

ALABAMA BRAND LAWS

ALABAMA CODE

TITLE 2 AGRICULTURE

CHAPTER 15 LIVESTOCK

ARTICLE 2 BRANDING OF LIVESTOCK

§ 2-15-20 Definitions.

When used in this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings, respectively, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

- (1) Commissioner. The Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries of the State of Alabama.
- (2) Department. The Department of Agriculture and Industries of the State of Alabama.
- (3) Board. The State Board of Agriculture and Industries of the State of Alabama.
- (4) Brand. Any recorded identification mark applied to any position on the hide of livestock by means of heat, acid or a chemical, except numbers used to keep production records or record of age. The word "brand" shall also mean and include tattoo marks on the hide or in the ear of livestock.
- (5) Livestock. Cattle, swine, sheep, goats, equidae, ratites and poultry.
- (6) Person. Any individual, partnership, corporation or association.
- (7) Livestock market. A place where a person assembles livestock for public sale, if such person is required to procure a license or permit from the State Department of Agriculture and Industries to operate such market.
- (8) Livestock hide dealer. Any dealer who buys hides of livestock.

§ 2-15-21 Brand registration; generally.

(a) Any livestock owner who uses a brand to identify his livestock must register such brand by applying to the department for registration of his brand. The application shall be made on forms prescribed and furnished by said department, which application shall be accompanied by a fee of \$10.00 for the first position on the animal on which the brand appears and a fee of \$2.00 for each additional position of the animal on which the brand appears. A facsimile of the brand to be registered shall also be furnished by the applicant.

If the brand described in the application or one similar or closely resembling a registered brand has not been previously registered by another livestock owner and such brand complies with standards and requirements of brands acceptable for registration as prescribed by the board pursuant to regulations, then the department shall approve the application, register the brand in the name of the applicant and issue to such applicant a certificate of registration. In the event the department denies registration of a brand for any reason, the registration fee of \$10.00 shall be returned to the person making application for registration.

(b) When a livestock owner who has registered a brand with the department transfers such brand to another, he shall immediately notify the department of the transfer, giving the date of transfer, brand identity and the name of the transferee. Upon receipt of the notice of transfer and a transfer fee of \$5.00, the department shall cause such transfer to be made in its register of brands, and such brand shall not be used by the new owner until permission has been given by the department for use of such brand.

(c) The provisions of this article shall not be construed to require any owner of livestock to brand his livestock unless he voluntarily elects to do so in which event he shall be required to comply with the registration requirements of this article.

§ 2-15-22 Evidence.

In all civil actions or in any criminal proceedings when the title or right of possession of livestock is involved, a copy of the certificate of livestock brand registration verified by affidavit of the commissioner shall be received in evidence by the court as evidence of the registration of such brand in accordance with the requirements of this article.

§ 2-15-23 Renewal of registration.

(a) There shall be a renewal period for recording livestock brands with the department which shall be once every five years, beginning with October 1, 1976. All brands recorded on or after October 1, 1976, shall be renewed or rerecorded on or before October 1, 1981, and each five-year period thereafter. At least 90 days prior to the renewal date for all brands, the department shall notify all persons having brands registered of the date on which such brand must be renewed. On or before the renewal date of all brands, the registered owner thereof shall pay to the department a renewal fee of \$10.00 for the first position of the animal on which the brand appears, plus an additional fee of \$2.00 for each additional position on such animal as authorized and provided under subsection (b) of section 2-15-28. Such additional information needed for renewal as the department may require shall also be furnished on forms provided by the department.

(b) If any livestock owner fails to renew any brand registered in his name, such brand shall be forfeited and shall be available to any other applicant for registration as provided under section 2-15-21.

§ 2-15-24 Forms.

The department shall prescribe and furnish forms on which applications for registration, reregistration and transfer of livestock brands shall be made and shall furnish such forms to the sheriff and the county agricultural agent of each county of the state to be distributed on request to livestock owners desiring to make application for registration of brands and such applications may also be furnished to applicants by the department.

§ 2-15-25 Register of brands -- Determination of ownership.

(a) The department shall maintain a complete register of all brands, showing the name and address of the owner, and shall publish and distribute copies of this register in booklet or pamphlet form and supplementary copies thereof to every livestock market and sheriff's office and other public officials in the state that may have an official need therefor. Copies of the register of brands may be furnished to other persons upon request at a price of \$5.00 per copy.

