

Animal health requirements for third countries exporting to the EU – explained

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Overview of Regulation (EU) 2020/692 on animal health requirements for third countries exporting to the EU

Delegated Regulation (EU) [2020/692](#) of 30 January 2020 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards rules for entry into the Union, and the movement and handling after entry of consignments of certain animals, germinal products and products of animal origin

Update

Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692 supplements the EU Animal Health Law with specific requirements for animals, germinal products and animal products exported from third countries to the EU.

Background

Regulation (EU) 2020/692, laying down animal health requirements for third countries exporting to the EU, supplements the Animal Health Law (Regulation (EU) [2016/429](#)).

The Animal Health Law is an umbrella act of the EU legislative framework for food production, along with the General Food Law (Regulation (EC) [178/2002](#)) and the Official Controls Regulation (Regulation (EU) [2017/625](#)).

Specific requirements for exports from third countries to the EU are set out in Part V of the Animal Health Law. It foresees in particular:

- listing third countries (or geographical areas) that can export to the EU based on defined criteria (Arts. 230–234); the list is in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/404
- animals and goods can only be imported from establishments approved by third countries authorities listed in the Non-EU country establishments database (Art. 233)
- rules in third countries must be at least as stringent as the EU legislation; if not, they must offer equivalent guarantees to the animal health requirements provided for registration, approval, traceability and movements (Arts. 234–236)

- animal health certificates, declarations and other documents to accompany consignments (Arts. 237, 238)
- requirements for other goods such as disease agents, plant material, means of transport, equipment, packaging materials, transport of water, and feed and fodder (Arts. 240–242).

Impacted products

animals (terrestrial and aquatic), germinal products, products of animal origin

Overview

Regulation (EU) [2020/692](#) supplements the Animal Health Law (Regulation [2016/429](#)) regarding the requirements for third countries to be able to export animals and animal products to the EU. It aims to prevent importing animal diseases that may be passed on to animals or humans.

This Regulation is structured in six parts (see Figure 1).

I General rules

These rules apply to all species and commodities covered by the Regulation.

Scope (Art. 1): the rules for exporting animals, germinal products, and animal products from third countries to the EU, for both terrestrial and aquatic animals and their products, including meat, dairy/milk, eggs, fish, birds, game and honeybees.

Definitions (Art. 2)

Obligations (Arts. 3 and 5): the Regulation foresees obligations for competent authorities (of both the third country and the Member State), and for operators, as described in Table 1.

Animal health systems to be in place in third countries (Art. 6): in particular, third countries must have in place:

General animal health requirements (Arts. 7–10).

- Animals (exported or used to produce goods to be exported) must not show symptoms of transmissible disease, or come from areas where infections have been detected (such as a restricted zone or a country with a national programme for disease eradication) (Art. 7)
- Requirements regarding the establishment of origin of the animals (Art. 8)
- When sampling and laboratory tests are required, samples must be taken by the competent authority in accordance with the methods foreseen in the legislation (Delegated Regulations 2020/689, 2020/688, 2020/686), and sent to an official laboratory (Art. 9).

- Animals intended for entry into the EU must come from a third country or zone free from category A diseases (and category B and C diseases depending on the species) (Art. 10). The EU does not grant disease-free status to third countries, so third countries have to demonstrate freedom from disease in accordance with the EU legislation during a certain time period (Annex IV). For certain category B and category C diseases, risk-mitigating measures or conditions are provided where the third country or territory of origin is not completely free of such diseases.

II Specific requirements for kept terrestrial animals

Common rules

Minimum residency period:

- Minimum residency period for live kept terrestrial animals (Art. 11; Annex III tables 1 and 2), including that no animals were introduced into the establishment during the period indicated.
- Some derogations are foreseen for registered horses for competition, races or cultural events (Art. 12).

Inspection:

- Inspection of live terrestrial animals by an official veterinarian in the third country prior to export to the EU (Art. 13).
- Animals must be subject to a clinical inspection within 24 hours prior to the time of loading for dispatch to the EU.
- For poultry (except day-old chicks and captive birds) the inspection must also cover the flock of origin.
- For horses, the inspection may be carried out 48 hours prior to the time of loading or on the last working day.

