



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

# Veterinary Checks on Animal Products

## Import Information Note (IIN) VCAP

November 2023

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# 1. Important Information

Import Information Notes (IINs) are technical documents containing import requirements and are for use by importers and border officials.

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 IIN as well as the IIN specific to your commodity [online](#).

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.

References to European Union legislation within this document are references to direct EU legislation which has been retained in Great Britain (retained EU law as defined in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018) and can be viewed on the UK legislation website ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk)).

Please note that any links to legislation provided in this document are for information purposes only and may not be the most recent version.

References to imports into Great Britain in any Import Information Note also includes imports into the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

References to trading partners includes non-EU, EU and EFTA countries.

The Border **Target Operating Model** (TOM) is the new approach to importing into Great Britain that will be progressively introduced from the end of January 2024. Guidance on the TOM can be found here:

[The Border Target Operating Model: August 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-border-target-operating-model-august-2023)

## 2. Scope

General conditions applicable to animal products subject to veterinary checks imported into Great Britain in accordance with [Retained EU Regulation 2017/625](#) and the [Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011](#). Similar legislation is in place in Scotland and Wales.

Animal products that are subject to official checks are listed in [Retained EU Regulation 2019/2007](#) (as amended) and include products for human consumption, animal by-products, germinal products (semen and embryos), hay and straw. In addition, Retained EU Decision 2007/275 lists the composite products (see Annexes of the [IIN CP/1](#)) which are subject to official checks and the ones that are exempt.

Detailed import conditions are laid down in specific [Import Information Notes](#) on particular animal products.

Live shellfish for direct human consumption is checked in accordance with veterinary checks on products of animal origin. You should contact the [Food Standards Agency](#) for advice on import conditions for live shellfish and other fishery products.

### 3. Pre-notification

Animal products that require veterinary checks are checked on entry into GB to ensure that they meet the import conditions. These checks must be carried out at an approved Border Control Post (BCP). BCPs are approved for different categories of animal products and you should ensure your proposed entry point has a BCP approved for the category of product you wish to import.

- [Contact details for UK BCPs](#)

Checks are carried out by official veterinary surgeons or, for fishery products, or specially trained Environmental Health Officers employed by the local or port health authority.

Currently, imports from the EU and certain imports from Greenland, Faroe Islands and EFTA countries do not need to enter Great Britain via a BCP and are not subject to veterinary checks at the border (please refer to section 6 below).

- Consignments from trading partners (other than the EU, and some imports from Greenland and EFTA countries) may only be imported through an approved Border Control Post (BCP).
- 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 import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS). Further information regarding IPAFFS can be found on [GOV.UK](#).
- 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 Great Britain. If the consignment does not meet the import requirements, the consignment may be rejected and either re-exported or destroyed.

It is a legal requirement to provide this notification and you may be charged an additional fee or the checks may be delayed if you fail to notify the BCP in advance.

## 4. Presentation at BCP

On arrival the consignment must be presented to the BCP without delay and it will be subject to documentary, identity checks and possibly a physical examination. Importers are responsible for presenting the consignment to the BCP. If you fail to present the consignment your consignment may be rejected. Consignments presented for import at a BCP must be accompanied by the original health certificate(s); faxed or photocopied certificates are not acceptable. The BCP will retain the original health certification unless the consignment is in transit to a third country or is being transhipped to another GB BCP for the border checks. Other documentation required for the consignment under import legislation for the specific category of product must also be presented.

The consignment will not be permitted to leave the BCP, nor the customs clearance area, except with a CHED provided by the BCP confirming that all the veterinary checks have been carried out. The products must be taken directly to the place of destination, which must be the address given on the CHED. The CHED must accompany the consignment to the place of destination.

If veterinary checks on a previous consignment from the same establishment have identified a serious animal or public health risk, your consignment may be subject to additional checks including laboratory analysis. You will be responsible for the cost of the sampling and the consignment must be held at the BCP until the result is known.

