

DARD Identification numbers for business customers, herd and flock keepers



Department of
**Agriculture and
Rural Development**

www.dardni.gov.uk



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CUSTOMER INFORMATION

DARD identification numbers for businesses, customers, herd and flock keepers

Contents

Introduction

This guide is intended to help you to understand why we allocate identification numbers (IDs) to businesses, customers, herd and flock keepers, how you get them and answer some frequently asked questions about these numbers. The three main types of identification numbers used by DARD are:

- **Business ID** - which is required for the payment of grants and subsidies or for registering animals;
- **Customer ID** - which is required to record your individual contact details and is necessary to enroll for DARD Online Services;
- **Herd and Flock keeper IDs** - which are required for the registration of herd and flock keepers.

Why do we need these identification numbers?

We have to maintain a record of the identity of anyone who submits an application to receive EU funding. This is required under European Commission regulations. Each business must be registered with us and have a unique business ID number.

Business IDs have been in use for a number of years. They are mainly used to administer and pay farm based subsidies such Basic Payment

Scheme (BPS), the Greening Payment, the Young Farmers' Payment, the Areas of Natural Constraint (ANC) Scheme and also to process funding applications within the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP).

What are IDs used for?

- To access your information quickly when you have a query;
- To pay monies to the correct recipient;
- To link the herds and flocks for which you are registered as a keeper to your farm business;
- To ensure that businesses are not being created and operated artificially to obtain EU funding; and
- To prevent fraud.

It is not possible to have a single customer, business and herd/flock identification number. While many of our customers are sole traders, some of our customers are partnerships or companies that have more than one individual involved.

Each of those individuals must have a separate customer ID, while the business as a whole must have a single business ID. In addition, some businesses may have more than one herd or flock keeper registration.

In these cases, more than one keeper number is needed, but only one keeper number per species may be associated with any given customer ID. A single keeper number is not possible for both cattle and sheep.

1. BUSINESS ID

Categories of business ID

There are 3 main categories of business ID. The business category you apply for depends on the type of business transactions you wish to carry out with us. The table below lists some of these main transactions. The flowcharts at **annex A** may also help.

What do you want to do?	You should apply for this category of business:
<p>Claim farming related grant or subsidy, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Payment Scheme, • Greening Payment • Young Farmers' Payment • Areas of Natural Constraint Scheme, • Agri-environmental aid schemes, • Certain other proposed farming related programmes within the 2014- 2020 NIRDP. 	<p>1</p>
<p>Apply for and claim grant for proposed schemes under the 2014-2020 NIRDP (except those schemes that require a Category 1 business as listed above).</p> <p>Note: If you already hold a Category 1 business ID, you do not need to apply for a separate Category 2 business ID.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Register as a keeper of a small number of animals. This is typically no more than 5 cattle and/or 10 sheep and/or 10 pigs and/or 100 poultry and/or 5 goats.</p> <p>You will not be able to claim grant or subsidy with this business category.</p> <p>Note: If you already hold a Category 1 or 2 business ID, you do not need to apply for a separate Category 3 business ID.</p>	<p>3</p>

How do I apply for a business ID?

You can access a business ID application form at:

<https://www.dardni.gov.uk/publications/business-change-forms-2016>.

You can also contact your local DARD Direct Office. You will be given a business ID application form for the type of business you wish to conduct with us. If you wish to join an existing business, you can do so by completing a business change form (BC1). This form will have to be signed by all existing members of that business.

What information will I need to provide?

Category 1 Business ID's are only allocated where DARD is fully satisfied that the business will operate as a fully separate and independent business both in status and in practice. Inspections are likely to take place both before and after establishment of the business to ensure that this is, and remains, the case. The onus is on you to demonstrate that your application meets a set of criteria relating to:

- Legal status;
- Economic Structure/Organisation;
- Commercial arrangements;
- Operational arrangements

In order to assist you to demonstrate that you meet these criteria, you should submit a business plan with your application. This should provide details on your proposed farming enterprises, the area you intend to farm (both owned land and rented land), the nature and size of each enterprise (e.g. number of cattle, sheep, area of crops grown), how you intend to establish each enterprise (e.g. financing arrangements to purchase stock), anticipated annual returns (projected profit and loss account) and cash flow, and how the business will develop over a 5 year period.

You should describe and provide evidence as to how the assets and capital required to establish your businesses, have been or will be acquired. For example, how the land, housing and machinery have been obtained? Did you purchase it, have it constructed or was it gifted to you. How will any livestock be obtained? Evidence that may be presented includes: receipts, bank statements proof of land purchase or lease.

You should also outline evidence of financing arrangements for the business, including any bank accounts and loan facilities, and provide your Unique Tax Reference (available from HMRC). In addition, you should provide details of other members of your business and any links they have to other farm businesses, and describe in detail links of any nature your business has with any other farming business, such as the sharing of labour, machinery, buildings and

facilities, any financial links, the regular sourcing of livestock, the regular disposal of livestock, joint purchasing arrangements, joint marketing arrangements, etc.

All evidence presented will be considered in the round and where the evidence presented does not clearly show that the proposed new business is separate and independent, or where evidence is missing, your application will not be approved.

