EXPORT OF OVINE SEMEN TO ARGENTINA

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE FOR OFFICIAL VETERINARIANS AND EXPORTERS

IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OV's) and exporters and should have been issued to you together with export certificate 8160EHC and its continuation 8160CON. These Notes for Guidance (NFG) are not intended to operate as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 8160EHC.

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. Scope of the Certificate

Export health certificate 8160EHC may be used for the export of ovine semen from the United Kingdom to Argentina.

Please note that export health certificate 8160EHC is in two parts, 8160EHC PART A and 8160CON PART B, and there is also a supplementary certificate 8160SUP covering assurances for Schmallenberg virus. With regards to 8160SUP, paragraph 1(a) cannot be certified as cases of Schmallenberg virus have been recorded in the UK. All relevant parts must be signed, dated and stamped.

There is an internal scrapie and tuberculosis (TB) support document 8160SPT covering assurances for scrapie and TB, to facilitate certification of export of ovine semen to Argentina. For semen collected from imported animals, additional assurances can be obtained in the internal support '8160 / 8161 SUP-SPT' document.

2. Certification by an Official Veterinarian (OV)

In Great Britain, this certificate may be signed by a Veterinary Officer of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) or by an authorised Official Veterinarian (OV) appointed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Scottish Government or the Welsh Government, who is on the appropriate panel for export purposes or who holds the appropriate Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary)(OCQ(V)) authorisation. In Northern Ireland it may be signed by an Authorised Veterinary Inspector (AVI) appointed by, or an OV of, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

OVs/AVIs should sign and stamp the health certificate with the OV/AVI stamp in any colour **OTHER THAN BLACK.**

In GB a certified copy of the completed certificate must be sent to the Centre for International Trade, Carlisle within seven days of signing. In the case an AVI in Northern Ireland, a certified copy must be sent to DAERA, Dundonald House, Belfast.

The OV/AVI should keep a copy for his/her own records.

3. Obtaining an import permit

The exporter/agent should be aware of the requirements of the importing country particularly with respect to the requirement for an import permit. The import permit number should be given in the health certificate at paragraph II.c.

4. Schedules

Paragraphs IV refers: Separate schedules may be used to provide the information required. The schedules must contain the same information as that required in paragraph IV and paragraph IV must be annotated "See attached schedule". Each page of the schedules must bear a page number and the health certificate reference number and must be signed, dated and stamped by the Official Veterinarian (OV).

The schedules must be stapled inside the health certificate and the OV should "fan" and stamp over the pages of the schedules and certificate. The top stapled corner of the schedules and certificate should be folded over and stamped also. Any blank spaces in the schedules or in paragraph IV must be deleted with diagonal lines.

5. Notifiable and other disease clearance (form 618NDC)

Paragraphs V. 1.1, 1.2, 3.3.1 (Rift Valley Fever), 3.3.4 (Brucellosis, ovine epididymitis, contagious agalactia, Bluetongue) and 3.3.5 refer: OVs may certify these paragraphs on behalf of the Department provided written authority to do so has been obtained on form 618NDC from the APHA Centre for International Trade at Carlisle or the issuing office of DAERA in Northern Ireland. Where details of donor parents & siblings is provided on a scrapie clearance spreadsheet with the application, clearance for scrapie will be provided for those animals listed to aid with certification of V.1.3.1 3rd paragraph

With reference to Paragraph V.3.3.4 - Tuberculosis clearance checks for the establishments the animals were resident in for 6 months prior to semen collection shall be performed by APHA/DAERA by completion of the 8160SPT.

With reference to paragraph V.5.2, if egg products have been used in the preparation of the semen diluent then either the:

- eggs must come from a SPF flock, or
- sourced in the UK, when UK is officially free of avian influenza and newcastle disease. The exporter must provide details of the supplier(s) of the eggs to APHA or DAERA to enable form 618NDC to be completed, or
- if sourced from outside the UK, then the OV would need to obtain independent evidence that it originated from a country or zone free of avian influenza and newcastle disease, with documentation that Argentina accept eggs produced in that country with respect to its Avian influenza and Newcastle disease status.

