

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Notes for Guidance: Export Health Certificate for entry into the European Union or Northern Ireland of consignments of stocks of semen of bovine animals collected, processed and stored after 31 December 2004 and before 21 April 2021 in accordance with Council Directive 88/407/EEC, and dispatched from the semen collection centre 8418

October 2025

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No: 8418 NFG

EHC for entry into the EU or NI of consignments of stocks of semen of bovine animals collected, processed and stored after 31 December 2004 and before 21 April 2021 in accordance with Council Directive 88/407/EEC, as amended by Council Directive 2003/43/EC, and dispatched from a semen collection centre where the semen was collected

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

1. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

[Commission Implementing Decision 2011/630/EU](#) as amended.

[Council Directive 88/407/EEC as amended by Council Directive 2003/43/EC](#)

Further guidance for completion of this certificate can be found in Chapter 4 of Annex I to [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/404](#).

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

[Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/686](#) Any EU legislation referenced in the EHC must be complied with and EU legislation can be accessed on the following link: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html>

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'.

IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to COs and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with the relevant export for entry into the EU of consignments of stocks of semen of bovine animals collected, processed and stored after 31 December 2004 and before 21 April 2021 in accordance with Council Directive 88/407/EEC, as amended by Council Directive 2003/43/EC, and entered into the EU after 20 April 2021, and dispatched from a semen collection centre where the semen was collected.

The 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]

2. SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATE

This EHC may be used for dispatch to and transit through the EU or NI of semen of domestic animals of the bovine species collected, processed, and stored in accordance with Council Directive 88/407/EEC, as amended by Council Directive 2003/43/EC.

This certificate is to be completed according to the notes for the completion of certificates provided for in Chapter 4 of Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235.

Exports of bovine semen dispatched from a semen collection where the semen was collected must be in accordance with the relevant conditions in Chapters (I) and (II) of Annex A of Directive 88/407/EEC.

The bovine animals from which the semen is collected must meet the conditions in Chapter (I) and (II) of Annex B and Annex C of Directive 88/407/EEC.

In the UK this certificate may only be used for semen collected **after December 2008** and dispatched from the semen collection centre where it was collected. This is due to the requirement for country freedom from Foot and Mouth Disease during the 12 months immediately prior to collection and until its date of dispatch (see health information section of certificate and Section 4 Notifiable Disease Clearance below).

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.

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:

<https://improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php>

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 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>

PART II: CERTIFICATION

The OV signing the EHC must ensure they are aware of the provisions of Council Directive 88/407/EEC (and any subsequent amendments), which lays down the animal health requirements applicable to intra-Community trade in and imports of semen of domestic animals of the bovine species.

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 - Enter the territory code. GB is listed for all of the relevant commodities. The relevant regulation is [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/404](#). This regulation has been amended by [Implementing Regulation 2021/634](#), adding the GB and the Crown Dependencies to the relevant lists.

Note the FMD restriction which prohibits export of semen collected prior to, or in the 12 months after, an FMD outbreak (see scope [Section 2](#)) and disease notification ([Section 4](#) below). Absence of vaccination may be certified on the basis that vaccination against FMD and Rinderpest is prohibited in the UK in the absence of a disease outbreak.

II.2, II.3 and II.4 - Can be certified on the basis of approval of the semen collection centre (Directive 88/407/EEC) and supporting certification/evidence from the centre veterinarian. 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/bovine_en

II.5.1 and II.5.2 - Can be certified on the basis of approval of the semen collection centre combined with traceability information for the bull. Note that bulls used for collection must have been resident in the UK for either six months prior to collection or for 30 days if imported during this six-month period from a listed country.

II.5.3 and II.5.4 - May be certified for the time periods specified following the disease notification guidance below ([Section 4](#) Notifiable Disease Clearance). II.5.4.2 may be struck through as in the absence of EHD it only applies to exports from Australia, Canada and the United States.

II.5.3.3 - can be certified subject to APHA approval of the vector protected establishment and their verification that measures have been applied effectively throughout the time period required. Vector protection establishment requirements are stipulated in Article 44 and Chapter 3 of Part II of Annex V to Regulation (EU) 2020/686.

II.6 and II.7 - May be certified on the basis of approval of the semen collection centre and supporting certification/evidence from the centre veterinarian. Note that semen must be stored for a minimum of 30 days prior to dispatch.

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:

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

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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PB 8418 NFG

Version History:

EHC

2025

No significant changes

2024

Notes

Box I.6: guidance is removed.

Box I.11: guidance amended to indicate the approval number.

Box I.12: guidance added about the place of destination.

Box I.21 and I.22: guidance removed.

Box I.27: guidance amended with the further clarity on the 'Identification Mark'.

Date of collection/production: further clarity is added regarding date on which semen was collected.

Approval or registration no: further clarity is added on the approval number.

NFG

Version 3: Published 29 October 2025

References to Vet Gateway updated to Official Veterinarian Training throughout.

Legal Statement: Wording updated.

Version 2: Published 31 July 2024

Applicable Legislation: Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/351 and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686 added

Part II – II.5.3.3 added