

EXPORT OF MARES/FEMALE HORSES FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIANS AND
EXPORTERS

READ THESE NOTES IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT

IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OV) and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with export certificate 1261EHC. The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 1261EHC. 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 United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in advance of each consignment.

****PLEASE NOTE ANY NON-APPLICABLE TEXT IN SECTION 1 (ISSUING COMPETENT AUTHORITY) & SECTION 2 (UK REGION OF PROVENANCE AND COMPETENT AUTHORITY) SHOULD BE CROSSED OUT (POINT 6 BELOW REFERS) SO REGION OF ORIGIN AND ISSUING COMPETENT AUTHORITY IS UNEQUIVOCALLY PRESENTED TO APHIS****

Under the Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Act 2024, it is an offence to export horses and other equines for slaughter, beginning in or transiting through Great Britain to a third country.

If the OV has suspicions that the consignment is being exported for slaughter in contravention of section 1 of the Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Act 2024, this should be reported as soon as possible to APHA by calling 03000 200 301. In your report, please detail the following:

- EHC and journey log reference number
- Location and address of inspection, including CPH number
- Name and address of transporter and journey organiser
- Transporter authorisation number
- Details of the animals in the consignment (number, species, age)
- The reason for your concern
- Any relevant additional information

Countersignature Requirements

This certificate must be countersigned by a salaried Veterinary Official of the National Government in the Department of Environmental Food Rural Affairs in Great Britain or Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland.

In the case of exports to USA, an Official Veterinarian (OV) is an Authorized veterinarian of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) or of the Department of Agriculture, Environmental and Rural Affairs (DAERA) *.

All requests for countersignature must be submitted to the Centre for International Trade - Carlisle (CITC) at least two working days in advance of the requested date/time of countersignature using Request for APHA Veterinarian Countersignature of an Export Health Certificate (ET145) application.

The ET145 application can be submitted to CITC by email to processingteam@apha.gov.uk

Upon receipt of your ET145 application CITC will liaise with an APHA Veterinarian* at your preferred countersigning office/area to make arrangements for countersignature to take place and notify you of the arrangements made.

*In Northern Ireland, a DAERA salaried Official Veterinarian/certifying officer is authorised to countersign this certificate. Export health certificate 1261EHC may be used for the export of mares/female horses from the United Kingdom to United States of America.

Horses can travel between Great Britain/Northern Ireland, and on these instances APHIS advice is that they would accept the following:

1. An official health certificate must be issued by the last entity (Great Britain or Northern Ireland) the horse resides in immediately prior to export. This certificate must be signed and endorsed by the official

salaried veterinarian of the exporting country government. If the official veterinarian is also the examining veterinarian, only one signature is required.

2. When UK origin horses reside in both Great Britain and Northern Ireland during the 60 days prior to export, the health certificates from the entity being resided in prior to residency in the exporting entity can be signed by the licensed, examining veterinarian. Only the health certificate from the exporting entity must be signed and endorsed by the official veterinarian of the exporting country.

Please note that APHIS recognises separately the regions, and the disease statuses of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as stipulated in the relevant section of the Federal Register (Vol. 86 No. 155).

CERTIFICATION BY AN OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN (OV)

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

Certifiers are only required to return a certified copy of EHCs for the following EHC types:

if the commodity is cattle, pigs, sheep, goats or camelids
EHC's where the certifier cannot submit certifier feedback

If you are required to return a certified copy to CITC, email a scanned copy to certifiedcopies@apha.gov.uk.

Retain a copy of all EHCs and supporting documentation certified for two years.

Certifiers 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

aPVPs certifying DECOL produced Export Health Certificates 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."

1. It is a USDA requirement that the silhouette contained within the health certificate 1261EHC must be fully completed in all cases. The identification of the horse must also be checked against the silhouette/microchip number in the passport when samples are collected for pre-export tests and when the horse is examined. Any discrepancies with the identification of the horse should be discussed with the local APHA office.

The export health certificate 1261EHC attached should already have

1. sections I-III completed. Please check that the details entered on the certificate are correct.