For a Category 2 business ID you will need to provide details of your business including your Unique Tax Reference, details of members of your business, links of any nature to other DARD registered businesses (including farm businesses) and any supporting documentation such as a memorandum of association.

For a Category 3 business ID you will need to provide details of land that you farm (both owned and rented), details of any animals you keep, details of members of your business and links of any nature to other DARD registered businesses. You will not need to provide the detailed financial information required for a Category 1 business ID.

It is not a requirement to own land to obtain a business ID, but you must be able to demonstrate that you have access to the necessary land to conduct your farm business in line with your business plan.

Do I need photographic identification?

If you are applying for a Category 1 business ID, then every member of the new business will have to present photographic identification at their local DARD Direct office. Photographic identification is not usually required for Category 2 and 3 business IDs unless we have a doubt about your identity.

I have a Category 3 business ID – can I apply for a grant or subsidy?

No. If you have a Category 3 business ID and now want to apply for grant or subsidy, you will have to apply for your business ID to be upgraded to either a Category 1 or Category 2 business ID and supply the necessary evidence to support your application. You will have to complete the appropriate application form dependent on which type of grant or subsidy you intend claiming.

At what point do I need a Category 2 business ID to apply for NIRDP funding?

You do not need to have a business ID before you apply for NIRDP funding. If your application is successful, you will need to complete an application for a business identifier (Category 2, RD1) form. This form will be issued to you when your NIRDP application has been approved.

2. CUSTOMER ID

A customer ID is used to identify individuals who use any of our services. Every member of a business will be given a customer ID. Against this ID we will record your name, address and contact details. It is important that you have a customer ID if you intend using:

- DARD Online Services for example to submit your Single Application Form or use APHIS Online, or
- Telephone services, for example to register animal births and deaths.

How do I apply for a customer ID?

In most cases, the customer ID will be created as part of the business ID process. There are times when this is not the case, for example, to register land. In these cases, contact your local DARD Direct office for further advice.

3. HERD OR FLOCK KEEPER ID

A herd or flock keeper ID is used to register and record movements of all animals and commercial poultry within Northern Ireland.

How do I register for a Herd or Flock keeper ID?

Contact your local DARD Direct office to get a herd or flock keeper registration form. You will also be asked to complete a business registration form if you don't already have a business ID.

Data Protection

We take data protection and freedom of information issues seriously. We take care to ensure that any personal information supplied to us is handled in a way that complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Further Information

If you require further information on identification numbers or wish to make changes to your existing business, customer, herd or flock keeper registrations:

- access further information at:
<https://www.dardni.gov.uk/publications/dard-identification-numbers-business-customers-herd-and-flock-keepers>
- visit your local DARD Direct office or,
- ring 0300 200 7848

Frequently Asked Questions about DARD IDs

Frequently Asked Questions – Business ID

Q1. How does DARD assess if my business is separate from another business?

A. A business ID application will be assessed against the following 4 criteria:

1. Legal Status
2. Economic Structure/Organisation
3. Commercial Arrangements
4. Operational Arrangements

The following are examples of the evidence that will be considered:

- Are any business members linked to an existing business or registered as a herd or flock keeper?
- Does the herd or flock operate completely independently of herds or flocks belonging to another business?
- What is the businesses legal status i.e. Sole Trader, Partnership etc?
- Does the business have a Unique Tax Reference (UTR)?
- Has the customer supplied proof of identity?
- What are the land tenure arrangements? Has the customer supplied evidence that they own land or have a lease agreement?
- Does the business have a business plan setting out what the business objectives are and how these will be achieved, for example, area farmed, number of cattle and financial arrangements being put in place to obtain stock?
- Does the business have any operational links to another business, i.e. share machinery, labour, facilities, buildings, purchasing arrangements, marketing arrangements, etc?
- Does the business have its own land, building, machinery and details of how the finance was obtained to acquire them?
- How is the business financed, including the nature of any loans and guarantees?
- Is the business very dependent on another business for stock, machinery, and finance? Does the business have separate financial accounts and bank accounts and are the financial transactions through these accounts appropriate to the size and nature of the business?
- Does the business buy or sell land, machinery, inputs, livestock or agricultural produce on behalf of another business?
- In case of Category 2 business IDs, is the project a non farming activity?

IMPORTANT

Our inspectors will assess applications on a case by case basis to decide whether you have provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate clearly that your business is financially and operationally separate from any existing business. The onus is on the applicant to provide proof that it is separate and independent.

We will carefully evaluate all the information provided and reach a decision on **all the facts provided**.

Q2. Does the lease have to be drawn up by a solicitor or auctioneer?

A. If land has been leased, the lease agreement must be drawn up by a solicitor and submitted with the application. It must be legally binding, be for a minimum of 5 years and contain the following details:

- Name(s) of person(s) involved
- Period of the lease (start date of the lease and end date of the lease)
- Agreed price (annual rent amount and terms of payment)
- Terms of lease (responsibilities of both landlord and tenant)
- Farm Survey Number and field number(s) being leased
- The lease must be signed by the landowner and the tenant(s) and witnessed
- The lease must have the date of signature for all persons signing

If your lease is not for a minimum period of 5 years the application for a business ID may be rejected.

Q3. Can land be taken in conacre?

