

EUROPEAN UNION: PIG MEAT FOR EXPORT TO CANADA – 7644EHC

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF OFFICIAL VETERINARIANS AND EXPORTERS

IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OVs) and exporters and should have been issued to you together with export certificate 7644EHC. These Notes for Guidance (NFG) are not intended to operate as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 7644EHC, which is available via EHC Online (EHCO) and the DAERA Export Certification System (DECS) in Northern Ireland.

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

1. FOR EXPORT OF FRESH PIG MEAT ONLY – REPLACEMENT OF HEALTH CERTIFICATE 7068EHC BY HEALTH CERTIFICATE 7644EHC

The certificate 7644EHC replaced the previously used certificate to Canada, 7068EHC for fresh pig meat, minced pig meat and pig meat preparations only. Companies wishing to export pig meat products must continue to use certificate 7068EHC.

Further advice regarding the precise scope of health certificate 7068EHC and may be obtained from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Centre for International Trade at Carlisle using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening#centre-for-international-trade-carlisle>

2. SCOPE OF CERTIFICATE 7644EHC

Export health certificate 7644EHC may be used for the export of fresh pig meat, minced pig meat and pig meat preparations only from the United Kingdom to Canada. Fresh meat means all animal parts (including offal) fit for human consumption whether chilled or frozen.

3. CFIA RECOMMENDATIONS

Following an audit of UK meat inspection systems in September-October 2024, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) provided Defra with a number of recommendations for resolving deficiencies identified according to Canadian regulations. For this EHC the relevant recommendations are:

- **Red meat establishments** exporting to Canada should have written water retention controls and procedures in place if their post-evisceration processing could cause excess water retention, as specified in the [Canadian Control Programs: water retention in edible raw red meat products](#).
- **Pork establishments** with in-house laboratories used for *trichinella spiralis* testing should have documented procedures in place to ensure reliable testing results.

- **All establishments** registered to export meat and meat products to Canada should implement a written allergen control procedure that includes all the [Canadian common food allergens](#), including pine nuts.

Exporters should implement these recommendations for export to Canada or risk consignments not being accepted on arrival.

Additional guidance as of 26 January 2026

Additional verification is now required to meet Canadian requirements pertaining to water retention in red meat. To complete certification of this EHC for consignments of red meat, the certifying OV must have written attestation from the slaughterhouse OV confirming that there is an annual official verification of the FBO's water retention plan if applicable, or that the FBO does not carry out processes that could add additional water to the meat.

The local slaughterhouse OVs of sites registered for export to Canada are being made aware of the expectation that they verify these control plans annually or upon a change in processes and communicate this to the certifying OV upon export.

In UK slaughterhouses, spray chilling is currently considered the primary process that may add excess water. However, other processes could also contribute, and FBOs must assess their operations against this requirement. If relevant, they must develop and validate a water retention protocol in line with CFIA expectations here: [Control Programs: water retention in edible raw red meat products - inspection.canada.ca](#).

4. IMPORT PERMIT

Prior to making arrangements to export fresh pig meat to Canada, exporters are advised to contact the CFIA for up to date information on requirements for any import 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 any ink of any colour **OTHER THAN BLACK**.

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 EHC 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. COMPLETION OF THE CERTIFICATE

The CFIA is highly prescriptive in its requirements for the certification of exports of meat and meat products to Canada. The only health certificate acceptable to CFIA for the commodities referred to in paragraph 2 above is in the format of the document negotiated and authenticated between Defra and CFIA to which these notes refer. This certificate must be completed strictly in accordance with CFIA guidelines, also taking into consideration the footnotes on the EHC.

A summary of the guidelines for the completion of the health certificate is at **Annex A** to these notes. A summary of instructions regarding the use of shipping marks on consignments for export to Canada is at **Annex B**, as per the link provided in the certificate under the heading '*Shipping Marks*'

Certifying OVs should particularly note the requirement that 'the Official Meat Inspection Certificate (OMIC) (i.e. the EHC) must be complete, accurate, and legible to be acceptable'. In practice this means that all entries on the certificate, including number of packages and weights, should be in typescript and not in manuscript.