With reference to V.5.3, if milk has been used in the processing of the semen that has come from the UK, the exporter must provide details of the supplier(s) of the milk to APHA or DAERA to enable form 618NDC to be completed.

If milk has been used in the processing of the semen that has not come from the UK, APHA are not able to complete form 618NDC with respect to milk or eggs sourced from outside the UK and the OV would therefore need to obtain independent evidence that it originated from a country or zone free of Foot and Mouth Disease with or without vaccination, and officially recognized as such by the WOAH (formerly known as OIE).

It is recommended that the exporter use milk or eggs from a UK registered source in order that form 618NDC can be completed in a timely manner.

Semen collection timing.

Paragraph V.1.2.1. Where semen is collected on more than one occasion, these conditions must be applied to each collection date.

6. **Additional Support Assurances required to enable certain paragraphs to be signed by the Official Veterinarian.**

Paragraphs V.1.3, V.2.1, V.2.2, V.2.3, V.3.3.1 to V.3.3.5 (maedi visna/CAE, EAE, pulmonary adenomatosis, Q fever and paratuberculosis), V.3.4, V.3.5, V.3.6, V.5.1, V.5.4, V.5.5 and V.5.6 refer: OVs may certify these paragraphs based on personal knowledge of the semen collection centre, or supporting certification from the centre veterinarian. If further guidance is required, CIT / DAERA should be contacted.

With regards to V.3.3.1 to V.3.3.5 (maedi visna/CAE, EAE, pulmonary adenomatosis, Q fever and paratuberculosis) – may be certified on the basis of a written declaration from the owner and the private veterinary surgeon responsible for the holding confirming to the best of their knowledge freedom of the mentioned diseases for the specified time periods. The declaration must be provided to the centre vet or OV.

V.1.3.
With respect to Scrapie

Either paragraph V.1.3.1 may be certified on the basis of the UK (England and the other DAs) TSE Regulations, together with the necessary APHA Scrapie Notification Disease (SND) database checks (see below) which implement this paragraph.

To comply with the WOAH recommendations at V.1.3.1, the donors have to originate from holdings which have a classical scrapie negligible risk status (ie have undergone active monitoring for at least 7 years) as listed in the Scottish Rural College (SRUC) Scrapie Monitoring Scheme (SMS) – http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120113/premium_sheep_and_goat_health_schemes/511/diseases_covered/5 .

Or paragraph V.1.3.2 may be certified if animals are ARR/ARR genotype. Testing maybe performed at official laboratories, such as SRUC and APHA laboratories. The laboratory report must be attached to the EHC.

SND checks to be performed even if V.1.3.1 or V.1.3.2 (genotyping) is certified:

If the centre veterinarian is not the veterinarian overseeing the holdings where the rams have resided since birth, due enquiries must be made to enable this sub-paragraph to be fully certified.

The owner/exporter **and** an authorised Official Veterinarian (OV) appointed to the appropriate panel for export purposes by Defra, the Scottish Government or the Welsh Government, or who holds the appropriate Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) (OCQ(V)) authorisation may need to liaise in order to complete paragraph V.1.3.1.

Close liaison with the Centre Veterinarian is required to ensure that the movement of the other donor rams to the Semen Collection Centre can be co-ordinated since an all-in / all-out procedure may be necessary; the OV may choose to use the Centre Veterinarian to submit requests for clearances, in which case the Centre Veterinarian must submit details for all the donors (from which semen is intended for certification) to CIT. CIT would then arrange for the details (CPH, Name and address of holdings of birth and residence, and if necessary (e.g. if the dam of the donor is not available or it is dead), identity details of the parents of the donors to be sent to APHA, Weybridge, preferably collated and by e-mail. APHA, Weybridge will check for confirmed cases of Scrapie on the holdings which the donor rams have resided in. If confirmed cases are identified, further searches will be made on the Scrapie Notification Database to determine if the Scrapie was confirmed during the time that the donors were resident on the holding and whether they are the progeny of any dam/sire confirmed with scrapie. If satisfactory, paragraph V.1.3.1 (and V.1.3.2) can then be fully certified by the OV. The submission of the search request to CIT must be made in good time to allow the search to be completed in time.

V.3.2.
This paragraph can be signed with guidance from CIT/DAERA if required.