A. DARD will not award a Business Identifier if the business has conacre land only. Where part of land area has been taken in conacre, details of the landowner and the agreement reached must be supplied.

The agreement should contain the following details:

- Name(s) of person(s) involved
- Period of the conacre agreement (start date and end date of the agreement)
- Farm Survey Number and field number(s) being taken in conacre
- The agreement must be signed by both parties (the landowner and the tenant)
- The agreement must have the date of signature for all persons signing

Q4. How do I get my Unique Tax Reference (UTR)?

A. 1. For those already registered with HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

- This will be shown on the last Self Assessment (SA) Statement or communication received from HMRC, or
- Contact their accountant or person responsible for the submission of their annual SA Tax Return, or
- Telephone the Tax Enquiries Helpline 0845 300 0627.

2. For those not registered with HMRC

- Register online at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/startup/> (the UTR will be posted to the individual), or
- Telephone the Newly Self Employed Helpline 0845 915 4515.
- The registration will be completed during the telephone call and the UTR will be posted to the individual

Q5. Can the Department refuse to issue a business ID number?

- A. Yes, if we are not satisfied that your business is financially and operationally separate from an existing business. We will not issue an ID unless your business satisfies a number of separate business criteria.

Q6. Can the Department take a business ID away?

- A. Yes, for example where two businesses merge or where the Department assesses that two businesses are not financially and operationally separate. If we assess that two businesses are not separate we will automatically link the two businesses. We will take all material factors into account before taking this action. Either of the two linked businesses will be permitted to draw to our attention any relevant information that they believe has a bearing on the situation.

Q7. Is there a charge for getting a business ID, customer ID, herd keeper ID or flock keeper ID?

A. No, there is no charge.

Q8. How long will it take to get a business ID?

A. If you supply all the necessary information with your farm business application form we aim to allocate your business ID within 25 working days. However, the investigation as to whether you meet the criteria to be regarded as separate will take some time. You should allow yourself plenty of time to apply for a business ID to meet funding application deadlines (e.g. well before the closing date of 15 May for Single Application forms) or to meet deadlines for transfer of BPS entitlements remembering that you may have to first apply for your Unique Tax Reference (see question 2).

Q9. What types of photographic ID will DARD accept?

A. The acceptable forms of photographic identification are:

- A UK, Irish or EEA driving licence (photographic part)
- A UK, Irish or EU passport
- An Electoral Identity Card
- A Translink Senior SmartPass
- A Translink 60+ SmartPass
- A Translink War Disabled SmartPass
- A Translink Blind Person's SmartPass

Q10. Is photographic ID required when someone is added to an existing Category 1 business?

A. Yes. Any new members joining a business must present photographic identification at their local DARD Direct office.

Q11. Does DARD retain a copy of the photographic ID?

A. No. Once checked to confirm your details, your photographic ID will be returned to you immediately. No copies will be retained by DARD staff.

Q12. If I die can I pass on my business ID to someone else?

- A. If you are a sole trader business (that is you are the only person in the business) you will not be able to pass on your business ID to someone else. If in your will, you leave your business to another person, he/she will have to apply to the Department for a new business ID.

If you are in a partnership (that is there is more than one person in the business) and you have made us aware of all the partners in the business, we will keep the business ID active (for use by the remaining partners).

Q13. Am I allowed to be named on more than one business ID?

- A. Only if you are involved in two businesses which pass the separateness test (see question 1 above).

Q14. Can my son or daughter get a separate Category 1 business ID?

- A Yes, but only if his or her business is separate, operates independently and has satisfied the business separateness test (see question 11 above). Artificial splitting of businesses is not permitted.

We do not issue business IDs to minors (persons under the age of 18 years old) unless an adult accepts responsibility for the business and becomes a member of that business.

Q15. If I have a Category 1 business ID, can my spouse get a Category 2 business ID, to apply to the NIRDP for a non farming project?

- A. Your spouse can get a Category 2 business ID to apply to the NIRDP provided their new business is separate from any existing farm business and the activity of the project is non farming related (see question 11 above).

Q.16. Some Community / Voluntary Groups will not have a tax reference can they obtain a business ID?

- A. All Groups will initially be asked to provide a Unique Tax Reference (UTR) number. However, if they are non-profit making, they will be permitted to demonstrate their legal status by means other than providing a UTR. This will include providing either Articles of Association or the group's Constitution.

Q17. How many animals can I keep with a Category 3 business ID?

- A. Category 3 business IDs are normally allocated for keepers of small numbers of animals, typically no more than 5 cattle and/or 10 sheep and/or 10 pigs and/or 100 poultry and/or 5 goats.

These thresholds are **not limits**. However, monitoring of animal numbers in any Category 2 or 3 businesses which exceed the above thresholds will be carried out to ensure that these businesses are not being used by any Category 1 business to avoid cross compliance obligations/penalties.

Q18. Why can't there be just one category of business ID?

- A. Categories allow us to reduce the amount of information we require from you in order to complete our business separateness assessment. For instance, if you are only intending to keep a small number of animals, we will ask less information from you than if you intend claiming grant or subsidies.

Q19. How do I know which category of business I have been allocated?

- A. We will advise you when you apply for a business id which category you have been awarded.

Q20. Should I keep my business ID number confidential?