Exporters and OVs are forewarned that presentation of a certificate that has been partially completed in manuscript may result in the rejection of the consignment on arrival at the port of entry in Canada.

7. COMPLETION OF PART I - DETAILS OF DISPATCHED CONSIGNMENT

I.2. - Certificate Reference number

ISO 3166 is the commonly accepted International Standard for country codes. Exporters and certifying OV's are advised that the CFIA will only accept certificates bearing the three letter (alpha-3) country code as defined in ISO 3166-1.

The unique certificate reference number produced/generated via the ECHO system must therefore be preceded by the three digit country ISO Code and a reference number in 1.2. The three letter ISO Code for the whole of the United Kingdom is 'GBR'.

I.4. - Local Competent Authority

The certifying OV should enter the name of the local office of APHA or DAERA in whose administrative area the establishment from where the fresh meat to be dispatched is located.

I.7. - Country ISO Codes

The three letter ISO Code for the whole of the United Kingdom is 'GBR' and should be entered at Box I.7. Box I.8 should be marked N/A (not applicable).

The three letter ISO Code for Canada is 'CAN' and should be entered at Box I.9. The certifying OV should make enquiries to verify the destination Canadian Regional Code (if applicable), which should be entered in Box I.10.

I.25. - HS Code

The Harmonised System (HS) Code is a commodity classification system in which articles are grouped into various categories. It is used as a basis for customs tariffs and for international trade statistics.

The HS Codes to be entered in this box for the various categories of fresh meat of porcine origin exported to Canada are as follows:

- 02.03 - meat of swine (pork): fresh, chilled or frozen
- 02.06 - edible offal of swine
- 02.09 - pig fat: fresh, chilled, frozen, salted, dried or smoked
- 05.04 - intestines, bladders, stomachs & parts
- 05.11 - animal products not elsewhere specified or indicated, dead animals, products not for human consumption
- 15.01 - lard, other pig fat, rendered

I.25. - Product Description

OVs and exporters must complete the product description in strict accordance with the instructions provided under this heading at Part I, indent 9 of the Notes section on page 2 of the OMIC.

In summary, the description of the product on the OMIC MUST be identical to the description of the product on the label of the shipping carton. In addition, the terms 'boneless' or 'bone-in' (with no abbreviations) must be included on the labelling of the shipping carton, and so also must appear in Box I.25 of the OMIC.

Various examples are presented to further clarify this requirement.

Type of Packaging

Exporters should refer to **Annex A** to these notes for further details regarding acceptable terms for packaging in accordance with UN Recommendation 21.

8. ESTABLISHMENTS CERTIFIED FOR EXPORT TO CANADA

Paragraph II.1 refers. All slaughterhouses, cutting premises and cold stores in which meat intended for export to Canada is processed, handled and stored must have specific approval to export to Canada prior to exports taking place. Such approval does not involve a bespoke inspection, however the establishment/s must be listed by the CFIA as eligible to export to Canada following a written endorsement by the Department to the CFIA.

The current list of UK premises eligible to export to Canada may be found via the following link:

<https://active.inspection.gc.ca/netapp/meatforeign-viandeetranger/forliste.aspx>

Owners of establishments not appearing on the CFIA list that wish to export pig meat to Canada should contact the APHA Centre for International Trade at Carlisle for further advice, using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening#centre-for-international-trade-carlisle>

9. EU REGULATIONS 852/2004, 853/2004 AND 854/2004 (AS AMENDED) - FITNESS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

The remainder of paragraph II.1 and paragraph II.2.1.3 may be certified on the basis of the application of the oval health mark or identification mark on the exported meat or packaging thereof, indicating that the slaughterhouse, cutting plant, manufacturing premises (if applicable) and cold store are officially approved and operating in accordance with the above Regulations and, in the case of premises operating in the UK, the Food Standards Agency Manual for Official Controls.