## 5. Fees

A fee will be charged for veterinary checks carried out at BCPs on imports of animal products. Details of the charge made for BCP checks on animal products are available from the inspectors at the relevant BCP.

BCP operators, who are independent of Defra or the local authority, may charge for the use of their facilities. The level of their fees is a matter between the operator and the importer.

## 6. Special transitional import arrangements

There are currently transitional arrangements in place for specified territories in order to deliver the Government's decision to phase in official controls on imports from those countries after leaving the EU. The transitional arrangements apply to imports entering GB, they do not cover Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man. The provisions in place (and countries affected) differ slightly depending on the category of goods in question.

Transitional arrangements apply to germinal products, animal by-products (ABPs) including derived products and POAO subject to official controls at a BCP that originate

from an EU member state, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. These arrangements are set out below.

Germinal products, ABPs and POAOs which originate from a third country other than those listed above, but arrive via an EU member state, may also qualify for the transitional arrangements in circumstances where (before importation into GB) such products:

- have been presented to a member state BCP recognised by the Secretary of State,
- are accompanied by a properly completed and validated CHED; and
- have been pre-notified in GB.

The transitional arrangements apply until the end of the transitional staging period. The introduction of border checks for EU goods (Germinal Products, ABP and POAOs) are as follows:

- From 1 January 2022 importers will be required to pre-notify authorities via IPAFFS for their consignments of POAO, ABPs listed in Annex I to retained EU Regulation 2019/2007 entering GB;
- From 31 January 2024 animal products will need to continue to pre-notify their arrival via IPAFFS at least one working day before the expected time of arrival at the point of entry (though where evidence of a logistical constraint preventing such notification is provided, this can be reduced to at least four hours in advance of expected time of arrival). Additionally, for animal products in the medium and high risk categories the consignment must be accompanied by a certified Export Health Certificate Further information regarding risk categories can be found at the link below.

[Check import risk categories and related rules for animals and animal products imported from the EU to Great Britain, from 31 January 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-import-risk-categories-and-related-rules-for-animals-and-animal-products-imported-from-the-eu-to-great-britain-from-31-january-2024)

From 30 April 2024 your goods must enter Great Britain through a point of entry with a [border control post \(BCP\)](#) that is designated to check your commodity.

## 7. Transit/transhipments

Rules to follow if you're moving animals or animal products from one third country to another third country and transiting Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales):

[Transiting animals and animal products through Great Britain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transiting-animals-and-animal-products-through-great-britain)

Please note that different rules apply depending on the origin and destination.

## 8. Common Health Entry Document (CHED)

On completion of the veterinary checks the BCP authorised officer will complete and sign the CHED providing the necessary fees have been paid. The CHED will record the outcome of the checks. It should accompany the consignment to the specified place of destination and should be kept there for inspection by enforcement officers as proof the consignment was checked on entry. If the consignment is to be split in the port as it is destined for two or more locations, the operator, when giving pre-notification, must declare the BCP as the place of destination in the CHED for the entire consignment. When the CHED for the entire consignment has been finalised by the inspector, the operator must request that the consignment be split and must submit a CHED for each part of the split consignment. The inspector will finalise the separate CHEDs for each part of the load, provided the quantities do not exceed the quantities specified in the CHED for the whole consignment: an additional fee will be charged for each CHED. The operator is responsible for ensuring that a copy of the CHED for each part of the split consignment accompanies the relevant part to the place of destination and until released for free circulation.

## 9. Rejected consignments

If your consignment fails to meet the import requirements for that product the consignment may be rejected. If your consignment is rejected it must be re-exported or destroyed or subjected to special treatment. If the BCP inspector considers the consignment to be a risk to public or animal health, they will take reasonable action to ensure compliance with Retained EU Regulation 2017/625, which may include requiring products to be destroyed.

