1. Important Information

Import Information Notes are technical documents containing import requirements, and are for use by veterinary staff.

Please be aware that import conditions may be updated due to changes in policy or legislation. Please ensure that you check the current version of the Import Information Note online.

Please note that any links to legislation provided in this document are for information purposes only and may not be the most recent version. Please see the EU legislation paragraph below for further information regarding how to find consolidated versions of the legislation.

Importers should note that the information given relates only to animal health and public health conditions of import. It does not give guidance on other conditions that may need to be met.

2. Scope

Import conditions for composite products for human consumption from Third Countries.

“Composite Products” are defined in Article 2(a) of Commission Decision 2007/275/EC as "a foodstuff intended for human consumption that contains both processed products of animal origin and products of plant origin and includes those where the processing of primary product is an integral part of the production of the final product".

3. Production standards

In order to be able to meet these requirements, the products must have been produced in accordance with the conditions laid down in:

- Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety;
- Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs;
- Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 laying down specific rules for food of animal origin;
- Regulation (EU) 2017/625 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption; and on official
controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules.

More detailed information on the food hygiene legislation can be found on the Food Standards Agency website.

4. Country of origin

Composite products containing meat products must come from a country and where applicable, the region, approved to export that type of meat product to the EU.

Composite products containing half or more of their substance of any one processed product of animal origin (POAO) other than meat products must come from a country approved to export that POAO to the EU.

Composite products containing no meat products and less than half of their substance of processed milk where the composite products do not meet the requirements of Article 6 of Commission Decision 2007/275/EC must come from a country approved to export milk to the EU.

Lists (as amended) of approved countries are laid down in:

- Regulation (EU) No 605/2010 – milk and dairy products;
- Regulation (EC) No.798/2008 – egg products;
- Commission Decision 2006/766/EC – fishery products;
- Regulation 2019/626 – gelatine, highly refined products such as glucosamine and some amino acids, honey, frogs’ legs, snails and Royal jelly

Meat products and dairy products used in composite products referred to above must come from:

- The same country as the composite product; or
- An EU country; or
- Another third country that has a similar health status i.e.
  1. meat products can only come from an ‘A treatment’ country (Decision 2007/777/EC) and go to another ‘A treatment’ country;
  2. dairy products can only come from one ‘column A’ or ‘column B’ country (Regulation (EU) No 605/2010) where the third country in which the composite product is produced is also authorised under the same conditions.
In addition, the country of origin must be listed for the appropriate species in Commission Decision 2011/163/EU (as amended) on the approval of residue monitoring plans submitted by third countries.

5. Approved establishments

If the composite product is manufactured in a separate establishment to that of the POAO, the composite product does not have to come from an approved establishment (however, the POAO must come from an approved establishment). If the POAO and the final composite product are produced in the same establishment, then that establishment would have to be approved.

The following POAOs must come from an approved establishment:

- Any meat product;
- Any other processed product of animal origin, where the POAO makes up half or more of the substance of the composite product (NOTE: this does not apply where the pure POAO does not have to come from an EU approved establishment e.g. honey); and
- Dairy products if the composite product is not shelf stable at ambient temperature and/or does not meet the requirements of Article 6 of Commission Decision 2007/275/EC, regardless of the amount of the dairy content in the product.

Consolidated lists of approved plants are available on the European Commission’s website.

- Lists of approved plants/establishments

6. Health certification/documentation

The following composite products must be accompanied by the health certificates described below. Composite products containing:

- any amount of processed meat product as referred to in article 4(a) of Decision 2007/275/EC;
- half or more of any one processed POAO as referred to in article 4(b) of Decision 2007/275/EC;
- less than half of their substance of processed milk product where the final composite products do not meet the requirements of Article 6 of Commission Decision 2007/275/EC as referred to in article 4(c) of Decision 2007/275/EC.

The health certificate for composite products containing processed meat, milk, fish and eggs is laid down in Regulation (EU) No 468/2012.
The health certificates for composite products containing any other processed POAO as indicated in Article 3.3 of Regulation (EU) No 28/2012 are laid down in other relevant EU legislation. Where no health certificate is laid down, the consignment should be accompanied by a commercial document.

Guidance on how to complete a health certificate can be found in Commission Decision 2007/240/EC.