10. CONTACT WITH IMPORTED ANIMALS DURING THE LAST 90 DAYS

Paragraphs II.2.1.1 and II.2.1.2 refer. These paragraphs may be signed for meat derived from animals originating from the United Kingdom only provided no animals not meeting the conditions laid down in this paragraph have entered the farm of origin within the specified time frame.

Official Veterinarians should take into account their personal knowledge of the farms of origin to certify this paragraph. In addition, supporting statements may be required from the owner / exporter / agent of the exporter confirming that the requirements of this paragraph have been met.

11. EXPORT OF FRESH PIG MEAT OR MEAT DERIVED FROM PIGS NOT ORIGINATING FROM THE UK

All of paragraph II.2 refers. Health certificate 7644EHC permits the export from the UK to Canada of fresh pig meat derived from pigs originating from any EU Member State.

In cases where this provision applies, it is the responsibility of the certifying Official Veterinarian at the point of export in the UK to carry out the appropriate checks regarding the disease status for all the named diseases of the Member State of origin of the imported meat/meat products, the animals from which the meat/meat products were derived and the conditions under which the pork meat has been

handled throughout the production chain.

It is likely that carrying out such checks will not be a straightforward matter. Official Veterinarians are advised not to certify this section unless they are in full possession of all the relevant details and are confident to do so.

12. OFFICIAL STAMP / SIGNATURE ON EVERY PAGE

Each and every page of the certificate and that of any attachment/s must be **SIGNED, STAMPED** and **DATED** by the OV, using ink of any colour other than black.

13. ** IMPORTANT **** REFERENCES TO APPROVAL NUMBERS FROM 31/08/2019**

The UK has reached an agreement with Canada to update the details of the approval numbers of all UK establishments requiring listing with Canada. With effect from 31/08/2019 the approval/registration numbers for establishments listed to export pig meat to Canada 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 abattoirs (under FSA/FSS/DAERA control) - or - five/six alpha-numerical digits for cold stores, dairy and fish establishments (where under local authority approval)].

The format of the approval/registration number including the "UK" prefix and the "EC" suffix shall continue to be used and entered in the appropriate sections of export health certificates signed before and up to 31/08/2019.

The format of the approval/registration number without the "UK" prefix and the "EC" suffix shall be used and entered in the appropriate sections of export health certificates signed after 31/08/2019.

Illustrative examples

Format to be used in export health certificates SIGNED <i>BEFORE</i> 31/08/2019	Format to be used in export health certificates SIGNED <i>AFTER</i> 31/08/2019
UK 2090 EC	2090
UK AB123 EC	AB123

Consignments certified before 31/08/2019 (which must contain UK and EC references in the approval/registration number) will be accepted for export to Canada upon arrival within a transitional period of 6 months after 31/08/2019.

THE NEW FORMAT APPLICABLE FROM 31/08/2019 MUST BE USED IN ALL DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH EXPORTS OF PIG MEAT TO CANADA, INCLUDING INTERNAL MOVEMENT CERTIFICATES OR SUPPORT HEALTH ATTESTATIONS SIGNED FROM THAT DATE.

The authorities of Canada will expect that the details of the establishments entered onto the certificate are both correct, consistent and in accordance with their own records of approved establishments. Approval codes, and other details, should exactly match the details as listed on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency website <https://active.inspection.gc.ca/netapp/meatforeign-viandeetranger/forliste.aspx>

The new listing by Canada replaces the previous listings by the

Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Health/ID marking of products: Canada will accept consignments of product bearing either the current format of oval health/ID marks (with "UK" and "EC") or any other acceptable format prescribed by the UK authorities following the UK's exit from the EU. Some consignments might contain a mix of products which each might bear different health/ID marks. Products will be identified as originating from the final establishment of production by cross-reference with the central unique identifier number of the establishment in the oval mark/stamp of the product.

