

## EXPORT OF HATCHING EGGS OF POULTRY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN AND EXPORTER

**Associated Documents:** 898EHC, 898SPT, 618NDC (and SUP if required)

#### 1. Scope of the certificate

This certificate may be used for the export of hatching eggs of domestic poultry to the United States of America.

**Poultry** (including their hatching eggs) for the purpose of this certificate is being defined as: birds of the following species: chickens, ducks, geese, grouse, guinea fowl, partridges, peafowl, pheasants, quail, pigeons and ratites. swans and turkeys;

#### 2. Import Permit

**Exporters must be aware that the importer must obtain a Permit to Import in advance from the United States Department of Agriculture at:**

National Center for Import and Export,  
VS, APHIS, USDA Center, 4700 River Road,  
Unit 39 Riverdale,  
MD 20737 USA

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import\\_export/animals/poultry\\_eggs.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/poultry_eggs.shtml)

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import\\_export/animals/live\\_poultry.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/live_poultry.shtml)

The Original copy of the import health permit must be attached to the completed health certificate 898EHC, and both documents must accompany the consignment from the UK to the USA.

NPIP - Importers who wish to be considered for U.S. National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) equivalency may request further information from UK exporters. More information on NPIP requirements can be found at this link: <http://www.poultryimprovement.org/>

**IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER:** exporters are strongly advised to ensure compliance with any additional requirements of the import permit not included in this certificate, including quarantine on arrival to the USA and any tests to be carried out during such quarantine before the consignment is finally allowed to be imported to the USA, or in the case of day-old birds hatched from imported eggs until they are released from quarantine after placing on the farms. This may include testing for avian influenza (any subtype), Newcastle disease and any other diseases that the USA authorities may deem necessary. Where pre-export testing for the diseases to be screened during quarantine is not required in the export health certificate before shipping to the USA, exporters are strongly advised to carry out voluntary courtesy pre-export tests for such diseases. Owners/exporters should therefore be advised that the Department cannot accept any liability if the consignment subsequently fails one of the tests whilst in quarantine in the USA and consequently the consignment may have to be destroyed as its return to the UK may not be possible since health assurances under EU import conditions will not be certifiable.

#### 3. Official Signature

This certificate may be signed by an OV appointed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Scottish Government, Welsh Government or the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Northern Ireland, who is on the appropriate panel for export purposes or who holds the appropriate Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) (OCQ(V)) authorisation.

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

**Certified Copy Requirements – England, Wales and Scotland**

Guidance concerning return of certified copies of EHCs has changed and only specific certified copies are required to be returned to the APHA. Certifying OVs must return a certified copy of EHCs only for the following EHC types:

- if the exported commodity is cattle, pigs, sheep, goats or camelids;
- if the certificate was applied for manually and the application documents have been emailed to APHA and not applied for via the Exports Health Certificates Online (EHCO) system.

Certified copies should be emailed on the day of signature to the Centre for International Trade Carlisle (CITC) at the following address: [certifiedcopies@apha.gov.uk](mailto:certifiedcopies@apha.gov.uk).

For certificates that have been issued to the Certifying OV via the EHCO system, the Certifying OV must complete the certifier portal with the status of the certificate and the date of signature.

A copy of all EHCs and supporting documentation certified must be retained for two years.

Certifying OVs are not required to return certified copies of other EHCs issued, however CITC may request certified copies of EHCs and supporting documentation in order to complete Quality Assurance checks or if an issue arises with the consignment after certification.

**DAERA Export Health Certificates: provision of certified copies**

Authorised Private Veterinary Practitioners (aPVPs) certifying DAERA Export Certification On-Line (DECOL) produced EHCs must return a legible, scanned copy of the final EHC to the relevant DAERA Processing Office within 1 working day of signing.

Good quality photographic copies will be accepted by the Department where obtaining a scanned copy is not feasible – for example, where 'on site' certification is undertaken and scanning facilities are not available.

For record purposes, a copy of the final Export Health Certificate and associated Support documents should be retained by the aPVP for a period of 2 years from the date of certification.

The Department will carry out periodic audits of all aspects of export certification to ensure that a high standard of certification is being maintained.