7. Special arrangements for New Zealand

Commission Decision 2015/1084 (EU) amended The New Zealand Equivalence Agreement. Annex V of the Decision provides the certification requirements. Products for which full equivalence have been agreed, must be accompanied by the model health certificate provided for in Annex 1 of Decision 2015/1901.

8. Health and identification marks

Composite products do not have to bear an identification mark. However, if the POAO and the final composite product are produced in the same establishment or if the final product is manufactured in an EU approved establishment it must have an identification mark in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 853/2004. The identification mark shows the approval number of the approved premises together with an abbreviation for the country of origin. The mark must be applied directly to the product or to the wrapping or packaging.

9. Specified risk material (SRM)

For meat derived from bovine, ovine or caprine animals must meet the relevant requirements of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001, which lays down the rules for the prevention, control and eradication of TSEs.

In addition, Commission Decision 2007/453/EC (as amended) categorises the countries or regions, according to their BSE risk.

10. Veterinary checks

The following composite products are subject to veterinary checks:

Composite products containing:

- any amount of processed meat product as referred to in article 4(a) of Decision 2007/275/EC;
• half or more of any one processed POAO as referred to in article 4(b) of Decision 2007/275/EC;

• less than half of their substance of processed dairy product where the final composite products do not meet the requirements of Article 6 of Commission Decision 2007/275/EC as referred to in article 4(c) of Decision 2007/275/EC.

The following composite products are not subject to veterinary checks:

• Those listed in Annex II of Commission Decision 2007/275/EC as amended; and

• Those composite products that meet the requirements of Article 6 of Commission Decision 2007/275/EC (which includes but not limited to the requirement that they are shelf stable at ambient temperature or have clearly undergone in their manufacture a complete cooking or heat treatment process throughout their substance, so that the raw product is denatured).

However, any milk used to manufacture these products must come from an approved country and treated in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) No 605/2010. Checks to establish this may be carried out at the port/airport or inland as part of general Food Law checks.

Consignments may only be imported through an approved Border Control Post (BCP). Consignments must be pre-notified to the relevant BCP, by completion of Part I of the Common Health Entry Document (CHED). The requirements for minimum pre-notification time are set out in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1013.

The person responsible for the consignment must give notice of the proposed entry of the consignment at least one working day before arrival (with a derogation to 4 hours before arrival if there are logistical constraints). The notification shall be made to the inspection staff at the BCP using the document drawn up in accordance with the model CHED set out in the Annex II Part 2 Section B to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1715.

Any other electronic means agreed with the BCP to inform about the intended arrival of a consignment in advance are not to be considered as an official pre-notification.

Following satisfactory checks at the BCP (for which a charge is levied), consignments may then circulate freely within the EU unless there is a requirement for products to be monitored in accordance with Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/1666. If the consignment does not meet the import requirements, the consignment may be rejected and either re-exported or destroyed.

• Further guidance on veterinary checks on animal products

• Border Control Posts

• Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011
11. Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland

The EU has International Agreements with Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, which means that they implement EU veterinary legislation in relation to the movement of animal products. Therefore animal products from Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein must comply with the same requirements applying to animal products from Member States.

12. Safeguard measures

Emergency safeguard action can be taken at very short notice to prohibit or restrict the importation of certain products from certain countries following an outbreak of disease or a public health issue. Information on the latest updates concerning disease outbreaks which may affect imports into the UK can be found on our Topical Issues page on the website.

Further information on the International and UK monitoring of animal diseases may be found on the animal disease monitoring website.

Importers can get the latest news about exotic notifiable disease outbreaks from the APHA subscription service.

- Topical issues
- Animal diseases: international and UK monitoring
- Exotic notifiable disease outbreak subscription service

13. European Union legislation

Consolidated texts, which integrate the basic instruments of Union 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.

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.
14. Contact for further information

For further information regarding import requirements, contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Imports team:

Centre for International Trade - Carlisle
Eden Bridge House
Lowther Street
Carlisle
CA3 8DX

Email: imports@apha.gov.uk

Telephone: 03000 200 301

15. Other important advice and guidance

Importers are also directed to the Food Standards Agency’s flowchart and website for further information to help classify your composite product and its import requirements.

Food Standards Agency Composite Products