- A. Yes. This is one of the main methods of confirming your identity with us when you contact us. If you keep this number secure, this will help ensure that any information we hold about you is secure.

Q21. Do I need to supply my bank account details on the business ID application form?

- A. You are not required to include your bank details on the business ID application form. However, if you are applying for a Category 1 business ID, you are required to provide evidence of the financing arrangements for the business, including details of all bank accounts and loans as this helps demonstrate that the business is separate and independent from other farm businesses. Failure to provide this information will weaken your application.

We will also need bank account details before we can make any payments to you. If we do not have this information, this will be requested either when we make an award of a Category 1 business ID or when a Letter of Offer is issued under the NIRD in the case of a Category 2 business ID.

Frequently Asked Questions - Customer ID

Q22. If I change my name, address or contact details what should I do?

- A. If you are a member of a Category 1 business and your name or address has changed you must complete a Business Change form (BC1)
<https://www.dardni.gov.uk/publications/business-change-forms-2016>
If you are a member of a Category 2 or 3 business, changes can be carried out by staff in your local DARD Direct Office.
- B. You can update all other contact detail changes by visiting or phoning any DARD Direct Office. We will verify your identity by asking you questions such as what is your business id, address, telephone number and then either update your contact details or give you advice as to what further information you need to supply.

Q23. If I already have an Applicant reference number / Client reference number / IACS number - do I need to apply for a customer ID?

- A. No. These were various names used over the years to refer to a customer. From now on, we intend to only refer to your Customer ID number.

Q24. Why do I need a customer ID if I have a business ID?

- A. You will need a customer ID to enroll for DARD Online Services. Even if these services relate to your business, you will still have to access these services as an individual using your customer ID. With your agreement, we will periodically use your contact details to let you know about services/events that may be of interest to you. We will also use your customer ID when linking land or registering keepers of flocks/herds.

Q25. Should I keep my customer ID number confidential?

- A. Yes. This is one of the main methods of confirming your identity with us and is also one of the 2 pieces of information required to enroll for DARD Online Services.

Q26. Once I have my customer ID, how can I access DARD On-line Services?

- A. Contact the DARD Online Services helpdesk team on 028 9442 6699 or e-mail info@ruralni.gov.uk and they will advise on how to access DARD Online Services. They will also issue the other unique piece of information (DARD Access Key) which you will require to enroll for DARD Online Services. Alternatively all the information required is on the website www.dardni.gov.uk/onlineservices which can be accessed at any time.

Q27. What services can I access on-line?

- A. Currently you can complete your Single Application Form online and access online maps. You can also access APHIS Online which enables online birth and death registrations, access herd lists and many other functions. Over time more DARD services will be available online.

Frequently Asked Questions – Herd Keeper / Flock Keeper registration IDs (previously known as Herd or Flock Keeper Numbers)

Q28. Why are Herd/Flock Keeper IDs needed?

- A. They are necessary to identify animal keepers for the management of routine animal health programmes (Tuberculosis, Brucellosis, Salmonella), and in the control of disease outbreaks such as Foot and Mouth Disease, Swine Fever, Newcastle Disease etc., and to demonstrate “cross compliance” for the administration of Single Farm Payments.

Q29. Who are Herd Keeper / Flock Keeper IDs issued to?

- A. Herd and Flock Keeper IDs are issued to registered keepers, to identify groups of animals in the same keepership.

Q30. What is meant by Groups of animals?

- A. A "Herd" or "Flock" is ordinarily an epidemiologically distinct grouping. This means that all animals within it are exposed to a disease risk which is distinct from that on other farms.

Q31. What is an “Associated” Herd/Flock?

- A. In certain cases, a higher than normal risk to animal health may exist from another herd or flock – because, for example, of shared equipment or facilities, or common day to day management. In such cases, both herds/flocks will be subjected to the same disease detection and control regimes - this is sometimes known as "association".

Q32. How long will it take for a new Herd/Flock Keeper ID to be issued?

- A. One of our Animal Health & Welfare Inspectors will call with the herd/flock keeper to inspect the animal housing/handling facilities and identify the lands proposed to be used for the livestock. Subsequent to the inspection and provided they have been allocated a Category 1 or Category 3 Business ID the Herd/Flock Keeper ID will be issued immediately thereafter. Typically this registration should be within 25 working days of provision of all necessary information (see question 6 above).

Q33. My father/mother has recently died. Can I use his/her Herd/Flock Keeper ID?

- A. No, unless you have been registered as a joint keeper with them prior to their death. If you were not registered as a joint keeper you must get your own Herd/Flock Keeper ID and then transfer the animals from your father’s/mother’s herd/flock registration to your new registration.

The reason for this is to ensure the integrity of the linkages between the Department’s databases of lands, persons and animals. We require the customer’s name and address to be held against the Herd/Flock Keeper identifier for effective disease control and cross compliance purposes, also that any future animal compensation payments can be paid to the appropriate person.

Q34. Can I transfer registration of my Herd/Flock Keeper ID to another farmer?

- A. No. It is necessary for him/her to obtain their own Herd/Flock Keeper ID and then for the animals to be transferred from your herd/flock to theirs. The reason for this is to ensure the integrity of the linkages between the Department’s databases of lands, persons and animals.