V.3.4.
With respect to on farm isolation pre semen collection.

The OV or the centre vet can supervise the isolation of the animals for 30 days before they enter the semen collection area. The intention within this paragraph is that the isolation takes place at the isolation unit of the SCPC in the same way that it does for EU qualification. However, the agreed wording implies that a 30 day isolation period may also be possible under OV supervision at a premises outside the SCPC. It would be very unusual to allow animals to go straight to the semen collection area from a remote isolation facility in this way, therefore in order to approve such pre semen collection isolation, it must be supervised by the OV and it must comply with the guidance in 8160NFGi, which refers to conditions for the approval and supervision of pre-entry quarantine/isolation on farms/holdings and at the pre-entry isolation units of the semen collection centre (SCC).

V.6.2 With respect to signing the certificate in behalf of the veterinary authority.

For the purposes of paragraph V.6.2, the Official Veterinarian (OV) signing the certificate is regarded, at the point of signature, as acting on behalf of the Veterinary Authority.

7. Collection, processing and storage of semen in accordance with the provisions of the WOAH (formerly known as OIE) Animal Health Code.
Paragraph V 5 refers

Information can be found at https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/terrestrial-code-online-access/

Specifically :

WOAH Article 4.7.6 applies.
Conditions applicable to the collection of semen

The floor of the mounting area should be clean and provide safe footing. A dusty floor should be avoided.

The hindquarters of the teaser, whether a dummy or a live teaser animal, should be kept clean. A dummy should be cleaned completely after each period of collection. A teaser animal should have its hindquarters cleaned carefully before each collecting session. The dummy or hindquarters of the teaser animals should be sanitized after the collection of each ejaculate. Disposable plastic covers may be used.

The hand of the person collecting the semen should not come into contact with the animal's penis. Disposable gloves should be worn by the collector and changed for each collection.

The artificial vagina should be cleaned completely after each collection where relevant. It should be dismantled, its various parts washed, rinsed and dried, and kept protected from dust. The inside of the body of the device and the cone should be disinfected before re-assembly using approved disinfection techniques such as those involving the use of alcohol, ethylene oxide or steam. Once re-assembled, it should be kept in a cupboard which is regularly cleaned and disinfected.

The lubricant used should be clean. The rod used to spread the lubricant should be clean and should not be exposed to dust between successive collections.
The artificial vagina should not be shaken after ejaculation, otherwise lubricant and debris may pass down the cone to join the contents of the collecting tube.

When successive ejaculates are being collected, a new artificial vagina should be used for each mounting. The vagina should also be changed when the animal has inserted its penis without ejaculating.

The collecting tubes should be sterile, and either disposable or sterilised by autoclaving or heating in an oven at 180°C for at least 30 minutes. They should be kept sealed to prevent exposure to the environment while awaiting use.

After semen collection, the tube should be left attached to the cone and within its sleeve until it has been removed from the collection room for transfer to the laboratory.

Article 4.7.7 applies.
Conditions applicable to the handling of semen and preparation of semen samples in the laboratory

Diluents

All receptacles used should have been sterilised.

Buffer solutions employed in diluents prepared on the premises should be sterilised by filtration (0.22 µm) or by autoclaving (121°C for 30 minutes) or be prepared using sterile water before adding egg yolk (if applicable) or equivalent additive and antibiotics.

If the constituents of a diluent are supplied in commercially available powder form, the water used should have been distilled or demineralised, sterilised (121°C for 30 minutes or equivalent), stored correctly and allowed to cool before use.

Whenever milk, egg yolk or any other animal protein is used in preparing the semen diluent, the product should be free from pathogenic agents or sterilised; milk heat-treated at 92°C for 3–5 minutes, eggs from SPF flocks when available.

When egg yolk is used, it should be separated from eggs using aseptic techniques. Alternatively, commercial egg yolk prepared for human consumption or egg yolk treated by, for example, pasteurisation or irradiation to reduce bacterial contamination, may be used. Other additives should also be sterilised before use.

Diluent should not be stored for more than 72 hours at +5°C before use. A longer storage period is permissible for storage at -20°C. Storage vessels should be stoppered.

