Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Notes for guidance: Health certificate for dispatch to the EU or NI of consignments of stocks of semen of Equine animals collected, processed and stored before 1 September 2010, and dispatched from the collection centre 8409

July 2024

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No: 8409 NFG

EHC for dispatch to the EU or NI of consignments of stocks of semen of Equine animals collected, processed and stored before 1 September 2010, and dispatched from the semen collection centre where it was collected.

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE (NFG) FOR THE CERTIFYING OFFICERS (CO) AND EXPORTERS

1. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

Regulation (EU) No 2016/429

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/659

Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692

Implementing Regulation (EU)2021/606 as amending Implementing Regulation (EU)2021/405

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/403

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/351 - Model EHC amending Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/403

Any EU legislation referenced in the certificate must be complied with and EU legislation can be accessed on the following link. You should ensure you use the latest version: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html

Please note that Official Control Regulations 2017/625 have repealed Regulation (EC) No 854/2004, 882/2004 and Directive No 96/23/EC. Please see link:

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017R0625&from=EN

Consolidated legislation

Consolidated texts, which integrate the basic instruments of Union legislation with their amendments and corrections in a single, non-official document, are available. Each consolidated text contains a list of all legal documents taken into account for its construction.

You can search for consolidated texts by using the ‘find results by document number’ option on the European Commission website. Once you have selected the relevant legislation, click ’document information’, and then scroll down to ‘all consolidated versions’ and select the most recent version. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html

Please note that the consolidated text may not contain the latest amendment to the legislation, as it takes several weeks for this to be updated.

Texts provided in this section are intended for information only. Please note that these texts have no legal value. For legal purposes please refer to the texts published in the 'Official Journal of the EU'.

IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to COs and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with the relevant health certificate for dispatch to the EU or NI of consignments of stocks of semen of Equine animals collected, processed and stored before 1 September 2010 and entered into the Union, and dispatched from the approved semen collection centre where the semen was collected.

The NFG should not be read as a standalonedocument but in conjunction with the health certificate.

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.

[Please note, policies are being reviewed. NFG will be further amended to provide specific guidance. Traders should look at NFGs regularly for any updates]

2. SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATE

EHC for dispatch to the EU or NI of consignments of stocks of semen of Equine animals collected, processed and stored before 1 September 2010, and dispatched from the approved semen collection centre where the semen was collected.

3. CERTIFICATION BY AN OV

In **England, Scotland and Wales**, this certificate must be signed by a Government Veterinary Officer (e.g. APHA, FSA or FSS employed veterinary officers) or by an OV appointed by APHA on behalf of Ministers in Defra, the Scottish Government or the Welsh Government and who hold the appropriate Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) (OCQ (V)) authorisation.

OVs must sign and stamp, with the OV stamp, the health certificate in ink of a different colour to that of the printing of the EHC. There is no requirement to sign and stamp in a specific colour. The OV should keep a copy of the signed certificate and any supporting documents for at least two years after signature or receipt/dispatch of the consignment, whichever is later. These can be electronic copies.

EHC in foreign language/s of the EU Member States (MSs).

EHC should be in English and the foreign language of the Border Control Post (BCP) of entry in the EU or NI. The original copy of the required EHC must accompany the consignment to the BCP of entry.

Listing of the EU MS BCPs can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/vet-border-control/bip-contacts_enThe foreign language certificate as received from the APHA Centre for International Trade at Carlisle or via the Export Heath Certificates Online system (EHCO) and bearing the same unique reference number as the English certificate, should be considered an official and accurate translations of the English, as published in EU legislation. The (sub-)

paragraphs / options and how they are numbered and formatted is identical in the English and foreign language editions and to the legislation published by the European Commission. Therefore, the same phrases / sentences in the foreign language versions as in the English version should be struck through and these deletions should be stamped and initialled in both versions. Both versions must also be signed as opposed to being initialled) and stamped by the OV, the foreign language certificate is deemed to be a genuine and properly authorised translation of the English version.

This also applies to any instructions in the guidance notes to strike out certain paragraphs or to certify statements that the country is free of certain notifiable diseases etc.