Horses which have not been resident in the United Kingdom for the 60 days prior to export may also be certified for export as long as the relevant health assurances in respect of residencies in the other countries mentioned in paragraph IV (b) (ii) are available

2. You should carry out the final **clinical examination** mentioned at paragraph IV a) and complete the export health certificate within 48 hours of export. The certificate must be fully completed before being countersigned by a salaried Veterinary Officer of Defra/SW/WG/DAERA.

Important: To ensure horses being exported to US maintain their health and safety, APHIS requires that an examination be completed within 48 hours of departure from the port of embarkation to the United States. The port of embarkation is where the horses will be loaded onto the aircraft destined for the United States.

In instances where logistically the clinical examination is unable to be performed within 48 hours from the port of embarkation, APHIS is willing to accept that the examination performed be within 48 hours of departure from the United Kingdom. On the health certificate (only if words "from port of embarkation" appear), the words "...from port of embarkation" may be struck out, and instead "from the United Kingdom" written in and endorsed upon. The OV can make the change, but there must be some indication that it was an official / authorized change. This could be OV initials and stamp in the margin. APHA countersignature on the certificate would then be sufficient for endorsement.

On these instances, in addition to the issued DEFRA health certificate, horses will be required to be accompanied by a health document issued by the respective competent authority of any foreign transit country that they reside in for 36 or more hours while in route to the United States.

3. You should ensure that the owner's declaration is stapled and 'fan stamped' to the certificate to make a tamper proof, composite document. Further guidance on this procedure can be seen at [http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External OV Instructions/Export Instructions/Certification Procedures/index.htm](http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External%20OV%20Instructions/Export%20Instructions/Certification%20Procedures/index.htm)

A declaration should be signed and dated only by the person confirming a statement. A copy should be retained for your own records.

4. **As stated in the footnotes, any non- applicable option must be deleted, for example, referring to the region of origin and corresponding competent authority issuing the certificate, the non-applicable option should be struck through with diagonal lines, so the region of origin (Great Britain or Northern Ireland) and relevant competent authority issuing the certificate (DEFRA or DAERA) is unequivocally presented to APHIS.**

5. **CEM procedures:**

Paragraphs IV f), g) and h) are only relevant in the case of horses that need to be swabbed. Generally speaking, horses under 731 days of age are exempt as they are unlikely to be exposed to the risk through engaging in natural breeding, but this is not always the case.

If the horse has been bred even if the horse is under 731 days old, then it must be swabbed and tested. In any case, the OV should try to determine the age of the horse as accurately as possible from the dentition and other features/records and not rely solely on the age recorded in the passport. A horse will not be considered to be under 731 days old if its first permanent incisors have erupted. Where there is any uncertainty as to whether the horse is under or over 731 days then the OV should err on the side of caution and undertake CEM swabbing/testing.

Swabbing technique (Paragraph IV h):

Mares must be swabbed for CEM testing on 1 occasion being within 30 days of shipment. The swab sites are identified in export health certificate 1261EHC. 3 separate swabs (2 in the case of a pregnant

- i. mare) are required from a mare, as follows:

Mare:

- 1 swab from the mucosal surface of the clitoral fossa
- 1 swab from the mucosal surfaces of all the clitoral sinuses there are (the laterals and the median)
- 1 swab from the distal cervix or the endometrium (only required for non-pregnant mares).

For further information on these sites and the sampling technique that the US tend to follow, see https://ahdc.vet.cornell.edu/docs/cem-culturing_contagious_equine_metritis.pdf

- ii. All swabs must be submitted directly to the APHA Penrith laboratory. For more information, the laboratory can be contacted on 01768 885295.

Swabs must be sent chilled and set up for culture within 48 hours of sampling and the samples must be accompanied by a statement indicating the time and date of collection.

If more than 10 swabs are to be submitted, prior notice should be given to the laboratory. A separate submission form must accompany swabs from each horse.

A mini swab should be used for swabbing of sinuses.