We require the customer’s name and address to be held against the Herd/Flock Keeper identifier for effective disease control and cross compliance purposes, also that any future animal compensation payments can be paid to the appropriate person.

Q35. Can another person's name be added to my Herd/Flock Keeper Registration?

- A. Yes, if the person is over 18 and has not already been assigned a Herd/Flock Keeper Registration. The individual must first have (or obtain) a customer ID. This must then be linked to the same business as the other named herd-keeper(s), as it is not possible for those named in a single herd/flock registration to be linked to more than one Business.

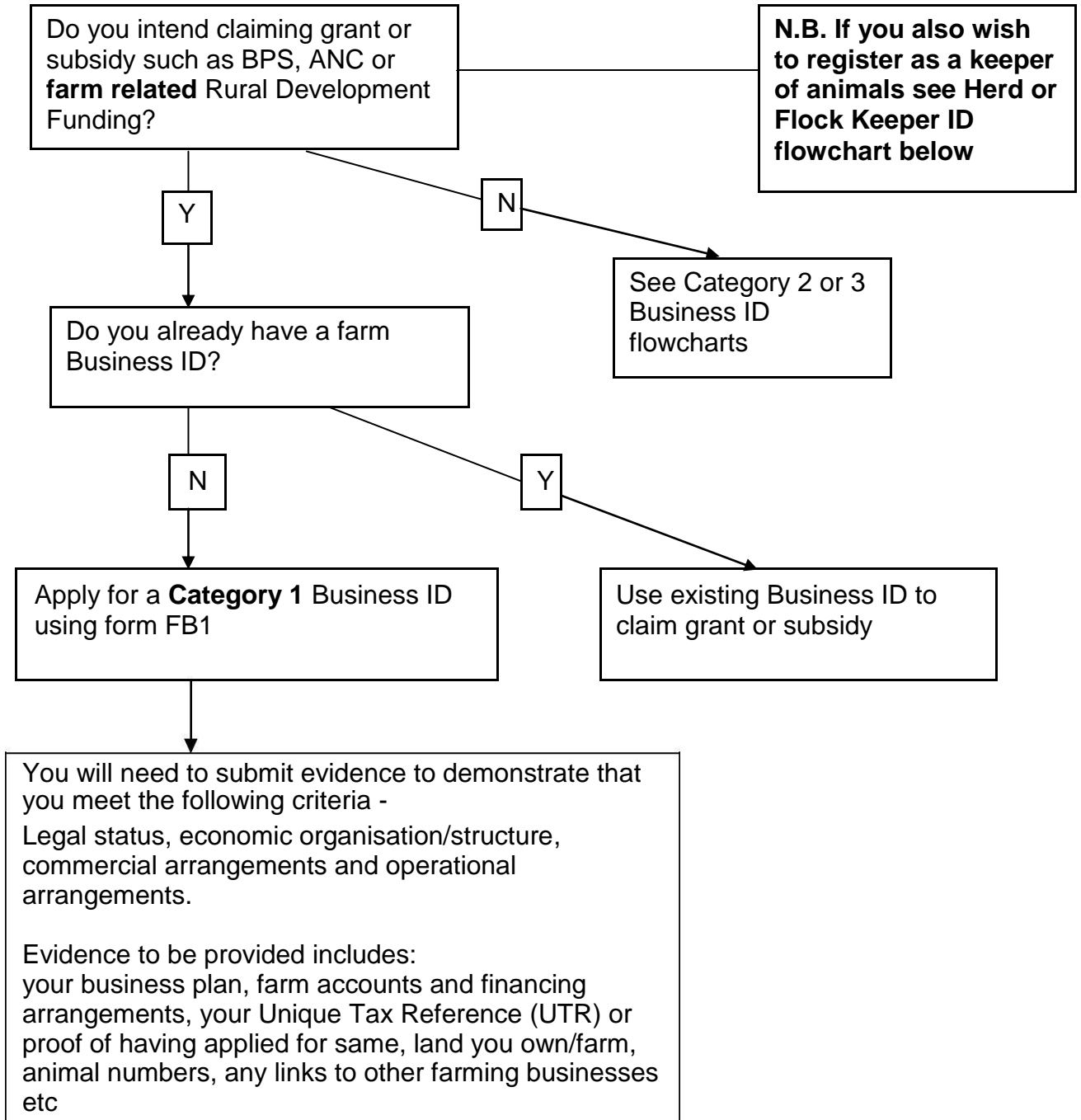
Q36. Can I keep my herd/flock keeper number if I move from a farm in one Divisional Veterinary Office (DVO) area to farm in another DVO area?

- A. No. You must notify the new DVO of the movement and re-register the new herd/flock on the new premises and lands in the new area. We depend on the physical location of your herd keeper registration for a number of processes (including how your herd's Brucellosis / Tuberculosis test is arranged) therefore it is essential that your herd/flock keeper registration is registered at your local DVO. Your new keeper registration number will be linked to your existing customer and Business ID number and the previous Keeper Registration Number (and all associated movement documentation books, ear tags etc) will be archived.

