VETERINARY CERTIFICATE FOR THE EXPORT OF FISH AND SEAFOOD PRODUCTS TO AZERBAIJAN – 7992EHC

Associated document: 7992EHC.

IMPORTANT
These notes provide guidance to Certifying Officers and exporters. The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 7992EHC. We strongly suggest that exporters obtain full details of the importing country's requirements from the veterinary authorities in the country concerned, or their representatives in the UK, in advance of each consignment.

1. SCOPE

The certificate can be used for the export to Azerbaijan of products derived from aquatic animals in the UK, or products obtained from other Member States (MSs) provided they were derived from aquatic animals caught/harvested in those Member States.

In the event that they are derived from aquatic animals caught/harvested in third country waters, the products MUST have been accompanied by a pre-export certificate similar to the certificate being issued for this final export.

However, it is unlikely that aquatic animals will be imported from a third country (fully packaged and labelled) for re-export in their original packaging

2. CERTIFICATION BY AN OFFICIAL INSPECTOR

This certificate may be signed by a Food Competent Certifying Officer (FCCO) or an Official Veterinarian (OV)], designated by the APHA on behalf of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Scottish Government or the Welsh Government.
OVs must hold the Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) Products (OCQ(V)PX) authorisation.

In NI, a Veterinary Certifying Officer or FCCO, appointed or designated, respectively, by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland (DAERA) may issue this certificate.

COs should sign and stamp the health certificate with their personal official stamp in any colour **OTHER THAN** that in which the certificate is printed and using a permanent ink.

In GB, a copy (paper or electronic; must be legible) of the completed certificate and any supporting documentation, must be kept for the minimum required time (usually three years) and may be requested for audit and other purposes.

In NI, copies of certificates are stored on the official database (HPRM).

3. GENERAL INFORMATION (SECTIONS 1-3 REFER)

Country of transit (Section 1.4): This refers to the *third country* of transit through which the consignment will pass.

Certificate No: (Section 1.5): This MUST consist of the prefix 'GB' (ISO Country Code for the UK), followed by a unique number in the

standard format.
The prefix 'GB' is pre-printed on the certificate.
The unique number MUST be printed on the certificate; if this number is entered in manuscript, the certificate will be INVALIDATED.

Country of origin (Section 1.6): This is the country of origin of the raw material used in the product.
If the raw material is imported from a third country, the country of origin is the MS in which the raw material was first processed/re-packaged.

Establishment details (Section 3.1) and Administrative-territorial unit (Section 3.2): This refers to approval by the Food Standards Agency/ Scotland (FSA/FSS) under UK legislation which implements EU law.

The Administrative-territorial unit is the AHDO responsible for the area in which the establishment of despatch is located. However, for the purposes of regionalisation, an administrative territory is the County.

4. VETERINARY CERTIFICATION (SECTION 4 REFERS)

Pre-export certificate details: As explained above, the table above section 4.1. should be completed (continuing on a separate sheet of paper if necessary) if the products were derived from aquatic animals resident in another MS or products derived from establishments located in other MSs.
If the raw material/product was imported from a third country and is being re-exported from the UK after being processed/re-packaged, then this table should be blank.

Section 4.1: This may be certified on the basis of oval marks which demonstrate compliance with EU Regulations (EC) 853/2004 and 854/2004. In the UK, the EU Regulations are implemented by the Food Hygiene Regulations 2006. In addition to this general principle, the following should also be taken into account when signing the certificate:

- Ensure that any starting material of animal origin used in the product meets the specific food hygiene Regulations which can be established by the EU oval mark.

- Ensure that the finished product meets the requirements of the Food Hygiene Regulations 2006. This can be ascertained by the EU oval mark.

- Approval and supervision of fish products establishments can be delegated by the 'Competent Veterinary Service' to a service which has competence in this area, when EU legislation provides for such a delegation of competence. In the case of the United Kingdom, this has been delegated to the FSA.

