

IMPORTANT NOTE

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OVs) and exporters and should have been issued to you together with export certificate 7629EHC. These Notes for Guidance (NFG) are not intended to operate as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 7629EHC.

Exporters are strongly advised to verify the requirements of the importing country by contacting the veterinary authorities, or their representatives in the UK, in advance of each consignment.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) have reviewed their health requirements for the import of beef from the United Kingdom in the light of the changes in BSE status of Scotland and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom now comprises two separate zones in respect of BSE status in accordance with the WOAHA Terrestrial Code. England, Scotland and Wales are controlled BSE risk whereas Northern Ireland is currently recognised as having negligible BSE risk.

SFA have also provided their detailed classification of the types of beef cuts and offal that can be imported which depends on the BSE risk status of the country/zone in which the cattle were born and raised. Also, they have provided their own definition of specified risk material (SRM) for cattle born and raised in countries/zones with controlled BSE risk.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) must be in place in slaughterhouses to separate/segregate cattle born and raised in countries/zones of differing BSE risk status, and for such separation/segregation to be maintained downstream until the meat is certified for export. Support Health Attestations (SHA) may be arranged to provide the necessary assurances for this along the supply chain.

2. SCOPE OF CERTIFICATE

Export health certificate 7629EHC may be used for the export from the United Kingdom to Singapore of the following categories of beef and beef products derived from cattle that were born and raised in the United Kingdom and/or the Republic of Ireland (ROI). The ROI is a country recognised as having a negligible BSE risk status.

The types of beef cuts and offal that can be certified depends on the BSE risk status of the country/zone in which the cattle were born and raised (see below for definitions):

If derived from animals born and raised in countries with BSE controlled risk status, the following can be certified for export

Cattle over 30 months of age: beef cuts - deboned only;
Cattle under 30 months of age: beef cuts - bone-in or deboned.

If derived from animals born and raised in countries with BSE negligible risk status, the following can be certified for export

Cattle of any age: - beef cuts bone-in or deboned;
 - Beef offal

- Processed beef

"Beef Cuts": Eligible beef cuts include skeletal muscle cuts and other parts of the carcass. Carcass is defined as the body of an animal after slaughter and dressing e.g. striated muscle, bones and marrow, connective tissue (tendon, ligament, cartilage, sinew) ear, fat, feet/trotter, head (including jowl meat), skin/rind, tail, trimmings, snout.

"Offal": Includes 'Green offal' - intestines (includes rectum, oesophagus and stomach) and 'Red offal' - diaphragm, heart, kidneys, liver, tongue, spleen, trachea and larynx.

"Processed beef": The definition of processed beef has not been fully clarified by SFA. Before making arrangements to export any such commodity to Singapore, exporters are advised to contact the SFA or a trade representative to ensure that the commodity in question is eligible for export to Singapore.

"Meat preparations": SFA do not consider meat preparations derived from beef, for example beef burgers and beef sausages, as eligible for import on domestic food safety grounds. Blood and blood products are also ineligible for import for the same reasons. Accordingly, export of the above and similar commodities to Singapore is currently **not permitted**, irrespective of their origin from BSE negligible or controlled risk countries or zones.

3. **ORIGIN OF CATTLE FROM WHICH THE EXPORTED MEAT IS DERIVED**

The SFA have agreed that animals killed in the United Kingdom may be born and raised either in the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland (ROI). This is due to the pattern of trade in cattle between Northern Ireland and the ROI and takes into account that the ROI is approved for the export of beef to Singapore in accordance with the same import requirements as the UK.

Support documentation is required to enable this paragraph to be signed, i.e. that the meat was from cattle that were born/raised in the United Kingdom and/or the Republic of Ireland (RoI).

The certifying OV must carry out the necessary checks to verify this statement. This may be on the basis of their knowledge of the operational conditions at the slaughterhouse as regards the farms of origin of the animals from which the exported meat is derived and the checking and verification of documentation accompanying the cattle to the slaughterhouse.

For cattle originating from farms located in the ROI, OVs must be completely satisfied that the cattle were born and raised in the ROI and have been legally traded into the UK.

All animals must be presented with their ROI passport so this can be verified by the OV if necessary. OVs should also check that the cattle traded from the ROI are accompanied by the appropriate animal health certificate.

4. **IMPORT PERMIT**

Prior to making arrangements to export beef and/or beef products to Singapore, exporters are advised to contact SFA Singapore for up to date information on requirements for any import permits or other documentation.

5. **CERTIFICATION BY AN OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN**

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 must sign and stamp the health certificate with the OV stamp in ink of a different colour to that of the printing.

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.

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.

6. AGE AND ORIGIN OF ANIMALS FROM WHICH THE EXPORTED MEAT IS DERIVED

Paragraphs IV(a) and IV(d) refer. **Support documentation (SHA) or IT system capability is required to enable these paragraphs to be signed** (i.e. that the meat was derived from animals that were born/raised in a BSE controlled risk or a BSE negligible risk country or zone and aged over 30 months, or less than 30 months, at slaughter).

The certifying OV must carry out the necessary spot checks to verify the support documentation (SHA) or outputs from the IT system. This may be on the basis of their knowledge of the SOPs/operational conditions at the slaughterhouse as regards the farms of origin of the animals from which the exported meat is derived and the checking and verification of documentation accompanying the cattle to the slaughterhouse to verify the country /zone of origin and age of the animal.

OVs must be completely satisfied that cattle originating from farms located in the ROI meet the certified age requirement, they were born and raised in the ROI and have been legally traded into the UK.