Additional information can be found in the APHA Vet Gateway:

http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/Export_Instructions/Certification_Procedures/index.htm

SIGNING AND STAMPING

When signing a certificate, the CO should ensure that the certificate contains no deletions or alterations, other than those which are indicated on the certificate to be permissible and any corrections to permitted entries, subject to such changes being initialled and stamped (in the margin) by the CO. Permissible deletions are normally indicated in the 'Notes' section at the end of the certificate, with the instruction 'Keep as appropriate' or 'delete if not applicable'.

- Where the certificate contains optional or contextual statements, the statements which are not relevant shall be crossed out, individually initialled and stamped by the CO, or completely removed from the certificate.

- Permitted paragraphs and sections may be crossed out by applying a 'Z' across the section or paragraph rather than crossing out line by line.

- There is no requirement for a date and time to accompany each stamp. The date is only entered at the required entry field in Part I of the certificate, and at the end where the CO signs, stamps and dates that action.

- We are aware of some BCPs demanding that all handwritten information in Part 1 of the EHC is initialled and stamped, including handwritten scoring out of otherwise blank boxes. There is no legal requirement in EU legislation that all the hand-written information entered in the certificate must be signed and stamped. It is only in the case of correction, in any part of the certificate, or in the case of statements to be crossed out, that the certifier must add signature (or initials) and stamp. This has been confirmed by the European Commission. The Commission noted however, in the case of a hand-written certificate, it is expected that the same one person completes the document. If not, the BCP might suspect that empty boxes were completed by another person after the certificate has been signed by the official.

You should consider checking with the specific BCP regarding their preference when it comes to the stamping and initialling of handwritten scoring out of otherwise blank boxes in Part I of the EHC.

- **Clarification from the European Commission means that all pages (as opposed to sheets of paper) are signed and stamped once individually in place of fan stamping and in addition to any permitted alterations. There is no requirement to fan stamp.**

- COs are reminded to consult the NFG prior to the certification of each EHC. NFG will be updated with this new information in due course.

Further Information COs should make sure they are familiar with all relevant guidance and other documents relating to EHCs and that they discuss requirements with exporters in advance.

See http://apha.defra.gov.uk/official-vets/Guidance/exports/ehconline.htm

You can also contact APHA's Centre for International Trade (CIT) on 03000 200 301

PART I: DETAILS OF THE CONSIGNMENT

All boxes in Part I of the certificate must be completed. When a box is not applicable/optional,and not filled, please score it through.

Please use schedule to be attached to the certificate if there is not enough space to fill the information. See Section 'Addition of Schedules' below.

Please complete all the boxes in Part I of the certificate in accordance with the guidance laid down in Chapter 4 of Annex I to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235, Amended by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2744.

Box I.27 (CN code)

All boxes in Part I of the certificate must be completed. When a box is not applicable/optional, and not filled, please score it through.

Please use schedule to be attached to the certificate if there is not enough space to fill the information. See Section 'Addition of Schedules' below.

Please complete all the boxes of part I following the guidance provided in the footnotes of the EHC itself.

Please complete all the boxes in Part I of the certificate in accordance with the guidance laid down in Chapter 4 of Annex I to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235 that can be accessed via this link:

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32020R2235

The Harmonised System (HS) Code is a commodity classification system used as a basis for customs tariffs and for international trade statistics.

It is the exporter's responsibility to ensure that the HS code is entered correctly and accurately reflects the product(s) being consigned.

Further information on HS Codes can be found online at:

https://www.gov.uk/trade-tariff/sections and http://madb.europa.eu/madb/euTariffs.htm

PART II: CERTIFICATION

II. Health information

The OV signing the EHC must ensure that the Health Information set out in Part II.1 of the health certificate have been complied with.

The OV may also require, where appropriate, support certification and / or evidence from the authorised centre veterinarian due to his/her knowledge of the operations of the establishment and/or written declarations from the owner as appropriate, to facilitate certification of the certificate.

II.1.1 - This can be certified based on the Approval of semen collection Centre. Approved semen collection centres are listed on the Commission website: https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/semen/equine_en

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/livestock-and-equine-embryo-collection-approved-premises/equine-embryo-collection-and-production-teams

II.1.2 and II.1.3 –
These can be certified on the basis of UK notifiable disease clearances and on the basis that African horse sickness, Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis and dourine have never been present in the UK, and glanders has not been present since 1928.