4. **Notifiable Disease Clearance & Exposure to avian influenza and Newcastle disease**

Paragraphs IV. (a) (i) and (ii) refer.

Paragraph IV (a) (i) may be certified by the OV on the basis that the flocks of origin of the eggs are not located in any area where official restrictions due to outbreaks of avian influenza (AI) or Newcastle disease (ND) have been imposed for the 90 days prior to export.

Paragraph IV (a) (ii) may therefore be certified by the OV on the basis of written authority (Form 618NDC) which will be sent to him/her by the issuing office (in GB, APHA Centre for International Trade, Carlisle; or the relevant issuing office in N. Ireland) before shipment.

#### Exposure to AI or ND

Paragraph IV (a) (i) refers. The OV must personally verify that, on the basis of his/her own knowledge of the flocks, supported if necessary by any movement records and written declarations by the exporter which the OV may consider necessary, the flocks have been located within the UK for the past 90 days and that the flocks have remained closed during that time. In the absence of individual official restrictions imposed on the flock due to any epidemiological link to a confirmed outbreak of either of these diseases, the OV can disregard the risk of exposure through direct/indirect contact with confirmed infected premises. For indoor flocks with good biosecurity measures the OV must apply a professional judgement to assess the appropriateness of such measures and the risk of exposure to disease through contact with wildlife. For outdoor flocks, it is imperative, especially if AI or ND are present in the UK, that the assurance that the flocks have not been exposed to these diseases is certified on the basis of pre-export isolation and testing for these diseases (see disclaimer at Section 2 of these guidance notes).

#### 5. Clinical inspection

Paragraph IV (a) (iii) refers. The USA does not specify the timing of the clinical inspection of the flocks of origin prior to export of the eggs. This paragraph may be certified provided that the OV has received a support certificate (898SUP) from the flock veterinarian.

The flock veterinarian may certify this statement in the 898SUP provided that he/she has inspected the flock within the past 31 days and has received confirmation from the flock manager within 72 hours prior to despatch of the eggs for export (or at the time of signature of the 898 SUP certificate) that there has not been any clinical sign of any disease problem affecting the flocks.

If the 898SUP certificate is signed more than 72 hours prior to export, the final signatory OV is responsible for obtaining the confirmation (as he/she seems appropriate) directly from the flock veterinarian or flock manager that the flocks remain free from clinical signs of disease.

'Clinical signs' of disease should be understood to include information from flock production and mortality records, laboratory test results and pathological reports.

**Please note it is imperative to list all flocks of origin in the relevant section of the EHC - a separate page with details is acceptable if attached to the certificate.**

#### 6. Salmonella enteritidis monitoring

Paragraph IV (b) refers. The national control programmes for salmonella (NCP) lays down procedures for the routine monitoring of chicken and turkey breeding flocks for Salmonellas of public health significance, including Salmonella Enteritidis, in accordance with EU Regulation 2160/2003. Samples must be collected at intervals not exceeding 21 days and send for testing to UK approved laboratory.

The paragraph may be certified in the case of chickens and turkeys if sampling has been carried out in accordance with the national control programme, and the results of all testing have been negative. The OV is personally responsible for checking that testing has been carried out, and that all the laboratory results have been negative.

In the case of other poultry species specific testing must be carried out following a similar protocol to that laid down in the national control programme.

Link for the Statutory National Control Programmes: Chicken breeders: [Chicken breeders: poultry testing for salmonella - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Equivalent statutory programmes are in place in N. Ireland: [Salmonella | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](http://daera-ni.gov.uk)

7. **Egg Drop Syndrome (EDS) testing**

Paragraph IV (c) refers. Testing must be carried out either at a government laboratory or at a laboratory which is UKAS (ISO17025) accredited for EDS serology testing (usually by HAIT or ELISA tests). The options of "at least 5%" or a minimum of 150 per flock are on the basis of "whichever is lesser" and results may be accumulated in the 90 days prior to export, provided that the OV is satisfied that different birds in the same flock have been used to reach the target figures and that all the sampling dates and the laboratory results thereof are within the 90 days prior to export.

