification Act was promulgated. This has caused duplications between purebred breeds and commercial animals.



## **Is there a central database**

**where authorities can confirm marks?**

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No, not at the moment, but it will surely be addressed by the new LIDS system proposed for traceability. The SAPS's stock theft units do have access to the department's database and SA Studbook's database through Logix to solve stock theft cases more easily.

## On what grounds is a brand permanently awarded and to whom or what?

Brand marks are permanently assigned to a person or farm upon registration and when that person dies or ceases farming, the brand mark can no longer be used. The Registrar of Brands must be notified. Even from father to son, DAFF must be notified so that the brand can be transferred.

Herd designated marks are assigned to a person or farm as long as the breed is actively farmed with and they are registered, active stud breeders. When the breeder stops farming, the mark may no longer be used for the breed or any other animals. The herd designated mark, therefore, has a valid period within

### CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

It is hereby certified, by the Registrar of animal identification, that an identification mark with the pattern and combination as shown below has been registered for the use on large stock, small stock, pigs or ostriches in the name of the above mentioned juristic person, company, closed corporation, trust or partnership.

### LARGE STOCK

The identification mark on large stock can be used in four different ways.



which it can be used. When a stud breeder, for example, does cross-breeding, the offspring are deemed not for registration and they have to use the brand designated for his commercial herd animals, while the dam, who is a stud cow, will be marked with the herd designated mark for stud breeding.

### THE CONTACT DETAILS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ARE AS FOLLOWS;

Any email correspondence regarding application and inquiries should go to [animalid@daff.gov.za](mailto:animalid@daff.gov.za).

The website for more information and application forms.

[www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/daff-services/registrations](http://www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/daff-services/registrations)

Inquiries for stud breeders who register with Studbook can be sent to [helpdesk@studbook.co.za](mailto:helpdesk@studbook.co.za)



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