II.1.4 and II.2(II.2.1, II.2.2 and II.2.3) -
These can be certified based on notifiable disease clearances and an owner's declaration that the animal has resided in the UK for the last three months. If this is not the case a written declaration will be needed by the owner, supported by a copy of the import health certificate, to check where the animals have come from and disease status of these holdings.

II.3.1, II.3.2, II.3.3, II.3.4 and II.3.5 –
These can be certified on the basis that an EU approved semen collection centre needs to comply with these requirements and that EVA and CEM are notifiable in the UK. If necessary, veterinary records can be sought from the semen collection centre.

II.3.6.1and II.3.6.2 and II.3.6.3 -
These can be certified based on supporting evidence from the centre veterinarian.

II.3.7.1, II.3.7.2 and II.3.7.3 -
Enter the test dates as required on the certificate. Cross out the programmes that do not apply to the consignment. At least one of the tests programme must apply.

A declaration from the semen collection centre veterinarian will be required to certify compliance with these requirements of the relevant test programme(s).

Further detail on the three programmes is provided below:

Programme 1 (II.3.7.1): For donors which are continuously resident for 30 days on the centre and no Equidae on the semen collection centre come into direct contact with Equidae of lower health status than the donor stallion: one set of samples taken at least 14 days after commencement of the minimum 30 days residency required prior to first collection of the season, If the stallions remain on the centre until the next breeding season, they must be tested again before the start of the season. Enter the test and the semen collection dates. If semen collected under this programme is frozen, it must be held / stored for at least 30 days prior to export.

Programme 2 (II.3.7.2): For donors stallions which are resident (have complied with the 30 days residency prior to first collection) but which may leave the centre for less than 14 days at a time and/or if other Equidae of a lesser health status are allowed onto the centre and come into direct contact with donors stallions: two or more sets of samples, the first set taken as per programme 1 above (II.3.6), the second/further sets in such a way as to ensure that the donor stallion has been sampled and tested prior to semen collection as follows (depending on the disease): was last carried out on a sample of blood taken not more than 120 days before the semen was collected for EIA, with negative results. For EVA last carried out not more than 30 days before the semen was collected or The non-shedder state of the seropositive stallion for equine viral arteritis was confirmed by a virus isolation test which was carried out not more than one year before the semen was collected for EVA. If semen collected under this programme is frozen, it must be held / stored for at least 30 days prior to certification and the results of these tests must be available and satisfactory.

Programme 3 (II.3.7.3): Two or more sets of samples, have been carried out during the 30 days mandatory storage period of frozen semen and not less than 14 days after the collection of the semen on samples taken on the dates required. Frozen semen must have been stored in approved conditions for at least 30 days prior to certification and the results of these tests must be available and satisfactory.

IMPORTANT – Mix of Programmes/Other Equidae at the Centre

It should be borne in mind that if a centre chooses to follow a mix of programmes and/or have other Equidae on the centre (e.g. resident or walk-on mares), then the protocol to be adopted must address any attendant risks. Generally speaking, compliance with the EU requirements for trade in breeding Equidae and pre-breeding season sampling/testing as recommended by the HBLB code will be necessary. Travelling donor stallions from which semen is intended for trade must comply with one of the three programmes, although only programme 3 is likely to be practical. The following are examples (not exhaustive) of how risks may be mitigated: If a centre chooses to collect fresh semen in accordance with programme 1 from some stallions and frozen semen in accordance with programme 3 from the others with which there is or likely to be direct (nose-to-nose or skin) contact, then the donors for the latter will need to undergo a 30 days' residency in isolation and sampled 14 days after commencement of residency/isolation. Or, the donors for the former should follow programme 2. This assumes that the centre or any horses resident on or entering the centre are not subject to restrictions for notifiable diseases –see paragraph 4 above – especially those which could be transmitted by vectors (e.g. EIA, equine encephalomyelitis) If other Equidae (eg resident or walk-on mares) are present within the curtilage of the centre AND the donor stallions are likely to come into direct contact with them (donor stallions cannot be used for natural breeding in any case while on the centre), the other Equidae could undergo the protocol set out in programme 1 and be considered of equal health status. This will require isolation for 30 days (resident mares only), collection of a set of samples as per programme 1 (although sampling sites for CEM in mares will be different and the HBLB code should be followed for this) and testing with satisfactory results (for EVA in mares, where serology is the only option available, positive results are considered satisfactory as long as they are stable or declining in two sequential blood tests taken at an interval of at least 14 days). The tests could be performed at any laboratory approved under the HBLB code. These Equidae could be deemed to be of equal health status i.e. the second/further set of samples is not required (in effect meaning that programme 1 can be followed).