October 2015 - The US authorities have dropped the requirement to test turkeys for EDS. Therefore this statement does not apply to hatching eggs of turkeys. Certifying OVs can delete this paragraph now in the case of hatching eggs from turkeys.

8. **Avian Metapneumovirus testing**

Paragraph IV (d) refers. Testing must be carried out at a government laboratory. Testing is not required for waterfowl species, and in their case this paragraph must be crossed out in the certificate.

Flocks that are not vaccinated against avian metapneumovirus can use any of the testing options in the certificate, but it is advisable that serological testing is chosen as the option to go for since it is the testing that USA will perform if birds/eggs are certified as originating from non-vaccinated flocks.

Vaccination will interfere with serology tests. As an alternative to testing 30 birds per house (sentinel bird are also eligible) by RT-PCR or ELISA, the use of sentinel birds can be used to achieve the assurances required on the basis of serology testing. If sentinel birds are used (30 birds per house required but it is advisable that more than 30 sentinel birds are initially placed to account for mortalities etc), they should be either birds aged 4 to 8 weeks when tested by serology with negative results prior to introduction or be unvaccinated males tested by serology with negative results prior to introduction. They must be placed in the same house as the flock under test. If the option of young birds is used, these should be in as close contact as possible with the rest of the flock but separated from the main flock in a cage on the floor of the house. The cage should be regularly moved around to different parts of the floor in order to ensure effective contact with the faeces of the flock of origin. Careful consideration must be taken to ensure that any eggs laid by sentinel birds are collected and be removed as soon as possible and in no circumstance must they be used for export to USA. Each sentinel bird must be individually identified so that the initial and subsequent serology results demonstrate that they were not vaccinated/naturally infected at the time of introduction in the flock and that this remains to be the case on the basis of further tests results to be used as evidence for certification for export. Testing may be done by whatever serology test is currently in standard use by the APHA or Agri-food and Biosciences Institute, Stormont. If a Company wants to use this option, the Official Veterinarian should obtain evidence that in this case the flock(s) had remained as closed flocks from the date of commencement of egg collection.

For any of the testing option at least 30 birds per house should be tested (30 sentinel birds per house if sentinels are used- serology testing only).

**Vaccination status of the flocks of origin:** certification of mixed consignments containing eggs from both vaccinated and non-vaccinated flocks is not allowed. The US Department (APHIS) requires that the vaccination status of the flocks of origin is stated in the certificate to consider what tests to be used if they decide to carry out post-import testing. In the case of eggs from flocks where sentinels are present, the vaccination status refers only to the birds producing the eggs for export (the sentinel vaccination status should be disregarded; no eggs from them should be exported to USA) and the flocks of origin must be certified as vaccinated for Avian Metapneumovirus.

9. **Avian influenza vaccination**

Paragraph IV (e) refers. The vaccination of domestic poultry for avian influenza in the UK is forbidden under EU regulations, except with special dispensation at times of particular risk (EU Directive 2005/94/EC). Under the same Directive, and the subsequent EU Decision 2006/474/EC, AI vaccination may be permitted in zoo birds under a specific licence, and subject to strict controls. The UK has never applied to the EU for approval of the use of AI vaccination in domestic poultry, but approval has been given for its use in a very small number of zoos.

The OV must certify this paragraph on the basis of his/her personal knowledge of the premises of origin, supported by whatever written statements may be considered necessary from the owner and other veterinarians.

10. **Newcastle Disease Vaccination**

Paragraph IV.(f) refers. The USA does not specify that the flocks must, or must not be vaccinated. Their concern is only that, if vaccinated, the vaccine must not be derived from a velogenic strain of virus.

In the OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines the Newcastle disease virus is differentiated into three classes; in descending order of virulence these are velogenic, mesogenic and lentogenic. The manual specifies that vaccines should be prepared only from the latter 2, less virulent strains. As all vaccines that are licensed for use in the UK must conform with the OIE Manual standards, the OV may certify this paragraph on the basis that any Newcastle disease vaccine, if used, had a valid marketing authorisation in the UK.

11. **Egg sanitisation and packing**

Paragraph IV (g) refers.