(b) The department shall also make use of its records of brand registrations in the performance of its duties to trace, locate and determine ownership of any lost, estrayed or stolen livestock and similar duties relating to livestock theft

investigations and furnish such information to interested persons, upon receipt of notice giving details or description of the kind of livestock, color, weight, size, sex, age, marks, brands and other identifying information.

§ 2-15-26 Fees.

All fees collected under this article for the registration, transfer and reregistration of brands together with amounts received for copies of brand registration books furnished upon request as authorized under section 2-15-25 shall be deposited in the state treasury to the credit of the agricultural fund.

§ 2-15-27 Livestock markets and hide dealers; register and records.

(a) Every operator of a livestock market where livestock are received and sold shall keep a copy of the register of livestock brands in his place of business where it will be easily accessible for public inspection during business hours.

(b) The operator of every livestock market where livestock are received and sold, together with those livestock dealers, slaughterers and butchers buying livestock for resale or for slaughter which livestock were not purchased at a livestock market, shall obtain and keep or cause to be kept a record for at least two years covering all livestock received, which shall show thereon the name and address of the owner, the number of animals received, the date of receipt and a description of such livestock together with the license number of the vehicle with the name and address of the driver thereof or the railroad waybill number or record of other method of transportation by which the livestock arrived. These records shall be retained by every such livestock market, dealer or slaughterer required to keep such records and shall be made easily accessible for public inspection for a period of two years after the livestock are received by such livestock market, dealer or slaughterer. Livestock dealers required to keep records under this subsection shall be those dealers required to be licensed under article 6 of this chapter.

(c) Livestock hide dealers shall keep records of cattle hides received by them to facilitate the tracing of lost or stolen livestock. Livestock hide dealers shall keep a record of all such hides which shall include the name and address of the person from whom hides are purchased, a description of the hides, brands and any other identifying information appearing thereon. Livestock hide dealers shall keep such records for public inspection for a period of two years after receipt of such hides.

§ 2-15-28 Rules and regulations.

(a) The commissioner, with the approval of the board, shall have authority to promulgate such rules and regulations as are reasonably necessary to carry out the evident intent and purposes of this article and which will facilitate the tracing and identification of lost, stolen or estrayed livestock and afford protection against the theft and unlawful dealing, handling or movement of livestock, including a system for brand registrations, transfer of brands, reregistrations and standards or requirements for brands acceptable for registration, which regulations will effectuate the purposes of this article. Such rules and regulations promulgated by the commissioner shall include information on the tracing and identification of lost, stolen or estrayed swine to be identified by brands, tattoos or other means.

(b) The commissioner, with the approval of the board, pursuant to rules and regulations, shall be authorized to designate positions on which livestock may be branded, not to exceed eight such positions.

§ 2-15-29 Offenses.

It shall be unlawful for:

- (1) Any person to use any brand for branding livestock unless the brand is registered with the department;
- (2) Any person to obliterate, alter or deface the brand of any livestock;
- (3) Any livestock market or livestock dealer to receive any livestock for sale or any livestock slaughterer to receive livestock for slaughter unless records of receipt and sale are kept in accordance with the requirements of this article;
- (4) Any livestock market, livestock dealer or livestock slaughterer to fail or refuse to keep a copy of the register of brands furnished by the department in a place easily accessible to interested parties for inspection at reasonable times as required by subsection (a) of section 2-15-27;
- (5) Any livestock market or livestock dealer or livestock slaughterer to fail or refuse to keep a record for review and inspection at reasonable times as required by subsection (b) of section 2-15-27; and
- (6) Any livestock hide dealer to fail or refuse to keep records required by subsection (c) of section 2-15-27 for review and inspection as required by said subsection.

§ 2-15-30 Penalty.

- (a) Any person who performs any act declared to be unlawful by this article or who fails to perform any duty imposed by the provisions and requirements of this article or who violates any rule or regulation promulgated hereunder shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punishable as provided by law for such an offense.
- (b) All amounts paid as fines for violations of this article when collected by the proper authority shall be transmitted to the department and deposited in the state treasury to the credit of the agricultural fund.
- (c) If any livestock market or livestock dealer violates any of the provisions or requirements of this article, such violations shall constitute grounds for the commissioner to revoke or cancel or refuse to issue or renew the permit or license issued by him which authorizes the operation of a livestock market or to engage in business as a livestock dealer pursuant to the law which regulates and governs the receipt, handling and sale of livestock at livestock markets or as a livestock dealer pursuant to article 6 of this chapter.

Reviewed by AAHS in July 2001.

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