II.4 - can be certified on the basis of the approval of the semen collection centre.

4. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE CLEARANCE

For guidance on certifying paragraphs relating to Avian Influenza (AI) see APHA guidance for "COs Obtaining Clearance for AI" available here:

http://apha.defra.gov.uk/official-vets/Guidance/exports/ehc-online.htm

COs (OVs and Environmental Health Officers (EHO)) can certify certain disease clearances paragraphs within this EHC, on behalf of the Department, provided written authority to do so has been provided/obtained on form 618NDC from APHA's Centre for International Trade – Carlisle (CITC).

The clearance will be provided by CITC on form 618NDC. It will specify the statements on the certificate that it covers and is only in relation to the official GB disease status specified in the relevant paragraphs. All other matters such as residency, vaccination status, status of premises in respect of other diseases not covered by the 618NDC and disease status of countries, areas, premises outside the UK, are for the CO to check and verify, obtaining support certification where necessary including support certification for products of animal origin that have originated in NI.

5. COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE

Certification Support Officers may not be utilised for gathering evidence relating to this certificate.

6. UK APPROVED ESTABLISHMENTS ELIGIBLE TO EXPORT TO THE EU

The exporting establishment must be listed as a 'UK approved establishment' and a list of UK-approved establishments for import of germinal products to the EU, can be found on the European Commission's list of approved establishments' link below:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/semen-oocytes-embryos_en

Please note that the list is updated regularly and ONLY establishments on the list are approved to export to the EU, and this does not include establishments with pending applications for approval.

If the final product contains germinal products from other establishments, then these establishments should also be listed as UK and/or EU approved establishments.

7. ADDITION OF SCHEDULES

When the space in Part I or Part II of the certificate is insufficient to accommodate full detailsof the consignment a schedule may be used. In the relevant section of the certificate the CO should annotate the certificate 'see attached schedule'. A new schedule

should be created (typed or clearly written) containing the same information as that requiredin the certificate. The schedule must include the certificate reference number on each pageand must be signed, dated and stamped by the CO in a colour other than blackon each page and under the last entry. Any blank spaces in the schedule or the certificateshould be struck through with diagonal lines. The schedule must be firmly stapled to theEHC, the pages of the certificate including the schedule should be numbered and thecomplete document (EHC and schedule) should be "fan stamped" as a precaution againsttampering.

Further guidance is available here:
http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/Export_Instructions/Certification_Procedures/index.htm

8. CERTIFIED COPIES OF EHCs

When completing export certification the CO and, if applicable, FCCO must make photocopies of, or scan and save all documents they certify. OVs must retain copies of certification documents in accordance with RCVS Certification principles.

https://www.rcvs.org.uk/setting-standards/advice-and-guidance/code-of-professional-conduct-for-veterinary-surgeons/supporting-guidance/certification/

COs must retain copies of all export documentation for a period of two years. A certified copy of this EHC does not need to be returned to the APHA CITC. For the purposes of completing routine Quality Assurance checks on export certification, CITC may request certified copies of certification from COs.

Further details on Post Certifying Procedures, 'certified copies' of certification and the types of documents that should be retained by COs can be found on the APHA Vet Gateway.

9. LEGAL STATEMENT

The existing EU legislation that the UK already complies with will be incorporated into our domestic law as "assimilated EU law" under the EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018. References in our guidance and certification to such EU instruments should be taken to bereferences to this "assimilated EU law". Under the Withdrawal Act we will ensure that current EU standards remain in force, without amendment, in the immediate months after our EU exit as part of UK domestic law (apart from corrections to make the EU legislation fully operable).

10. DISCLAIMER

This certificate and NFG are 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 APHA in Carlisle.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at: farmandgermcarlisle@apha.gov.uk

PB 8409

Version History:

EHC

Notes -
I.12: guidance on 'place of destination' added
I.27 expanded to explain: 'type', 'identification number', 'identification mark', 'date of collection/production', 'approval or registration number' and 'quantity'

NFG

Version 2: Published 31 July 2024

Applicable Legislation: Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/351 added

Part I: Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235, amended by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2744 added