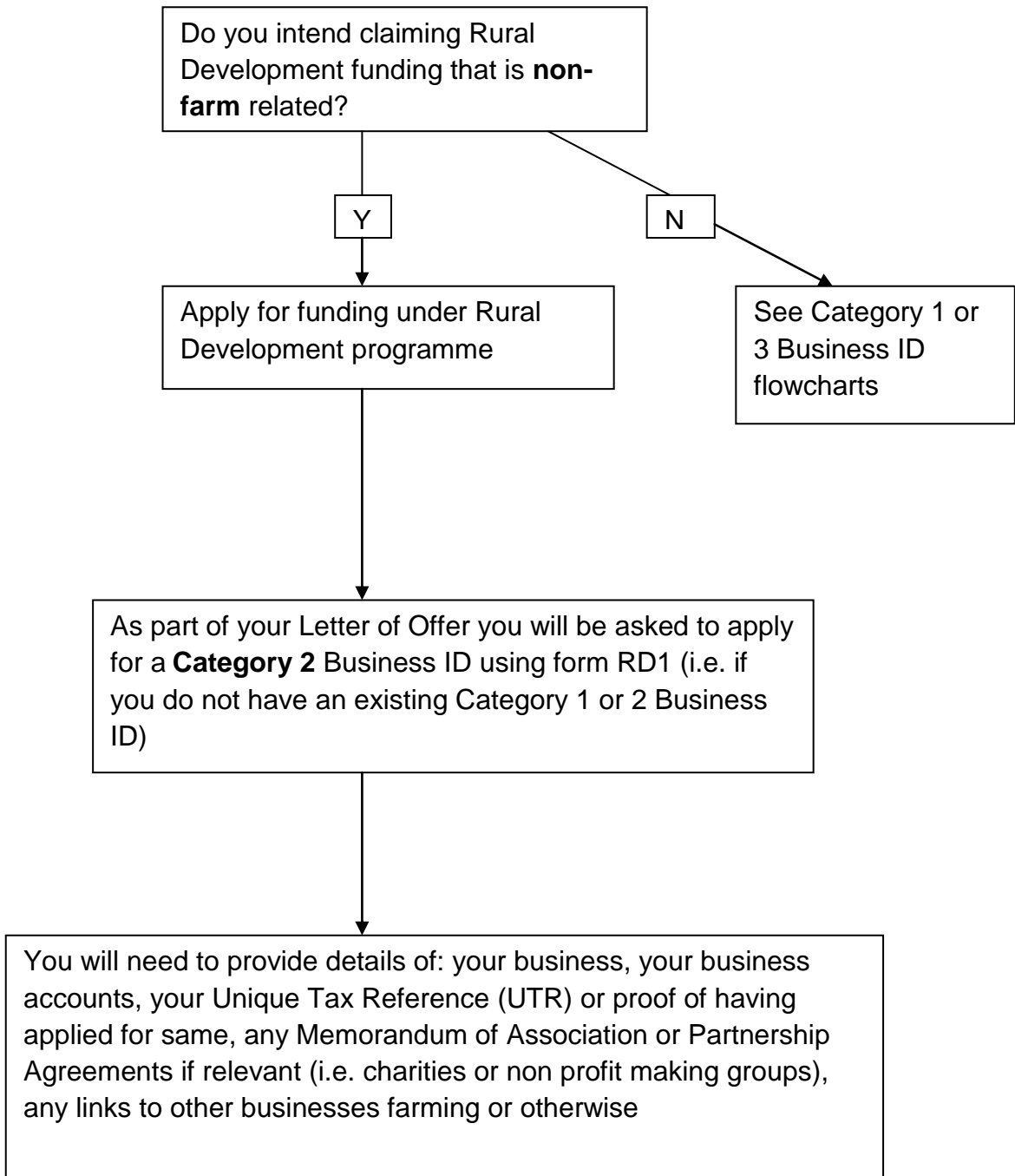
Note: As DARD policy and procedures are subject to change the information contained in this guidance may also be subject to change. The information is correct as of April 2015.

