EXPORT OF QUALIFYING EQUINES FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE FOR THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIANS AND EXPORTERS

READ THESE NOTES IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT

1. IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OV) and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with export certificate 8959EHC. The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 8959EHC. 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 ANY NON-APPLICABLE TEXT IN SECTION 1 (ISSUING COMPETENT AUTHORITY) & SECTION 2 (UK REGION OF PROVENANCE AND COMPETENT AUTHORITY) SHOULD BE CROSSED OUT (POINT 6 BELOW REFERS) SO REGION OF ORIGIN AND ISSUING COMPETENT AUTHORITY IS UNEQUIVOCALLY PRESENTED TO APHIS****

8959 SUP

The 8959SUP is provided as a separate supporting document on the GOV.UK page where the relevant export health certification documents are published. It may be completed for a horse leaving GB for another country where the horse is subsequently intended to be exported from that country to the USA, and its period of residence in GB falls within the relevant pre-export residency period.

The purpose of the 8959SUP is to provide the veterinarian responsible for the subsequent export to the USA with supporting assurances in relation to the horse's period of residence in GB, to support certification of the applicable US animal health requirements.

The 8959SUP may therefore be used where the horse's residence in GB falls within the 60 days immediately preceding its subsequent export to the USA, or within the applicable period of up to 90 days where 9 CFR 93.301(g) applies. It should be completed before the horse leaves GB and should not be completed retrospectively.

Once the 8959SUP is completed, it should be submitted to the relevant competent authority (APHA or DAERA, as applicable) for countersignature and application of the official stamp before the horse leaves GB.

The countersignature serves to authenticate the 8959SUP as an official supporting attestation and does not constitute independent verification of all the information contained within it. APHA and DAERA veterinarians undertaking the countersignature must do so in accordance with their respective internal procedures. APHA endorsement of the 8959 supplementary certificate confirms that the signatory is an Official Veterinarian of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) or the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), and is authorised to sign the certificate.

Responsibility for the 8959SUP certification remains with the official certifying veterinarian.

It is the exporter's responsibility to make sure that all the required export documentation is in place before the final export to the United States.

Countersignature Requirements

This certificate must be countersigned by a salaried Veterinary Official of the National Government in the Department of Environmental Food Rural Affairs in Great Britain or Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland.
In the case of exports to USA, an Official Veterinarian (OV)is an Authorized veterinarian of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) or of
the Department of Agriculture, Environmental and Rural Affairs (DAERA) *.
All requests for countersignature must be submitted to the Centre for International

Trade – Carlisle (CITC) at least two working days in advance of the requested date/time of countersignature using Request for APHA Veterinarian Countersignature of an Export Health Certificate (ET145) application.

The ET145 application can be submitted to CITC by email to processingteam@apha.gov.uk

Upon receipt of your ET145 application CITC will liaise with an APHA Veterinarian* at your preferred countersigning office/area to make arrangements for countersignature to take place and notify you of the arrangements made.

*In Northern Ireland, a DAERA salaried Official Veterinarian/certifying officer is authorised to countersign this certificate.

Supplemental Health Certificates (SHC) Countersignature requirements

SUPPLEMENTAL HEALTH CERTIFICATES FOR RESIDENCY AND MOVEMENT FROM EU MEMBER STATES TO GREAT BRITAIN/NORTHERN IRELAND AND VICE VERSA MUST BE ENDORSED BY THE CORRESPONDING COMPETENT AUTHORITY**

Under the Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Act 2024, it is an offence to export horses and other equines for slaughter, beginning in or transiting through Great Britain to a third country.

If the OV has suspicions that the consignment is being exported for slaughter in contravention of section 1 of the Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Act 2024, this should be reported as soon as possible to APHA by calling 03000 200 301. In your report, please detail the following:

- EHC and journey log reference number
- Location and address of inspection, including CPH number
- Name and address of transporter and journey organiser
- Transporter authorisation number
- Details of the animals in the consignment (number, species, age)
- The reason for your concern
- Any relevant additional information

US Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) guidance.

APHIS has summarised their guidance for certifiers and exporters at the following site : APHIS guidance for completing the MHC

2. SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATE

Certificate 8959EHC applies to the export of domesticated equines to the United States, **excluding:**

- equines imported for non-competitive public exhibition or entertainment purposes,
- racing Thoroughbred horses from France, Germany, the Republic of Ireland, and the United Kingdom (Great Britain and Northern Ireland), which qualify for export under 9 CFR 93.301(d) and for which EHC 1263 should be used; and
- zebras or other non-domesticated/wild equines.

Note as well that EHC 8959 replaces the following certificates:

- EHC 3987 – Export of male horses to the USA
- EHC 1261 – Export of female horses to the USA

EHC 8959 does not replace EHC 1263 – Export of thoroughbred horses in continuous training to the USA.

Horses resident in more than one territory or country prior to exporting to USA

USDA/APHIS may require certification covering all periods of residence during the applicable residency period prior to export to the United States.

Where a horse has resided in more than one territory or country during that period, certification will be required from each relevant territory or country to support the final export certification.

2.1 Direct export- GB to USA

The 8959EHC must be issued if the horse has resided only in GB for the previous 60 days immediately prior to export to the United States. The export health certificate must be completed by the OV and should be endorsed by the Competent Authority.

2.2 Periods of residence in Great Britain.

Where a horse is leaving Great Britain and may subsequently be exported to the United States from another territory or country within the applicable residency period, the supplementary certificate (8959SUP) should be completed prior to departure from Great Britain and submitted to APHA for endorsement.

The 8959SUP provides animal health attestations relating to periods of residence in Great Britain during the applicable residency period before export to the United States as supplementary certification is required to support certification by the final exporting territory or country to USA.

Example: A horse resides in Great Britain for 45 days before travelling to Italy and will be exported from Italy to the United States 15 days later. The export health certificate is issued by the Italian Competent Authority. The period of residence in Great Britain may be supported by a completed and endorsed 8959SUP issued before the horse leaves Great Britain.

2.3 Residence in other countries or territories prior to the export from GB to USA

Where a horse has resided in countries or territories other than Great Britain during the applicable residency period prior to export to the United States, certification covering those periods of residence must be obtained from the relevant Competent Authority in accordance with USDA/APHIS requirements.

Please note that APHIS recognises separately the regions and disease statuses of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as originally set out in Federal Register Vol. 86, No. 155 and reflected in current APHIS regionalisation policy.

3. CERTIFICATION BY AN OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN (OV)

3.1 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 should sign and stamp the health certificate with the OV stamp in 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 Exports Health

Certificates Online (EHCO) system. If you are required to return a certified copy to CITC, email a scanned copy to certifiedcopies@apha.gov.uk .

Retain a copy of all EHCs and supporting documentation certified for two years.

Certifiers 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

aPVPs certifying DECOL produced Export Health Certificates 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."

3.2 It is a USDA requirement that the silhouette contained within the health certificate 8959EHC must be fully completed in all cases. The identification of the horse must also be checked against the silhouette/microchip number in the passport when samples are collected for pre-export tests and when the horse is examined. Any discrepancies with the identification of the horse should be

discussed with the local APHA office.

Important: To ensure horses being exported to US maintain their health and safety, APHIS requires that an examination be completed within 48 hours of departure from the port of embarkation to the United States. The port of embarkation is where the horses will be loaded onto the aircraft destined for the United States.

In instances where logistically the clinical examination is unable to be performed within 48 hours from the port of embarkation, APHIS is willing to accept that the examination performed be within 48 hours of departure from the United Kingdom. On the health certificate (only if words "from port of embarkation" appear), the words "…from port of embarkation" may be struck out, and instead "from the United Kingdom" written in and endorsed upon. The OV can make the change, but there must be some indication that it was an official / authorized change. This could be OV initials and stamp in the margin. APHA countersignature on the certificate would then be sufficient for endorsement.

On these instances, in addition to the issued DEFRA health certificate, horses will be required to be accompanied by a health document issued by the respective competent authority of any foreign transit country that they reside in for 36 or more hours while in route to the United States.

1. You should ensure that the owner's declaration is stapled and 'fan stamped' to the certificate to make a tamper proof, composite document. Further guidance on this procedure can be seen at http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/Export_Instructions/Certification_Procedures/index.htm

A declaration should be signed and dated only by the person confirming a statement. A copy should be retained for your own records.

2. As stated in the footnotes, any non- applicable option must be deleted, for example, referring to the region of origin and corresponding competent authority issuing the certificate, the non-applicable option should be struck through with diagonal lines, so the region of origin (Great Britain or Northern Ireland) and relevant competent authority issuing the certificate (DEFRA or DAERA) is unequivocally presented to APHIS.

4. IMPORT PERMIT

Per USDA requirements, all live equines must be accompanied by a USDA import permit.

Importing Live Equines and Equine Germplasm into the US | APHIS

5. GENERAL HEALTH ATTESTATION-Part II

The Official Veterinarian (OV) must be satisfied, based on examination of the animal, supporting documentation, owner/exporter declarations where appropriate, and any official records available, that the requirements in this section are met.

Points 1-6

The OV must examine the equine on the day of certification and confirm that it is clinically healthy and free from signs of communicable disease.

The OV should also take account of the animal's history and any available records to satisfy themselves that there is no reason to believe the equine has been exposed to communicable disease during the relevant period. The OV must inspect the equine and be satisfied that it is free from ectoparasites at the time of certification.
The OV must obtain written confirmation from the owner or exporter, and review any available veterinary records, to verify that the equine has not received a live, attenuated, or inactivated vaccine, or any immune-modulating pharmaceutical or nutraceutical, during the 14 days before export.
For male equines, the OV must obtain confirmation that the animal has not been castrated during the 14 days before export.
The OV must obtain written confirmation from the owner or exporter that, during

the relevant period, the equine has not been kept on premises where any of the

diseases listed in the certificate have occurred, and that no such diseases have been identified on adjoining premises by the Competent Authority.
Where II.6(b) is certified, the OV must obtain appropriate official health attestations from the competent authority or official veterinarian in each additional country and be satisfied that the certificate requirements have been met.
The APHIS-recognised animal health status of a country or region can be found on the USDA APHIS Animal Health Status of Regions webpage.

Region Health Status – Animals | Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Point 5- Adjoining premises

Adjoining premises are premises that border or are immediately adjacent to the premises of origin, irrespective of ownership. Where the OV is unable to verify compliance with this declaration from information available to them, disease clearance must be obtained through 618NDC before the certificate is signed.

Point 6. b.

The authorized or government veterinarian issuing the health certificate is responsible for collecting official information/documentation verifying that the health conditions being attested to in the export health certificate were met in the other countries an equine has been in for the 60 days immediately preceding export, or the entire period of temporary export of 9 CFR 93.301(g) equines if more than 60 days, before endorsing the export health certificate.

Verification may be based on entry health certificates, supplemental health documentation, or other internationally accepted certification standards. A sample health document that may be used for this purpose has been provided by APHIS if required (8959SUP – SUPPLEMENTAL HEALTH CERTIFICATE FOR QUALIFYING EQUINES THAT RESIDE IN MULTPIPLE COUNTRIES PRECEDING EXPORT TO THE UNITED STATES).

8959SUP is an example developed by APHIS to help guide Competent Authorities on the type of contextual information that should support the verification of statements within the export health certificate, but you may use any documentation you find appropriate for this purpose.

Point 7.

The OV is not expected to have direct knowledge of future events. Certification may be based on a written declaration from the owner/exporter confirming that appropriate arrangements have been made to ensure the equine will be kept separate from equines of a lesser health status and from other domestic or wild livestock as described in the certificate requirements.

6. CEM REQUIREMENTS-Part III

The OV must certify the option that applies to the equine. Documentary evidence must be available to support the selected option.

Part III.1.c Equines Not Present in a CEM-Affected Country

Part III.1.c. cannot be certified for horses originating in the United Kingdom as the UK is not recognised as free from Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM).

For horses originating in the United Kingdom, Part III.1.c. to Part III.1.c.(iv).2. should not be certified and should be struck through. The associated declarations in Parts X.1.a., X.1.b. and X.2 do not require completion.

This paragraph may be certified where the equine has not been present in a country or region recognised by USDA APHIS as CEM affected during the 12 months preceding export.
The OV should obtain written confirmation from the owner/exporter that the conditions in paragraphs (i) to (iii) have been met.

Transit Through a CEM-Affected Country
Paragraph (iv) applies only where the equine transits a CEM-affected country before export to the United States.

Additional information must be completed in:

- Part X.1.a for placement of seals;

- Part X.1.b for breaking of seals; and/or
- Part X.2 where the equine is held in a transit country.

III.1.d Temporary Competition Entry (CEM Waiver)
This paragraph may be certified for intact stallions and mares that:
- have been present in a CEM-affected country during the previous 12 months; and
- are being exported to the United States for competition purposes for a period not exceeding 90 days.

The OV may rely on a written declaration from the owner/exporter and any supporting records available.

III.1.e 9 CFR 93.301(g) Equines
This paragraph applies to equines originating from the United States or another APHIS-recognised CEM-free country or region which have been temporarily exported to a CEM-affected country **for no more than 90 days**.
The OV may rely on a written declaration from the owner/exporter confirming that the conditions in paragraphs (i) to (iv) have been met.

III.2 Equines Requiring CEM Testing
This section applies to intact stallions and mares over 731 days of age, and bred equines less than 731 days of age, that do not qualify under Part III.1.
The OV must be satisfied that:
- samples were collected within 30 days prior to export;
- samples were submitted to a laboratory approved by the competent authority;
- samples were received by the laboratory within 48 hours of collection;
- cultures were incubated for at least 7 days; and
- the equine has not been used for breeding or breeding-related activities from the date of sampling until export.

Laboratory reports must be available to support certification.

III.2.i Stallions
For intact males, samples must have been collected from the mucosal surface of the prepuce; the urethral sinus, the distal urethra and the fossa glandis (including the diverticulum). All culture results must be negative.

III.2.ii Mares
For intact females, samples must have been collected from the clitoral fossa and sinuses and the distal cervix or endometrium where the mare is not pregnant. All culture results must be negative.

III.2.iii Previously Positive Equines
Where the equine previously tested positive for CEM, the OV must obtain evidence that:
- treatment was completed;
- at least 21 days elapsed between completion of treatment and re-sampling; and
- all subsequent culture results were negative.

Supporting laboratory reports and treatment records must be available for review.

7. SCREWWORM REQUIREMENTS-Part IV

The APHIS-recognised screwworm status of a country or region can be found on the USDA APHIS Animal Health Status of Regions webpage. OVs should verify the status of any country or region in which the equine has resided or transited before certification.

Region Health Status - Animals | Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

8. FOOT AND MOUTH, VENEZUELAN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS AND AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS REQUIREMENTS (PART V, PART VI AND PART VII)

The APHIS-recognised health status of a country or region in relation to Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis (VEE), and African Horse Sickness (AHS) can be found on the USDA APHIS Animal Health Status of Regions webpage.

OVs should verify the status of any country or region in which the equine has resided or transited before certification by checking on the link below.

Region Health Status – Animals | Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

9. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE CLEARANCE

Part II. 5. refers. Official Veterinarians may certify these paragraphs, in respect of residencies in the UK only, on behalf of the Department provided written authority to do so has been obtained from CIT, Carlisle on form 618NDC.

10. ADDENDUMS

If not applicable, the addendums may be removed or deleted from the certificate.

More than one addendum may be used where different authorised/government veterinarians are responsible for completing the required actions.

Part IX: Addendum for Equines in Transit from the Exporting Country to the Port of Embarkation
Complete this addendum only where the equine is held in GB as the transit country for 36 hours or more before export to the United States.
The addendum must be completed by the competent authority /government veterinarian in the exporting country.

Part X.1.a: Placement of Seals on the Transport Conveyance

Not applicable for GB whilst we are CEM affected country.

Part X.1.b: Verification/Breaking of Seals on Arrival in a Transit Country

Not applicable for GB whilst we are CEM affected country.

Part X.2: Verification of Status During In-Transit Holding

Not applicable for GB whilst we are CEM affected country.

Part XI: Screwworm Mitigations
Complete this addendum where the equine has been present in a screwworm-affected country or region and does not meet the conditions of Part IV.2.
All required treatments, examinations and attestations must be completed before certification.

11. SIGNATURES

The "authorization number" required at the Signatures section of Parts VIII, IX, X.1.a, X.1.b, X.2, XI and XII refers to the OVs' official stamp and the SP number within the stamp. OVs should therefore stamp this section of the appropriate pages.

12. WELFARE

Exporters and transporters must comply with all the legislation for the welfare of live animals during transport. The welfare conditions required during transport are set out in Council Regulation EC No 1/2005 (as retained), implemented in England by The Welfare of Animals (Transport)(England) Order 2006, with parallel legislation in Scotland and Wales.
If transported by air, animals should also be transported in accordance with International Air Transport Association (IATA) standards.

Information about welfare during transport in Great Britain and the necessary

requirements can be obtained from the Animal and Plant Health Agency: Welfare in Transport Team
Centre for International Trade
Eden Bridge House
Lowther Street, Carlisle
CA3 8DX
Phone: +44 (0) 3000 200 301
E-mail: WIT@apha.gov.uk

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

13. 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