OVs are further advised to obtain written confirmation from the farms of origin verifying that the requirements of these paragraphs have been met. OVs should also check that the cattle traded from the ROI are accompanied by the appropriate Intra-Trade Animal Health Certificates (ITAHCs) issued by TRACES.

The TSE Regulations require a red striped label to be applied to carcasses from animals over 30 months old originating in a BSE controlled risk country/zone, and Singapore requires meat to be deboned if from over 30 months animals born and raised in a country/zone of controlled BSE risk status, so this alone can be used as evidence of age in downstream FBOs. Traceability documentation back to the animals of origin may also be made available to the OV on request, to facilitate verification of compliance with SFA requirements.

Further advice may be obtained from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Customer Service Centre (CSC) at Carlisle via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening>

or, in the case of export from Northern Ireland from DAERA at Dundonald House, Belfast.

7. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE CLEARANCE

OVs may certify paragraph IV(b) and sub-paragraph IV(c) (i) of the certificate on behalf of the Department provided written authority to do so has been obtained on form 618NDC from the APHA CIT at Carlisle or from the issuing office of DAERA. OVs should delete sub-paragraphs IV(c) (ii) and IV(c) (iii).

8. BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY (BSE) STATEMENTS

Paragraphs VI(d), IV(e), IV(f), IV(g) and IV(h) may be certified on the basis that these are requirements of the UK TSE legislation. The UK competent authorities (Defra, the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland) ensure compliance with the legislation.

All specified risk material (SRM) described in the footnote to

paragraph IV(h) must be removed from the meat originating from BSE controlled risk animals intended for export to Singapore as required by the Singapore Import Requirements.

9. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EXPORT OF PROCESSED BEEF

Paragraph IV(n) refers. The requirements of this paragraph can be certified based on the OV's personal knowledge of the processes in the manufacturing establishment, or an SHA.

10. APPROVAL OF SLAUGHTERHOUSES, CUTTING PLANTS AND PROCESSING PLANTS BY SFA SINGAPORE

Paragraphs IV(i) and IV(k) refer. Slaughterhouses, cutting plants and processing plants must have received prior approval from SFA before exports can take place.

Establishments wishing to become approved for export to Singapore must first be audited by the FSA / FSS / DAERA for compliance with the agreed export conditions and submitted by the relevant competent authority to DEFRA for recommendation to SFA for approval. Exports from the establishment may commence only after SFA have confirmed that it appears on the list of approved establishments. Country lists may be found using the search facility via the following link to the SFA website:

<https://www.sfa.gov.sg/tools-and-resources/accreditation-database-for-overseas-sources>

It is the responsibility of the exporter to ensure prior to export that all slaughterhouses, cutting plants and processing plants included in Section II of the certificate are included in the list of UK establishments approved by SFA Singapore. Cold stores and re-wrapping centres **do not** require such listing.

The approval numbers of all slaughterhouses, cutting plants and processing plants must be recorded on the table at section I (a).

Further advice regarding approval of existing premises and new approvals may be obtained from the APHA CSC at Carlisle via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening>

or, in the case of export from Northern Ireland from DAERA at Dundonald House, Belfast.

11. FITNESS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

Paragraphs IV(j), IV(k) and IV(m) may be certified on the basis of the UK fitness for human consumption oval mark and evidence that the slaughterhouse, cutting plant, meat products plant (if applicable) and cold store are officially approved and operating in accordance with the UK Food Hygiene legislation.

The primary food legislation providing the framework for all food legislation in England, Wales and Scotland is The Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended). The Food Safety (NI) Order, as amended, applies in Northern Ireland.

12. RESIDUES AND OTHER UNAUTHORISED SUBSTANCES

With regard to veterinary residues, paragraph IV(l) may be certified

on the basis of the results of the UK National Surveillance Scheme (NSS) for veterinary residues and to which all officially approved meat establishments are subject.

The applicable legislation is The Animals and Animal Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Residue Limits) (England and Scotland) Regulations 2015 and parallel legislation in Wales and Northern Ireland.

In addition, HACCP requirements described in the UK Food Hygiene legislation place an obligation on all officially approved meat establishments to ensure compliance with this legislation.

13. REFERENCES TO APPROVAL NUMBERS

The UK has reached an agreement with Singapore to update the details of the approval numbers of all UK establishments requiring listing with Singapore. With effect from 30/09/2019 the approval/registration numbers for establishments listed to export Beef and Beef Products to Singapore will cease to have references to "UK" or "EC". From that time, approval/registration numbers will include the central unique identifier code ONLY [four numerical digits for establishments under FSA/FSS/DAERA control.

14. LABELLING OF PACKAGING AND CARTONS

The Singapore Food Agency requires that every basic packaging unit and every carton of meat and meat product imported into Singapore must be labelled with the following particulars to conform to their regulations:

- i. Description of meat product;
- ii. Country of origin of meat product;
- iii. Brand name of meat product (if any);
- iv. In the case of processed meat, name or designation number of the processing establishment in which and the date the meat was processed (if applicable);
- v. In the case of frozen/chilled meat products, the name or designation number of the slaughterhouse in which the animals used in production of such meat were slaughtered and the date of slaughter;
- vi. The name or designation number of the establishment in which, and the date on which the meat was packed;
- vii. The batch number, where the meat was canned (location) and the canning code; and
- viii. The net weight of the meat product as contained in each basic packaging unit and the outer carton thereof.

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