Annex A

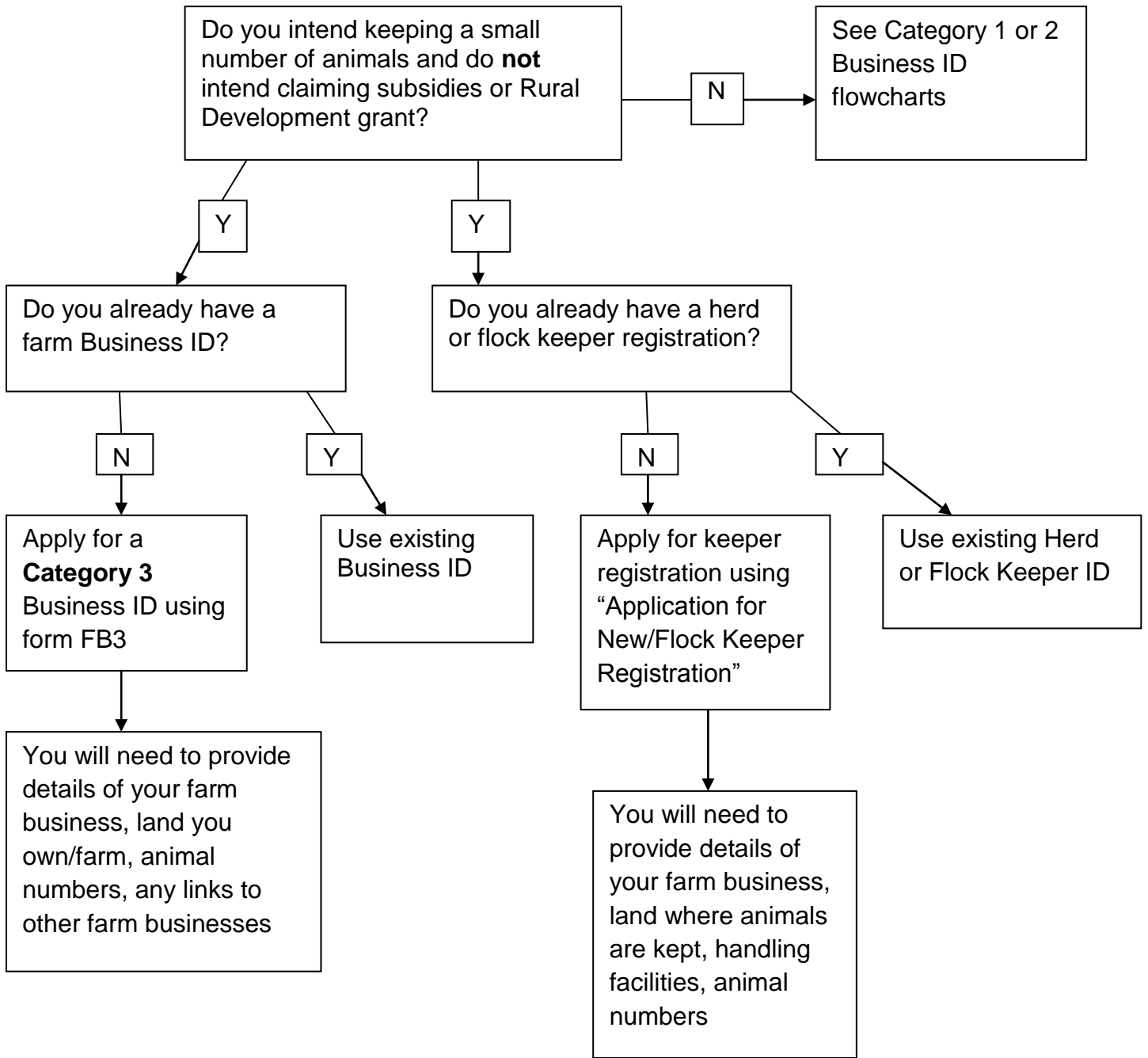
(1a) Business ID – Category 1



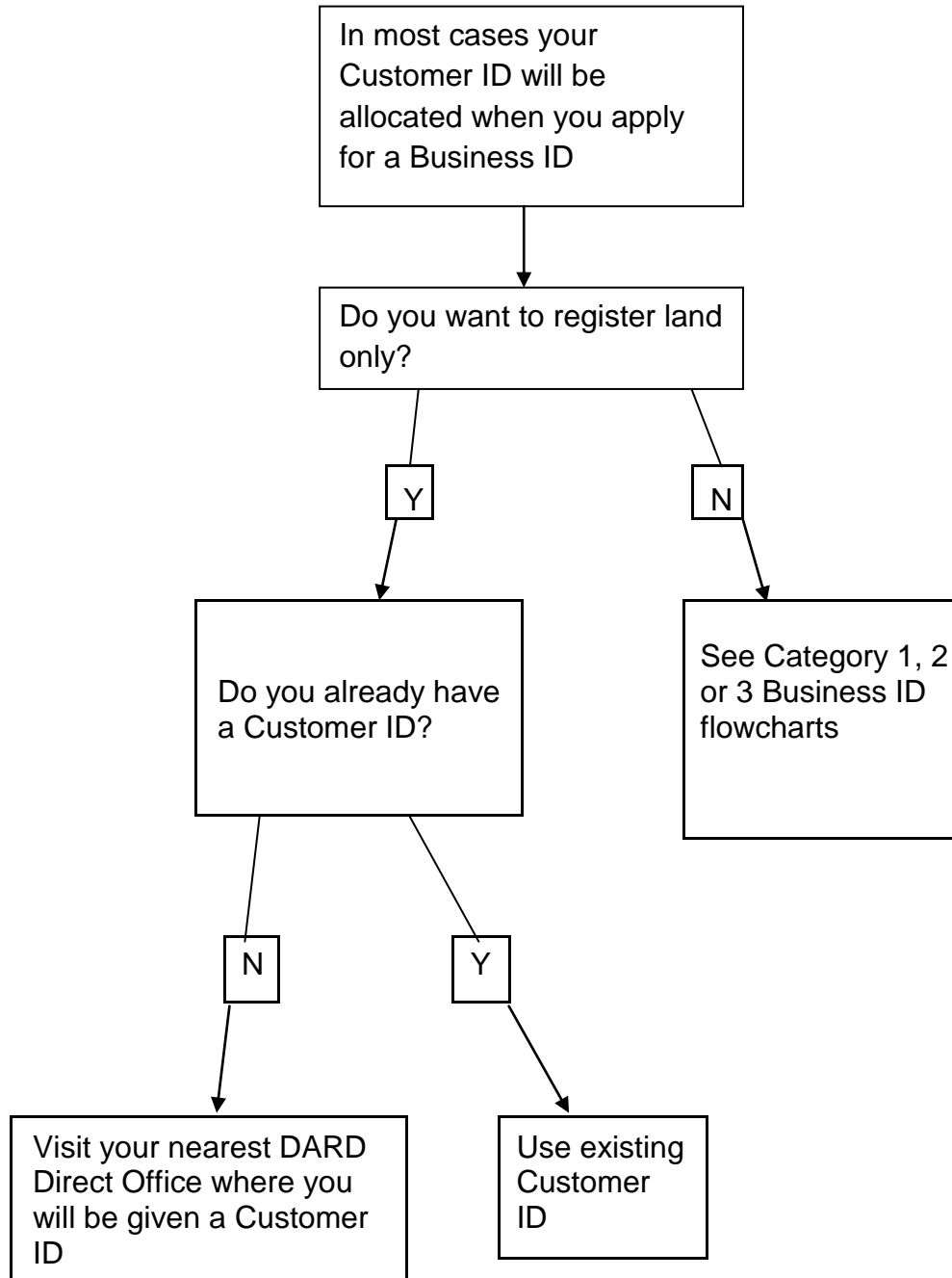
1b Business ID – Category 2