The eggs must be sanitised in accordance with the standards laid down in the OIE Code. The Code states that "hatching eggs should be cleaned and sanitised as soon as possible after collection using an approved sanitising agent in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions". The UK authorities do not have a procedure for approval of commercial products for egg sanitisation. In the absence of any such official approval procedure, the OV may use his/her own clinical judgement about the approval of the method.

The OV may certify the procedures surrounding collection and sanitisation in one of two ways.

Either the OV must have been present during the processes to personally observe them. Or else the OV must:

- (i) visit the premises on a frequent and routine basis during which

these processes are regularly observed and confirmed to be satisfactory, **and**

**(ii)** have received a written record from a responsible person confirming that they have been carried out in the normal way to a satisfactory standard in respect of this particular export consignment, **and**  
**(iii)** have sufficient familiarity with the establishment and confidence in its management practices to have no reasonable doubt about the processes in this particular case.

In order to certify the part about clean and unused packing materials the OV must personally check the materials used.

12. **Notifiable disease clearances (Regionalisation of notifiable diseases and transit through restricted areas)**

**APHIS-defined European Poultry Trade Region:**

A single region consisting of Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales), Greece, Hungary, Ireland (Republic of), Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden.

Paragraph IV (h) refers. This may be certified by the OV provided that he/she has received written authority (Form 618NDC) which will be sent to him/her by the issuing office (in GB, Centre for International Trade, Carlisle) or the relevant issuing office in N. Ireland within 10 days before shipment.

This paragraph covers disease clearances both for the premises of origin and the disease control zones (as APHIS-defined European Poultry Trade Region) where they are located. Option 1 has been crossed-out in both options of this paragraph as it is not applicable to this certificate.

In the event of ongoing outbreaks in any countries of transit, the exporter should submit a route plan and a written declaration together with the application for this certificate so that the relevant disease clearances can be issued. If there are no ongoing concerns about Newcastle disease or HPAI, it may be enough to solely specify the countries of transit. In the absence of notifiable avian influenza and Newcastle disease in the UK and provided the consignment will only travel within the UK, the 618NDC will confirm that there are no official restrictions due to avian influenza or Newcastle disease in the premises of origin or the UK as a whole, without mentioning the specific transit areas in the UK.

Similarly, the OV should obtain a route plan and a written declaration from the owner/exporter. If the consignment is not transiting any countries in which there are ongoing concerns over Newcastle disease or HPAI it may be enough to solely specify the countries of transit. He/she should then compare these with the notifiable disease clearances (618NDC) issued with the certificate before signature.

The route plan, the exporter's declaration and the 618NDC disease clearance document should not be attached to the certificate, but should be retained by the OV for record purposes.

**Seal** - The second option of this paragraph (\*OR) only needs to be certified if the eggs will transit areas under official restrictions due to avian influenza and Newcastle disease. The OV has to personally apply or supervise the application of the seal to the means of transport and enter the seal number in this section of the certificate.

An OV needs to certify that the seal is intact on arrival at the airport

prior to the movement of the eggs for embarkation for export.

13. **Support certification**

In certificate 898EHC, paragraphs IV (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) refer. Where the flocks of origin are supervised by a different OV, the final certifying OV must obtain a support certificate 898SUP from the flock veterinarian, confirming that the conditions of these paragraphs have been met. The support certificate will be issued by APHA at the same time as the main certificate.

14. **Supplementary certification**

A supplementary certificate 898SPT is required to accompany the 898EHC certificate because of the current ban by USA on hatching eggs and poultry originating or transiting France (due to AI vaccination). The certifying OV must obtain evidence in order to certify that the poultry to be exported did not originate from France after 1st October 2023 and that the consignment have not and will not transit France. The supplementary certificate will be issued by APHA at the same time as the main certificate, and will need fan stamping together with the main certificate and any other schedules/documents to provide an indivisible certificate.

15. **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 APHA Centre for International Trade, Carlisle or DAERA, via the link or e-mail address below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-apha>  
DAERA - Email: [vs.implementation@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:vs.implementation@daera-ni.gov.uk)