6. Support certification

Paragraphs IV d) and e), and - in the case of horses resident in countries other than the UK (Great Britain or Northern Ireland) during the previous 60 days - paragraph IV i) refers. The Official Veterinarian should obtain support certification as necessary from Veterinary Surgeons responsible for other premises, including in another country if appropriate, where the horse has been kept during the 60 days prior to export. Support certification in relation to vaccination, residency, breeding etc may also be required.

7. Notifiable Disease Clearance

Paragraph IV i) refers. OFFICIAL VETERINARIANS may certify this paragraph, in respect of residencies in the UK only, on behalf of the Department provided written authority to do so has been obtained from CIT, Carlisle on form 618NDC.

8. "Courtesy" tests

- i. Equines exported to the USA are required, on arrival in the USA, to undergo post-import quarantine. During quarantine, horses are tested for equine infectious anaemia (agar gel immunodiffusion (Coggin's) test), dourine (complement fixation test), glanders (complement fixation test) and equine piroplasmiasis (competitive enzyme linked immunosorbent assay - cELISA - AND complement fixation test). To reduce the risk of rejection on arrival in the USA, exporters and their veterinary surgeons are strongly recommended to have horses tested prior to export, and preferably carried out by USA labs to reduce the risk of different results being found at the post export quarantine sampling. Samples may be sent to the APHA Weybridge laboratory, as an alternative if desired.

The complement fixation tests (CFT) has been re-introduced as an official post-import tests for equine piroplasmiasis (*Theileria equi* and *Babesia caballi*) from February 2015. Horses must test negative on both the CFT and cELISA in order to enter the USA. The CFT is being added because it is more likely to detect early infections when the cELISA is not yet in the positive range. The cELISA is more likely to detect later infections and chronic asymptomatic carriers. Positive CFT results are defined as equal to or greater than a 2+ reaction at a

- i. 5 serum dilution. Positive cELISA results are defined as 40% inhibition or greater.
- ii. It must be stressed that the results of these tests are not recognised by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and are not certified on any export health document nor are they a requirement of the USDA import permit. Negative results to these tests do not guarantee a negative result when the horse is subsequently tested in quarantine in the USA. There is evidence to suggest that stress and other factors may affect the test results. Owners/exporters should therefore be advised that the Department cannot accept any responsibility if the horse subsequently fails one of the tests whilst in quarantine in USA and consequently may have to return to GB. A declaration should be obtained from the exporter or owner indicating acceptance of this risk.

Should exporters decide not to undertake the courtesy testing then a declaration should be obtained from the exporter / owner stating that they are aware of our advice to pre-export test the horses and that they understand and accept any consequences from not following this advice.

- iii. It is also important that horses which show a positive laboratory test result prior to export are not exported unless the owner and/or his agent is fully aware of the consequences should the animal be found positive in the USA and not allowed entry; in addition there is a need to be aware of the implications on consignment contacts which may be deferred entry until a later date and the financial implications.

9. The Mallein test

Any horse which is known to have been mallein tested within 6 months of export from Great Britain to the USA must be accompanied by a supplementary certificate denoting the exact date and results of the mallein test carried out. The supplementary certificate which must be signed, stamped and dated by an Official Veterinarian, and endorsed by a full time Veterinary Officer of DEFRA, should be attached to the appropriate export certificate. Animals which have given a positive mallein test must not be exported.

10. Please note that all papers which must necessarily accompany export health certificates for the export of horses must be authenticated with an Official Veterinarian's stamp and signature on each separate sheet of paper.

11. WELFARE

Exporters and transporters must comply with all the legislation for the welfare of live animals during transport. The welfare conditions required during transport are set out in Council Regulation EC No 1/2005 (as retained), implemented in England by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006, with parallel legislation in Scotland and Wales.

If transported by air, animals should also be transported in accordance with International Air Transport Association (IATA) standards.

Information about welfare during transport in Great Britain and the necessary requirements can be obtained from the Animal and Plant Health Agency: Welfare in Transport Team
Centre for International Trade
Eden Bridge House
Lowther Street, Carlisle
CA3 8DX
Phone: +44 (0) 3000 200 301
E-mail: WIT@apha.gov.uk

Or, in the case of Northern Ireland, DAERA at Dundonald House, Belfast.

12. 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

i. 1:

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