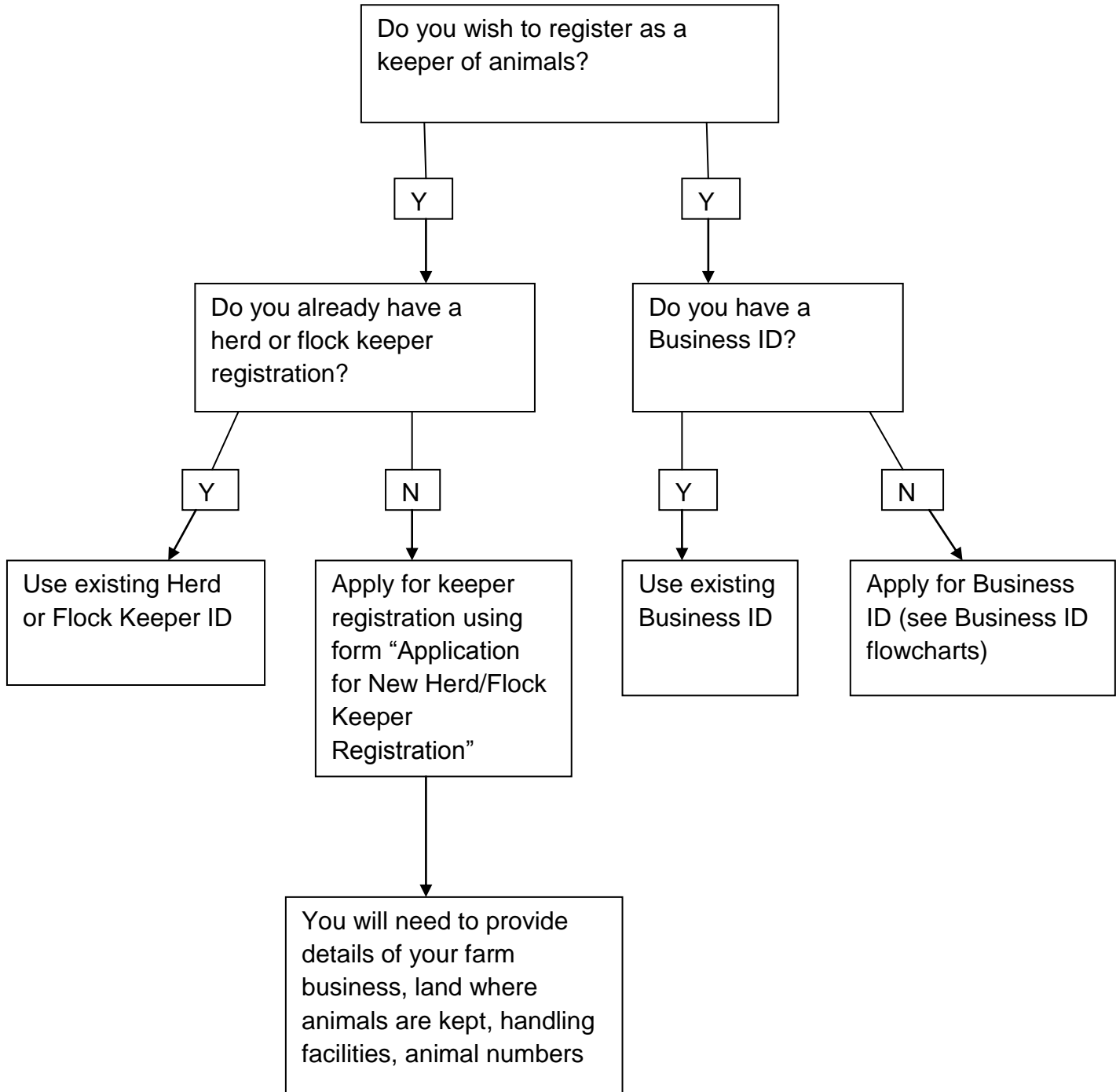
(1c) Business ID – Category 3



(2) Customer ID



(3) Herd or Flock Keeper ID



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