Consignments rejected by the BCP, which are to be destroyed, are classed as category 2 animal by-products and destruction should be carried out in accordance with the Animal By-products Regulations.

If the consignment is to be re-exported, you will need to confirm to the BCP that the consignment will be accepted by the relevant third country before the BCP releases the consignment for re-export.

## 10. Exemptions from the veterinary checks

Some animal products do not require veterinary checks on entry into GB. Please see Annex 1 for a list of some of the products exempt from checks. If in any doubt, please contact the APHA Imports team (contact details below) as your consignment may be rejected if you incorrectly fail to present it for veterinary checks.

## 11. Monitored consignments (post import controls)

Consignments of animal products which are considered to be a higher risk to animal health must be taken directly to the specified destination on the CHED. The importer must confirm arrival of the consignment to APHA (see contact details below). The BCP will advise you if your consignment is subject to these additional controls.

## 12. Consignment returned to the UK from a third country

Consignments which have been exported and returned to GB following rejection at the border in a third country must be checked on entry. Special rules are in place for returned consignments. Details are available in IIN RPTC/1.

- [IIN RPTC/1](#)

## 13. 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](#)

## 14. Legislation.gov.uk

Consolidated legal texts, which integrate the basic instruments of retained EU 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 inputting the 'document number' and 'year' and then clicking the option 'All UK Legislation (including originating from the EU)' on [legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk).

Once you press 'search', you can find the relevant legislation listed with the full title of the legislation. Once you have selected the legislation, you may see the following message at the top of the page:

"Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made to XXX. Those changes will be listed when you open the content using the Table of Contents below. Any changes that have already been made to the legislation appear in the content and are referenced with annotations."

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. EU Exit amendments to legislation may take several months too. We advise to read the legislation alongside the EU Exit amendments made in the below UK laws:

- [The Import of, and Trade in, Animals and Animal Products \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Official Controls \(Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Official Controls \(Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Aquatic Animal Health and Alien Species in Aquaculture, Animals, and Marketing of Seed, Plant and Propagating Material \(Legislative Functions and Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Animals, Aquatic Animal Health, Invasive Alien Species, Plant Propagating Material and Seeds \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [The Trade in Animals and Animal Products \(Legislative Functions\) and Veterinary Surgeons \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2019](#)

Texts provided in this section are intended for information only. Please note that these texts have no legal value. For legal purposes please refer to the texts published in [legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk).

Further information on changes in relation to EU legislation and UK law can be found on [legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk). Please continue to use legislation.gov.uk to find EU retained law applicable to Great Britain. Please avoid using the EU Commission website for information on imports into Great Britain.

## 15. Contact for further information

For further information regarding import requirements, contact the APHA Imports team:

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

Email: [Imports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:Imports@apha.gov.uk)

Telephone: 03000 200 301

To confirm arrival of monitored consignments, please contact the relevant mailbox below:

For destinations in England and Wales, contact [importsriskmanagement@apha.gov.uk](mailto:importsriskmanagement@apha.gov.uk).

For destinations in Scotland, contact [AyrlImports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:AyrlImports@apha.gov.uk).

## Annex 1

### Exemptions from veterinary checks

- Certain personal imports which form part of travellers' luggage and small consignments sent to a private person. Personal imports of meat, milk and their products are not permitted. Further information is on the gov.uk website.

#### [Information on personal imports](#)

- Incoming ship or aircraft stores brought in on one vessel or aircraft for direct transfer to another.
- Research and Diagnostic samples, which remain subject to licensing prior to importation. However, some samples may need to go to a BCP - see [IIN on research samples](#).
- Fresh fishery products immediately landed from a third country flagged vessel.
- Products listed in Annex II of Retained EU decision 2007/275.
- Products not subject to animal health controls under retained EU law. Consignments may need to be licensed prior to import.
- Composite products that meet the requirements of Article 6 of Retained EU Decision 2007/275 (See [IIN on composite products for more information](#))



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The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government and Welsh Government.