Section 4.2: This requires establishments to be free from any animal health restrictions. The animal health restrictions relate to diseases to which fish are susceptible, at the time of their dispatch/certification from the establishment.

PARASITE CHECKS
Sections 4.3 and 4.4 refer: This can be signed on the basis of compliance with Section VIII, Annex III of Regulation 853/2004.

MICROBIOLOGICAL CRITERIA
Sections 4.3, 4.5 and 4.7 refer: As regards microbiology, the EU has specified criteria for cooked crustaceans and molluscan shellfish only – Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on the microbiological criteria for

foodstuffs refer. This Regulation is implemented in the UK by the Food Hygiene Regulations 2006. On this basis, Sections 4.3 and 4.7 can be signed for all shellfish and fish produced in accordance with the Regulations. As far as certification for 'not contaminated with salmonella' - as required at section 4.5 - is concerned, it is envisaged that specific examination of the batch intended for export will be necessary, including in the case of fish and sea food products imported from third countries. If specific criteria have not been laid down for this, 'absence in 25 g of the sample' should be considered adequate.

The sample taken for analysis must comprise five units and be representative of the daily production/batch. However, if HACCP plans are in place, which include a testing regime for *Salmonella spp,* then specific testing of the batch(es) intended for export is not necessary.

CHEMICO-TOXICOLOGICAL CRITERIA

Sections 4.6 and 4.7 refer: These can be signed on the basis of the following:

- Compliance with Council Directive 96/23/EC, which is implemented by the Animals and Animal Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Residue Limits) Regulations 1997 and a programme referred to as the National Surveillance Scheme (NSS).
- On the basis of this scheme, it can be considered that animal products for human consumption do not contain levels exceeding the limits permitted in the European Union of any antibiotic/veterinary medicinal product; any beta-agonist or any substances having a thyrostatic, oestrogenic, androgenic or gestogenic action, which do not occur naturally; any pesticide; or any heavy metal, known to be harmful to human health.
- The NSS also covers PCBs.

RADIOLOGICAL CRITERIA

Section 4.7 refers:
This paragraph will be certified on the basis of UK's compliance with the relevant EU legislation and international recommendation. The legislation for microbiological and chemico-toxicological criteria are as above. As far as radiological criteria are concerned, current EU limits for radionuclides in food only apply to agricultural imports from third countries contaminated by the Chernobyl accident (EC Regulation 737/90 and amendments). This establishes a limit for Cs-134 + Cs-137 of 600 Bq/kg. However, the EU has recommended that milk and mixed diets are monitored in the Member State of origin. In support of this recommendation, the FSA monitors milk at several dairies across the UK and complete meals from large consumption areas such as canteens or restaurants. The FSA, in association with the environment agencies, publishes an annual report – Radioactivity in Food and the Environment – which summarises the results of such monitoring and any additional monitoring carried out on the basis of risk e.g., around the nuclear sites. The results of these monitorings in 2003 demonstrate that even the most exposed members of the public received radiation doses from consumption of food and exposure to environmental radioactivity due to discharges and direct radiation that were below the statutory United Kingdom annual dose limit to members of the public of 1 mSv (millisievert) i.e., below European Union limits and within Government targets.

Current Codex guideline levels for radionuclides (in internationally traded food) only apply following accidental nuclear contamination

FITNESS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

Sections 4.8 and 4.9 refer: These can be certified on the basis that the products were produced in an establishment approved in accordance with the Regulations, and are health marked or identified (either the packages or accompanying document), as appropriate, in

accordance with the Regulations.

5. DISCLAIMER

This certificate is provided on the basis of information available at the time and may not necessarily comply fully with the requirements of the importing country. It is the exporter's responsibility to check the certificate against any relevant import permit or any advice provided by the competent authority in the importing country. If these do not match, the exporter should contact the Centre for International Trade - Carlisle, via the link below: http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening