HM Government
UK TRANSITION

Export Health Certificates

Importing Animal and Animal Products from European Union into Great Britain

Frequently Asked Questions

Version 2.0 – 22.10.21

Export Health Certificates

What is an Export Health Certificate?

An Export Health Certificate (EHC) is a document that confirms that certain information, health standards and regulations have been met, so live animals and products of animal origin can be imported into Great Britain (GB).

It is completed by the exporting country and signed by a certifying officer in that country (usually an official veterinarian) or competent certifier, recognised by the exporting country as having the correct qualifications to certify the product in question.

There are already requirements in place for higher risk products products such as live animals, high-risk animal by products (ABP) and some products of animal origin (POAO) under safeguard measures.

Does my import require an EHC?

From 1 July 2022, products of animal origin must be accompanied by an EHC.

From 1 July 2022, composite products will require an EHC, as set out in Article 6 and Annex II of retained EU Decision 2007/275). See the composites **exempt or not exempt** decision tree on our EU-GB Trader Showcase to determine whether your product is exempt from SPS controls.

From 1 July 2022, animal by-products (ABP) must be accompanied by an EHC, official declaration or other official documentation depending on the commodity being imported. Check here for more information on what documentation may be required.

Note that **from 1 January 2022**, you need to notify the authorities of your intention to import most POAO, ABP and composite products by using the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS). You will not need an EHC at this point though from 1 July 2022 you will need to upload an electronic copy of the EHC to your IPAFFS pre-notification. (The original copy should accompany the consignment).

The requirements already in place for products of animal origin under safeguard measures, live animals, germinal products and high-risk animal by-products will continue.

Who is responsible for arranging EHCs?

For products coming in from the European Union (EU) into Great Britain the exporter in the EU country will obtain the EHC, which will be issued by the relevant competent authority in the EU Member State.

Where information is needed on an EHC?

Model EHCs for importing animals and animal products are available here. These templates show the requirements for importing these goods from the EU to GB.

If no export health certificate is available, or you cannot meet the conditions of a health certificate, check if there is a general licence or authorisation here. If there is no general licence available, complete the IV58 form at gov.uk and send this to imports@apha.gov.uk

What is the process for arranging an EHC?

1. The exporter contacts the competent authority to arrange for a certifying officer to inspect the goods to be imported to GB.

2. The certifying officer(s) reviews the consignment and, if it meets the required conditions, issues the EHC.

3. The EU exporter obtains the EHC from the competent authority and sends an electronic copy to the GB importer.

4. The importer uploads an electronic copy of the EHC on IPAFFS.

5. The original certified EHC travels with the consignment.

How long is an EHC valid for?

There are situations where a shelf stable Product of Animal Origin (POAO) that has been certified already in the exporting country may be stored in a warehouse for more than 10 days before being exported. Usually, the EHC for these products is still valid and can be imported after 10 days without the need for re-certification.

For all other products, including products stored in ambient temperatures, the EHC is usually valid for 10 days. If the products are not shipped within 10 days, the exporter is advised to seek advice from the competent authority that issued the EHC.

Does the EHC need to be completed in English?

It is the responsibility of the competent authority in the exporting country to organise translations of GB EHC models into the required language to support the certification process, however, an English language EHC must be attached to IPAFFS pre-notification.

Do I need a EHC for collagen, gelatine or highly refined products for human consumption?

Yes. See the list of model EHCs here. For collagen or gelatine-based POAO that derives from anything other than hides and skin, the product will also be subject to Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) controls. This is covered in the appropriate model EHC.

What happens if the original signed EHC is lost or destroyed in transit?

The original certificate needs to accompany the consignment to the Border Control Post (BCP) or destination. If the certificate is lost or destroyed in transit, the consignment may be rejected at the port of entry.

What happens if there is a discrepancy with the quantity loaded onto the vehicle?

The consignment details, including quantities, will be checked by the certifying officer at the point of certification. From 1 July 2022, if the certificate is incorrect, this may cause delays at the BCP upon arrival.

Can a certifying officer certify EHCs remotely?

We are not aware of any active discussion on a blanket policy for remote certification in EU Member State countries. Animal imports to GB must meet all the requirements set out in our model EHCs and it is up to Member States to comply with these requirements.

Are EHCs required for samples?

The import requirements apply to samples. In some cases, imports of trade samples may be permitted to come in under an authorisation with specific import conditions that limits what can be done with the trade sample, for example products for human consumption being taste tested by employees of the import company only, a maximum weight being applied and the sample being destroyed after the analysis is complete.

Model Export Health Certificate

How do I complete Box 1.13 - Place of loading?

For animals, include: the name of the city or the place where the animals are loaded and, if they are assembled beforehand, the details of the official assembly centre.

For products, include: the name of the city and category (for example, establishment, holding, port or airport) of the final place where the products are to be loaded in the means of transport for the journey to GB.

If it’s a container, give the place when the goods board the final means of transport to GB ferry, give the place where the truck embarked.

If a supplier uses multi modal transport for a single consignment/shipment what identification number should I enter in Box 1.15?

The last means of transportation used in the exporting country should be entered here. Only one option should be selected from the following.

Mode of transport:

- aeroplane
- vessel
- railway
- road vehicle
- other - modes of transport not covered by Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97

Identification of the means of transport. For:

- aeroplanes, the flight number, for vessels the ship name(s)
- railways, the train identity and wagon number
- road transport, the registration number plate with trailer number plate if it applies
- a ferry, state the identification of the road vehicle, the registration number plate with trailer number plate if it applies, and the name of the scheduled ferry

Box 1.16 request the entry Border Control Post in Great Britain, Channel Islands or Isle of Man. The BCPs will not be available until January 2021. How do I complete this section now?

You will see that the notes for box 1.16 states that this section of the certificate should not be completed “until the end of the transitional staging period”. Therefore, this section should be left incomplete until the BCPs are operative from July 2022 onwards only.

Give the name of the BCP and the BCP identification code assigned by IPAFFS.
This only applies to imports to GB from third countries. Do not use this box until the end of the transitional staging period.

How do I complete Box 1.8 of the EHC on region of origin? Where regionalisation applies for avian influenza, do I include the region code here?

If it applies, for animals or animal products affected by regionalisation measures (where a clearly defined part of a territory contains an animal subpopulation with a distinct health status).

You must state the code of the approved region, zone or compartment. The codes can be found in the appropriate third country list in UK legislation or, for EU and EFTA countries only, in the appropriate certification requirement document.

How do I complete Box 1.20?

You must only select one option. For:
- animals, give the total number of heads or straws expressed as units
- germinal products, give the total number of straws expressed as units
- products and aquatic animals, except ornamental fish, the total gross and net weight in kilograms

Total net weight: this is defined as the mass of the goods themselves without immediate containers or any packaging.

Total gross weight: overall weight in kilograms. This is defined as the aggregate mass of the products and of the immediate containers and all their packaging but excluding transport containers and other transport equipment.

How do I complete Box 1.28 of the EHC - identification of commodities?

As specified in the relevant health certificate, give the:

- purpose for goods to be placed on the market
- intended use of products
- Animal feeding stuffs: concerns only animal by-products intended for animal feed as referred to in Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 (Animal by-products Regulation.
- Approved body: movement of animals to an approved body, an institute or a centre, as listed in Council Directive 92/65/EEC of 13 July 1992 laying down animal health requirements governing trade in and imports into the Community of animals, semen, ova and embryos not subject to animal health requirements laid down in specific Community rules referred to in Annex A (I) to Directive 90/425/EEC

Artificial reproduction: for germinal products only.

Breeding/production: for breeding and production animals, including aquaculture animals intended for farming.

Canning industry: for tuna intended for the canning industry, for example.

Circus/exhibition: for registered circus and exhibition animals and aquatic animals for aquariums or similar businesses not for further sale.

Fattening: for ovine and caprine animals only.

Further process: for products which have to be further processed before being placed on the market.

Game restocking: for game for the purpose of rebuilding stocks only.

Human consumption: for products intended for human consumption for which a health or veterinary certificate is required by EU retained legislation, only.

Other: intended for purposes not listed elsewhere in this classification, including aquatic animals intended for put-and-take fisheries.

Pets: commercial movements of dogs, cats, ferrets and birds. For ornamental aquatic animals intended for pet shops or similar businesses for further sale.
Pharmaceutical use: animal by-products unfit for human or animal consumption, as referred to in Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009.

Quarantine refers to:

- birds other than poultry Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 139/2013 of 7 January 2013 laying down animal health conditions for imports of certain birds into the Union and the quarantine conditions thereof
- carnivores, primates and bats Directive 92/65/EEC
- aquaculture animals Commission Decision 2008/946/EC
- registered equidae: Council Directive 2009/156/EC of 30 November 2009 on animal health conditions governing the movement and importation from third countries of equidae.

Relaying: for bivalve molluscs intended for purifications at destination.

Slaughter: for animals destined directly or via an assembly centre to a slaughterhouse.
Technical use: animal by-products unfit for human or animal consumption, as referred to in Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009.
Trade samples: as defined in point 39 of Annex I to Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 of 25 February 2011 implementing:

- Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption
- Council Directive 97/78/EC as regards certain samples and items exempt from veterinary checks at the border under that Directive

I am having problems deleting text in square brackets within the certificate that do not apply to the import I am dealing with. How do I remove them?

If a section does not apply this can be crossed out by the certifier who signs the certificate.

Where can I find further guidance on completing EHCs?

Further guidance on completing EHCs can be found here.