

EXPORT OF WET-SALTED, DRY-SALTED, LIMED AND PICKLED HIDES AND SKINS OF BOVINE AND OVINE ORIGIN TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE CERTIFYING OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN

Associated Documents: 7406EHC and 618NDC

IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OV) and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with export certificate 7406EHC. The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 7406EHC. 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

Export health certificate 7406EHC may be used for the export to South Africa of bovine hides or ovine skins which have been wet-salted, dry-salted, limed or pickled.

The relevant import permit number should be entered into the appropriate space on the first page of the certificate.

2. Certification by an Official Veterinarian (OV)

This certificate may be signed by an Official Veterinarian appointed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Scottish Government - Rural Directorate, Welsh Government - Department for Rural Affairs, or an Authorised Veterinary Inspector (AVI) appointed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland (DARDNI), who is an Official Veterinarian (OV) on the appropriate panel for export purposes.

OVs/AVIs should sign and stamp the health certificate with the OV/AVI stamp in any colour **OTHER THAN BLACK**.

A certified copy of the completed certificate must be sent to AHVLA Specialist Service Centre - Exports in Carlisle, within seven days of issue.

The OV/AVI should keep a copy for his/her own records.

3. Paragraph IV may be certified on the basis of the following specific guidance in conjunction with any necessary evidence resulting from the OV's familiarity with the sourcing, procurement, segregation, processing, handling and storage arrangements in place at the processing establishment supported as necessary by physical inspection and examination of relevant documentation and/or records including commercial documentation and veterinary statements.

- (a) Paragraph IV(a)(i) refers. Slaughterhouses located within the UK can be considered to be 'licensed' and to be 'approved for export' on the basis of their approval under the EU Hygiene package, including Regulations (EC) 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs, 853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin and 854/2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption.

In England, the EU Hygiene package is implemented and enforced by the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). Similar legislation exists in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Confirmation of approval of UK slaughterhouses may be ascertained on sight of a valid approval document or by reference to the Specialist Service Centre - Exports, in Carlisle.

- (b) Paragraph IV (a) (ii) regarding absence of clinical evidence of vesicular stomatitis, foot and mouth disease or anthrax at slaughter may be signed on the basis that the carcasses of animals confirmed to be clinically affected with these diseases would be destroyed under European community legislation.
- (c) Paragraph IV(a) (iii) refers to killing as part of a disease eradication programme rather than slaughter in a slaughterhouse. This paragraph may be certified on the basis of any necessary evidence resulting from the OV's familiarity with the sourcing, procurement, segregation, processing, handling and storage arrangements in place at the processing establishment supported as necessary by physical inspection and examination of relevant documentation and/or records including commercial documentation and veterinary statements.
- (d) Paragraph IV(a) (iv) may be signed on behalf of the Department for hides and skins originating from animals slaughtered in the UK provided written authority to do so has been obtained from the Specialist Service Centre - Exports, Carlisle, on form 618NDC.

For the purposes of this paragraph, the reference to districts where no foot and mouth disease (FMD) "had been reported" should be interpreted as meaning "had been *confirmed*"; this therefore does not include unconfirmed reports of FMD.

In respect of hides and skins imported from other countries, this paragraph can be certified on the basis of the OV's awareness of the disease status of the countries of origin. This can be ascertained from information provided on the internet at:

http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/public/wahid.php/Diseaseinformation/diseasehome

and

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-diseases/monitoring/>

This should also be combined with the OV's familiarity with the sourcing, procurement, segregation, processing, handling and storage arrangements in place at the processing establishment supported as necessary by physical inspection and examination of relevant documentation and/or records including commercial documentation and veterinary statements.

If in doubt the OV should seek advice from the AHVLA Specialist Service Centre - Exports, in Carlisle, via the link below:

<http://animalhealth.defra.gov.uk/about/contact-us/tradeexports.html>

- (e) Paragraph IV(b) refers. This paragraph requires that the container is loaded and sealed under 'authorised supervision'. This refers to loading and sealing either by the OV or by an individual authorised by the OV.

In consultation with the owner of the exporting establishment, the OV may therefore authorise one or more competent operatives at the exporting establishment to load and seal containers of hides and skins which are to be exported on this certificate.

This authorisation should be audited by the OV through spot checks and risk-based inspections to ensure that expected standards are being maintained. The OV may, if he/she deems it appropriate, withdraw an individual's authorisation.

The OV should note that authorisation of such competent operatives does not require approval by AHVLA Carlisle. It is the OV's responsibility to authorise such individuals for this purpose.

When authorising an individual for this purpose, the OV's decision should take into account the procedures and systems in place at the establishment and their knowledge or experience of the individual concerned.

The authorised individual who loads and seals a container described on this certificate must provide a written declaration detailing the product which he/she loaded into that container and confirming the container's number and the number of the seal applied to that container. This declaration should form part of the records kept by the exporter and made available to the OV at his/her request.

4. Where declarations are relied upon to support the completion of this certificate, these must be signed by someone who has knowledge of and responsibility for the relevant parts of the production process. The managing director (or equivalent) of the company should provide a letter giving the name(s) and job title(s) of those authorised to give the declaration and the basis on which the declaration is made.

The declaration should include a clause indicating that the signatory is aware that making a false declaration is an offence and that he/she accepts full responsibility if any problems arise with the export should there be any dispute relating to the matters being declared.

The RCVS Guide to Professional Conduct 2012 states that [Veterinary Surgeons] "must not recklessly confirm what other people have stated". Where possible, supporting evidence should be called for and put on file.

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 AHVLA Specialist Service Centre - Exports, in Carlisle, via the link below:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla-en/imports-exports/international-trade/>