



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA Briefing Note 07/21

Notification of new timeline for introducing border control processes on the import of goods

Date issued: 12 March 2021

Purpose

To provide Official Veterinarians with the latest information regarding the governments plans for the introduction of border control processes for businesses looking to import goods into Great Britain.

Background

A new timetable for introducing import border control processes has been set out by the government today (Thursday 11 March) to enable UK businesses to focus on their recovery from COVID.

Last June, we announced a timetable for the phased introduction of controls on imports from the EU into Great Britain, to ensure businesses could prepare in a phased way. This timetable was based on the impacts of the first wave of COVID. We know now that the disruption caused by COVID has lasted longer and has been deeper than we anticipated. Accordingly, the Government has reviewed these timeframes.

Although we recognise that many in the border industry and many businesses have been investing time and energy to be ready on time, and indeed we in Government were confident of being ready on time, we have listened to businesses who have made a strong case that they need more time to prepare. In reviewing the timeframes, we have given strong weight to the disruption which has been caused, and is still being caused, by COVID, and the need to ensure that the economy can recover fully.

We are therefore announcing today a clear revised timetable for the introduction of controls, as follows:

- Pre-notification requirements for Products of Animal Origin (POAO), certain animal by-products (ABP), and High-Risk Food Not Of Animal Origin (HRFNAO) will not be required until 1 October 2021. Export Health Certificate requirements for POAO and certain ABP will come into force on the same date.
- Customs import declarations will still be required, but the option to use the deferred declaration scheme, including submitting supplementary declarations up to six months after the goods have been imported, has been extended to 1 January 2022.
- Safety and Security Declarations for imports will not be required until 1 January 2022.
- Physical SPS checks for POAO, certain ABP, and HRFNAO will not be required until 1 January 2022. At that point they will take place at Border Control Posts.
- Physical SPS checks on high-priority plants will continue at Places of Destination until 1 January 2022, when they will move to Border Control Posts.
- From 1 January 2022, the requirement for pre-notifications, phytosanitary certificates and documentary checks will be extended to all regulated plants and plant products (i.e. not just those which are 'high-priority').
- From March 2022, checks at Border Control Posts will take place on live animals and all regulated plants and plant products (i.e. not just those which are 'high-priority').
- We will continue to engage extensively with businesses to support them to adjust to the new requirements already in place and to prepare for the new requirements set out above so that they can continue to trade successfully under the new arrangements.”

Action

OVs are not required to take any direct action at this time. However those OVs whose work involves checks on the imports of live animals and animal products should be aware of these new timelines and prepare accordingly.

Further Information

Press Notice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-focuses-on-recovery-from-covid-with-new-timeline-for-border-control-processes-on-import-of-goods>

Written Ministerial Statement: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-03-11/hcws841>

Defra Mailing Box for Questions: sps-imports-delivery-animals@defra.gov.uk