

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Notes for Guidance: Export Health Certificate for entry into the European Union or Northern Ireland of bovine animal semen collected after 20 April 2021, and dispatched from the semen collection centre 8401

October 2025

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No: 8401 NFG

EHC for entry into the EU or NI of bovine animal semen collected, processed and stored in accordance with Regulation (EU)2016/429 and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692 after 20 April 2021, and dispatched from the semen collection centre where the semen was collected.

IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to Certifying Officers (CO) and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with the relevant export certificate for dispatch to the EU or transit through the EU of semen of domestic animals of the bovine species collected, processed and stored in accordance with the aforementioned regulations. The Notes for Guidance (NFG) should not be read as a standalone document 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]

NFG FOR THE COs AND EXPORTERS**1. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION**

[Regulation \(EU\) No 2016/429](#)

[Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/999](#)

[Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/692](#)

[Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/686](#)

[Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/403](#)

[Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2024/351 - Model EHC amending Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/403](#)

Consolidated legislation

Consolidated texts, which integrate the basic instruments of EU 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'.

2. SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATE

This EHC may be used for entry into and transit through the EU or NI of semen of domestic animals of the bovine species collected, processed and stored in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692 after 20 April 2021, and dispatched from the semen collection centre where the semen was collected.

The semen must be collected in accordance with the relevant conditions in Part 1 of Annex III to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686.

3. CERTIFICATION BY AN OVOV

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.

The RCVS Certification principles must be complied with.

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

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. 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_en

The foreign language certificate as received from the APHA Centre for International Trade at Carlisle or via the Export Health 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 APHA :

[Official Veterinarian Training](#)

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 <https://improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php?ta=8>

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 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, Amended by Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2023/2744](#). 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>

'Test' has been added to I.27. Refer to the guidance within the Notes section for information on how to complete.

PART II: CERTIFICATION

The OV signing the EHC must ensure they are aware of the provisions of the relevant regulations (please see Part I), and subsequent amendments, which lay down the animal health and semen collection, processing and storage requirements, which permit the entry into the EU of consignments of semen of bovine animals.

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

II.1.1. - This can be certified based on the knowledge that the semen was obtained from donor animals originating from a third country, territory or zone which is listed in annex IX to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/404.

II.1.2, II.1.3 and II.1.4 - can be certified for the time periods specified based on the disease notification clearance and the prohibition of vaccination in the absence of an outbreak. (Section 4 Notifiable Disease Clearance).

Second option of II.1.2 may be struck through in the absence of FMD. **II.1.4** – This can be certified, as vaccination against the diseases listed in II.1.4 is prohibited in the UK, and vaccination against the listed diseases is currently prohibited for imports into GB. There are two sub-options: 'Either' and 'or'.: 'Either' can be certified, as vaccination against FMD is prohibited in the UK, and vaccination against the FMD is currently prohibited for imports into GB. 'Or' option must be deleted.

II.2.1- This can be certified based on the disease notification clearance and the prohibition of vaccination. The third paragraph (after 'or') can be struck through.

II.2.2, II.2.3 and II.2.5.- These can be certified based on an attestation from the Semen Collection Centre appointed vet.

II.2.4 and II.2.6. - These may be certified based on the Notifiable Disease Clearance. (Section 4) and support certification from the centre veterinarian.

II.3.1. and II.3.2 – These can be certified based on proof that the Semen Collection Centre is an approved and listed establishment.

Please refer to listing of approved establishments on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/livestock-and-equine-semen-collection-approved-premises> and EU Website:

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

II.4.1 - This may be certified as vaccination against Rinderpest virus, Rift Valley fever virus, Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia and Lumpy Skin disease is prohibited in the UK.

II.4.2, II.4.3 and II.4.4 –

These can be certified based on support certification by the Centre veterinarian, clinical records and official movement records. Please note, donor animals maybe identified with a UK tag in alignment with the EU derogation for live ruminants. UK tags must be compliant with the requirements detailed in Regulation (EU) 2023/26.

II.4.5 – This can be certified based on Notifiable Disease Clearance and on support certification by the Centre Veterinarian.

Please note, regarding the reference to 'single establishment' in II.4.5, the Commission has confirmed to Defra that the 30-day period prior to the date of collection and during the collection period includes any location (i.e. Quarantine unit and collection centre). Therefore, donor animals can be used for collection of semen after pre-entry quarantine.

II.4.6 and II. 4.7 – These can be certified based on the notifiable disease clearance and support certification from the centre veterinarian.

II.4.8 – II.4.8.1 can be certified based on the notifiable disease clearance and support certification from the centre veterinarian.

II.4.8.2 - shall be deleted as seasonally free disease zone requirements do not apply to GB.