A mixture of antibiotics should be included with a bactericidal activity at least equivalent to that of the following mixtures in each ml of frozen semen: gentamicin (250 µg), tylosin (50 µg), lincomycin-spectinomycin (150/300 µg); penicillin (500 IU), streptomycin (500 µg), lincomycin-spectinomycin (150/300 µg); or amikacin (75 µg), divekacin (25 µg).

The names of the antibiotics added and their concentration should be stated in the international veterinary certificate.

Procedure for dilution and packing

The tube containing freshly collected semen should be sealed as soon as possible after collection, and kept sealed until processed.

After dilution and during refrigeration, the semen should also be kept in a stoppered container.

During the course of filling receptacles for dispatch (such as insemination straws), the receptacles and other disposable items should be used immediately after being unpacked. Materials for repeated use should be disinfected with alcohol, ethylene oxide, steam or other approved disinfection techniques.

If sealing powder is used, care should be taken to avoid its being contaminated.

Conditions applicable to the storage and identification of frozen semen

Semen for export should be stored in straws separately from other genetic material not meeting the requirements of this chapter with fresh liquid nitrogen in sterilised/sanitised flasks before being exported.

Semen straws should be sealed and code marked in line with the international standards of the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR).

Prior to export, semen straws should clearly and permanently be identified and placed into new liquid nitrogen in a new or sterilised flask or container under the supervision of an Official Veterinarian. The contents of the container or flask should be verified by the Official Veterinarian prior to sealing with an official numbered seal before export and accompanied by an international veterinary certificate listing the contents and the number of the official seal.

Sperm sorting

Equipment used for sex-sorting sperm should be clean and disinfected between animals in accordance with the recommendations of the licenser of the system.

Where seminal plasma, or components thereof, is added to sorted semen prior to cryopreservation and storage, it should be derived from animals of same or better health status.

Semen straws containing sex-sorted sperm should be permanently identified as such.

8. Residency of the donor rams in the UK

Paragraphs V.3.1 and V.3.2 refer: If necessary, details in the Livestock Information Service or equivalent system in devolved administrations: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sheep-and-goat-keepers-how-to-report-animal-movements may be checked to establish whether paragraphs V.3.1 and V.3.2 can be signed.

For imported animals, the relevant import certificate may be checked to verify animals were imported legally from an approved third country.

9. Laboratory tests

The OV must ensure that any laboratory carrying out pre-export testing is officially approved for this purpose by DEFRA or DAERA.

In Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland), the majority of pre-export testing is carried out at the APHA Laboratory, New Haw, Weybridge, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 3NB, (Tel: 01932 341111). Some tests are carried out at APHA Lasswade, Pentlands Science Park, Bush Loan, Penicuick, Midlothian, EH26 0PZ, (Tel: 0131 445 6169). Certain specialist tests are carried out at regional APHA laboratories.

In Northern Ireland, the majority of pre-export testing is carried out at the Veterinary Sciences Division (VSD) Laboratory, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3SD (tel: 028 9052 0011).

If tests for bluetongue are required, samples must be sent to the Pirbright Institute. Guidance on submission of samples, including the submission forms to use, can be found at:
http://www.pirbright.ac.uk/files/quick media/Diagnostic%20Price%20List.pdf

For operational reasons however, the laboratories involved may change periodically. Accordingly, the OV is advised to check with the APHA or VSD to determine to which laboratories samples should be sent for testing. Samples should always be sent to the laboratory concerned sufficiently in advance of the export date to enable the tests to be carried out and reported. If in doubt as to the procedures for collection, the requirement for transport medium if any, dispatch of samples and the length of time a test is likely to take, the OV should seek the advice of the relevant laboratory.

10. Sealing of the transport container

Paragraphs V.6.1 and 6.2 refer: The semen must be secured within a cryogenic container by a tamperproof seal applied in such a way that the container cannot be opened without breaking the seal. The number on the seal must be entered at paragraph I.f on the health certificate.

If it is necessary to top up the container, topping up should be done in the presence of an Official Veterinarian (OV) who must apply a new tamperproof seal. The OV must endorse paragraph I.f on the health certificate with the new seal number, giving name and signature and dating and stamping the endorsement in the margin of the certificate in any ink colour **other than black.**

11. 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 at Carlisle, via the link below:

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

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