14. 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

Annex A

Procedures for the Use of the Official Meat Inspection Certificates

Edible Fresh Meat / Preparations

Online Canadian guidance is available here: [Procedures for the use of Official Meat Inspection Certificates \(OMIC\) - inspection.canada.ca](https://inspection.canada.ca)

Official Meat Inspection Certificate (OMIC)

Ink colour of the signature and the official stamp (if not embossed), must be different from the colour in which the original certificate text is printed.

The certificates are to be numbered consecutively in box number I.2, immediately following the country code, for example, GBR 0000. This same number will be required to be stamped on all the shipping cartons of product covered by that certificate unless shipping marks are used. Refer to Annex B of these notes for details on the use of shipping marks.

Any modification of the authenticated Official Meat Inspection Certificate will result in the invalidation of the certificate and consequently the refusal of the shipment.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Official Meat Inspection Certificates

The OMIC must be complete, accurate, and legible to be acceptable. In addition only original certificates with an original signature of the foreign government official are acceptable. For the purpose of documentation clearance, the CFIA will accept copies of the original certificates as the proof that the imported products comply with the

provisions of the pertinent Canadian legislation.

Exporters and OV's are forewarned that presentation of a certificate that has been partially completed in manuscript may result in the rejection of the consignment on arrival at the port of entry in Canada.

Photocopies and carbon copies of health certificates are not acceptable for the purposes of import inspections at Canadian registered establishments, except where replacement certificate guarantee has been accepted by Meat Programs Division, Import Programs, in Ottawa.

The imported shipments of meat products will not be subjected to the required import inspection until the Inspector has in his possession the original OMIC, or a copy of the guaranteed replacement certificate.

Certificates are not acceptable if any of the item descriptions listed below are erased, typed over, altered, or changed by any other means. If this occurs, the certificate shall be refused and a replacement certificate must be obtained if the meat product is to be considered for importation.

The identification of the commodities (description of the meat)
The shipping marks.
The number and kind of pieces, containers, packages, etc.
The net weight.
The slaughterhouse/manufacturing plant (foreign establishment) number.
The signature of the foreign government official.
The certificate number.

Certificates which contain obvious misspelled words may be accepted. Unacceptable certificates shall be refused.

Type of Packaging

UN Recommendation 21 recognises that there is a need to harmonize existing expressions and codes used in international trade procedures to describe and represent different types cargo, packages and packaging materials.

Packaging: Materials and components used in any packaging operation to wrap, contain and protect articles or substances during transport;

Package type: The shape or configuration of a package as it appears for transport.

Acceptable terms are as follows: bin, bottle, box, carton, cask, crate, drum, jar, packet, package, pouch, tin, tray, tub, shrink-wrapped, vacuum-packed and palletized. The commonly used term 'dolav' is not acceptable under the recommendation.

This above list is not exhaustive and exporters should check UN Recommendation 21 regarding these and other forms of packaging. It can be found via the following link:

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/cefact/recommendations/rec21/rec21rev1_ecetrd195e.pdf

Use of Shipping Marks

Online Canadian guidance is available here: [Use of Shipping Marks - inspection.canada.ca](https://inspection.canada.ca)

1. General Policy

Shipping marks are used to identify all shipping containers (cartons) within an imported shipment to the appropriate Official Meat Inspection Certificate (OMIC). **Each shipping container in each imported lot must be clearly marked with an appropriate shipping mark.**

The shipping marks can be specifically generated numbers or they can represent the appropriate OMIC number (from I.2). They must not be repeated in the next twelve (12) months on any OMIC from the same exporting country. There may be more than one shipping mark on a OMIC, but there may not be two OMICs with the same shipping mark.

The shipping marks must be entered on the OMIC, in the box I.25, "shipping marks" on certificates from any country other than the USA whether they are specifically generated numbers or whether they represent the OMIC number.

Where the individual stamping of the retail containers would not be practical (e.g. small retail containers not containerized in larger containers, or products in tray packs), the alternative packaging procedure may be used. The alternative procedure allows for the pallet to be considered as the shipping container.