II.4.8.4 - can be certified subject to APHA approval of the vector protected establishment and their verification that the measures have been applied effectively throughout the time period required. Vector protected establishment requirements are stipulated in Article 44 and Chapter 3 of Part II of Annex V to Regulation (EU) 2020/686.

II.4.8.5 and/or **II.4.8.6** - can be certified if the donor animals comply with the testing requirements. Support certification and evidence from centres veterinarian is required.

II.4.9 - Regarding Epizootic Haemorrhagic Disease: The first paragraph of this section may be certified for the time periods specified based on the notifiable disease clearance. All the other paragraphs can be struck out.

II.4.10, II.4.11 and II.4.12 - These may be certified on the basis of support certification provided by the centre veterinarian.

II.5 and II.6 – These may be certified on the basis of support certification from the centre veterinarian. The ID marking of the straws or other packages must refer to: date of collection or production of semen; species and ID number of donor animals; unique approval number of the establishment as listed on the EU website; and any other relevant information.

Note, the species reference on the straws or other packages may be referred to by species code, e.g. 'BOV' for bovine. There is flexibility in presenting the species information.

II.6. Can be deleted if not applicable. If applicable, OV needs to insert the name(s) of the antibiotic(s) added and its (their) concentration or the commercial name of the semen diluent containing antibiotic(s), as required per footnote (9).

4. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE CLEARANCE

Some export certificates for animals and animal products will include statements that will require the OV to certify that specified zones or the entire country of origin are free from certain diseases.

COs must check the following sources of disease information for the United Kingdom immediately prior to certification, to ensure disease freedom statements can be certified:

- the Notifiable Disease Occurrence List for Great Britain ([ET171 Notifiable disease occurrence list for Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#)) available on [Official Veterinarian Training](#).
- the UK Status for Non-Notifiable Diseases Relevant to Export Certification ([ET152 UK status for non-notifiable disease relevant to export certification](#)) available on [Official Veterinarian Training](#).

For Great Britain:

In the absence of a specific Notifiable Disease Clearance (618NDC) from CITC: COs may certify that GB has disease free status or region free status for those diseases mentioned in the health certificate, once they have checked the disease list(s) for the last occurrence of the disease and have ensured it complies with the time frames in the certificate.

In the event of a disease outbreak that affects a CO being able to obtain their own disease clearance, CITC will notify COs to make it clear which disease freedom statements should not be certified and where necessary, will issue a 618NDC notifiable disease clearance if the EHC can continue to be issued for certain regions that retain free status.

In the event of a disease outbreak after the EHC has been issued that affects the disease clearance, COs must not certify the EHC and must contact CITC immediately for advice on whether certification can still take place. If a disease outbreak affects the disease clearance procedures for this EHC, a 618NDC will be reinstated by CITC which will be issued with the EHC until a time when disease clearance can be reinstated.

NOTE: This does not apply to Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) or Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) freedom statements.

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 details of 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 required in the certificate. The schedule must include the certificate reference number on each page and must be signed, dated and stamped by the CO in a colour other than the printed text on each page and under the last entry. The schedule forms part of the certificate. All pages of the certificate, including the schedule, must be sequentially numbered. Any blank spaces in the schedule or the certificate should be struck through with diagonal lines.

Further guidance is available here:

[Official Veterinarian Training](#)

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 [APHA Official Veterinarian Training](#).

9. LEGAL STATEMENT

References in this guidance to "assimilated EU Regulation" should be interpreted as references to assimilated law, as defined under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018.

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.

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8401 NFG

Version History

EHC

2025

No significant changes

2024

II.1.4: FMD vaccination attestation altered to include either/or option

II.2.6: Establishment surra attestation amended

II.4.8.4: Seasonally disease free zone paragraph amended to vector-protected environment

NFG

Version 6: Published 29 October 2025

II.4.4: Further guidance is added regarding identification of donor animals.

References to Vet Gateway updated to Official Veterinarian Training throughout.

Legal Statement: Wording updated.

Version 5: Published August 2024

Part I: Guidance added for addition of 'Test' to I.27

Version 4: Published 31 July 2024

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

Part 2 II.1.4: Instruction to delete second option added

II.4.8.4: This requirement can be certified subject to APHA approval. This paragraph is amended to reflect that.

II.6: added

Version 3: Published 27 November 2023

II.4.8: Further information is added for **II.4.8.1** about Bluetongue disease.

II.4.8.2 and II.4.8.3: Clarification is added that seasonally disease-free zone requirements do not apply.

II.4.8.4: This requirement can be certified if the Centres Veterinarian demonstrate that the conditions set out in this point can be met.

II.4.8.5 and/ or II.4.8.6: Further clarity is added about the documentary evidence required by the centre's Veterinarian.

Notifiable Disease Clearance: This paragraph is updated to align with other NFGs.