2. Use of Shipping Marks under Alternative Packaging Procedures

2.1. Use of Pallets as Shipping Containers

2.1.1. Policy

Palletized, consumer packaged, fully marked and labelled meat and poultry products, intended to move as an intact unit to retail distribution, may be imported with the shipping marks and shipping container label applied to the outside of the pallet, rather than to individual tray packs or cartons.

2.1.2 Alternative Packaging Procedures for Fully Marked and Labelled Retail Products

2.1.2.1 Packaging and Palletizing

2.1.2.1.1 Fully marked and labelled, packaged products are placed in cartons or trays for retail sale as a unit. The trays may be stretch wrapped in groups or individually. The trays should be sufficiently sturdy and high enough to allow handling during import inspection sample selection.

2.1.2.1.2 The trays or cartons are then palletized and subsequently stretch wrapped (or covered by corrugated material). The wrapped pallet is considered as one shipping container for import certification purposes.

2.1.2.1.3 Only one type of product may be assembled on one pallet. Product type is interpreted as a meat product packaged in one

container type and size, one product formula and originating from one processing establishment.

2.1.2.2 Labelling

2.1.2.2.1 When a pallet is identified as a shipping container, one main shipping label is required on the side of the pallet in the form of a placard underneath the pallet stretch wrap or as an adhesive label.

2.1.2.2.2 The pallet label must display in a **prominent and legible manner**, all mandatory information required on a shipping container and shipping marks. Refer to the CFIA website: [Shipping containers - inspection.canada.ca](https://inspection.canada.ca).

2.1.2.2.3 The shipping mark or export stamp in the case of US product must be applied to the placard or shipping container labels of the stretch-wrapped pallet. Trays and cartons need not be marked with the shipping mark/export stamp. However, if the entire pallet does not move as an intact unit to retail distribution, then the individual cartons or trays will be considered shipping cartons and shall have to bear the mandatory labelling requirements, including the shipping marks.

2.1.2.3 Certification

2.1.2.3.1 All production codes present on the retail package (such as date codes imprinted on the packages, or the entire production code required to be permanently marked on cans or other containers of hermetically sealed meat products) for each type of product in the shipment must be listed on the foreign country's export certificate (OMIC). This will allow for a production code based recall, should the need arise.

Box I.25 of the Official Meat Inspection Certificate (number and type of packages) will identify the number of pallets in the shipment, number of cartons or trays, the number of each individual unit carton or tray, the size of the units and all production codes. Example: 1 pallet (25 trays X 6 cans tray X 250ml), production codes: 00000, 00001 and 00002.

2.1.2.3.2 In the event that production codes are missing, incorrect or completely illegible on a health certificate the product shall not be permitted to move as an intact unit into Canada. The shipment can be presented under normal import reinspection procedures, provided the shipping marks are affixed to the individual cartons or trays. This must be done by an official of the foreign inspection system. If this is not possible, the shipment will be refused entry.

2.1.3 Importer Responsibility

The importer is responsible for assuring that the full pallet will be distributed to the retail distribution level as an intact unit. If not, each individual unit that is distributed must be marked with the appropriate labelling features and shipping marks. If a CFIA official determines that a company or importer violates the provisions of this program, the foreign establishment shall be removed from the program. The foreign establishment that has been suspended from the program must submit a letter, through their competent authority to the Chief,

Import Program, Meat Programs Division, requesting reinstatement to the program. This correspondence must provide details of corrective actions that have been taken to prevent future violations.

2.1.4 Import Establishment Responsibility

The import establishment is responsible for presenting the lot in a manner that each individual unit within the lot will have an equal chance of being selected as a sample.

As the meat products are subject to normal sampling and import inspection procedures, the import inspection establishment must provide facilities to draw the random sample, re-shrink wrap, re-stack and reapply the placard or the label to the pallets from which the necessary samples were drawn.