Rules of dispatch:

- During the journey, the animals must not come into contact with other animals (Art. 14).
- Specific conditions are laid down for transshipment in non-listed third countries (Arts. 15, 16).
- Specific transport requirements for animal safety and cleanliness (Arts. 17 and 18).
- Animals intended for slaughter must be slaughtered within 5 days from the date of arrival in the EU (Art. 19).
- In general, animals intended for raising must be kept for a minimum period of 30 days in the establishment of destination (Arts. 19, 26).

Specific rules

Ungulates:

- In principle, animals must be delivered straight to their point of destination without passing through any other establishment. However, a single-assembly operation may be authorised under certain conditions (Art. 20).
- An obligation is foreseen for individual identification of ungulates intended for export to the EU: code of the animal with a link to the animal health certificate and ISO code of the exporting country (Art. 21).
- Specific rules for entry of ungulates intended for confined establishments (Arts. 27–35).

Poultry, day-old chicks, captive birds: Specific health requirements are laid down in Arts. 36–62. They concern in particular infections with highly pathogenic avian influenza and Newcastle disease virus.

Honeybees and bumble bees:

- Only these two categories of bees can be exported to the EU.
- Specific health requirements are laid down in Arts. 63–72, in particular regarding packaging material, cages and feedstuffs.

III Germinal products

Germinal products of ungulates (Arts. 79–97).

Hatching eggs of poultry and captive birds (Arts. 98–116).

Other germinal products intended for confined establishments (Arts. 117–119).

Animal health requirements deals with the identification and residency period of donors/flock of origin, the approval of establishment, the traceability, transport, etc.

IV Products of animal origin

- General requirements (Arts. 120–123)
- Fresh meat (Arts. 124–146)
- Meat products and casings (Arts. 147–152)
- Milk, dairy products, colostrum, colostrum products (Arts. 153–157)
- Eggs and eggs products (Arts. 158–161)
- Composite products (Arts. 162–165)

V Aquatic animals and their products

General health requirements (official inspection 72 h prior to loading, rules of dispatch, transport conditions, labelling, freedom from disease, compulsory for categories A and B, registration or approval of establishments of origin, vector species, derogations, handling after entry into the EU, Arts. 166–174).

Animal health requirements to limit the impact of certain non-listed diseases (Art. 175).

VI Transit and re-entry

Transit through the EU and products leaving from the EU and returning to the EU (Arts. 176–182).

VII Food for personal use

Some derogations to the animal health requirements are foreseen for some foods for personal use as far as they comply with certain conditions (maximum weight, packaging, etc.) (Arts. 164, 165)

Annexes

I Notifiable diseases for germinal products, products of animal origin from ungulates, poultry and wild game, aquatic animals and their products (for terrestrial live animals, diseases are listed in Regulation 2016/429, Art. 5 and Annex II)

II Minimum information for disease surveillance programmes

III Minimum residency periods before exports to the EU for ungulates, honeybees and bumblebees

IV Minimum periods of freedom from disease (Part A); conditions where the third country is free from certain diseases for less than the period (Part B); and conditions in cases of vaccination or absence of vaccination (Part C)

V and VI Freedom from disease for tuberculosis, brucellosis, bluetongue and leukosis

VI Additional requirements in cases of bovine rhinotracheitis, viral diarrhoea and Aujeszky's disease

VIII Restrictive areas to be applied for each disease in cases of outbreak

Timeline

Date of publication: 3 June 2020

Date of entry into application: 21 April 2021

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

Compliance with the requirements laid down in this Regulation is necessary for a third country to be approved to export to the EU.

Recommended Actions

For countries not yet listed, approval is a long process but the EU market may be worthwhile for certain products. Competent authorities of AGRINFO partner countries may raise questions with SANTE-CONSULT-A5@ec.europa.eu.

For countries already on the lists, competent authorities and operators should ensure that they stay compliant. The EU regularly audits its partner countries and the EU Member States, and publishes [Health and Food Audits and Analysis](#)

Operators should be in regular contact with their competent authorities and support them in the process. Operators must also follow the procedure to be on the list of approved establishments.

Resources

European Commission (2022) [Animal Health Law: Key to the prevention and control of diseases in your animals](#) [in 24 languages].

European Union (2020) [Entry into the Union: New legislation on animal health](#) [presentation].

Online resources from the European Commission:

- About the Animal Health Law
- Video: Animal Health Law [in 24 languages]
- Non-EU country establishments database
- Establishment Lists: Border Control Posts

AGRINFO: Approval of third country establishments explained [AG00114]

Sources

Delegated Regulation (EU) [2020/692](#)

Regulation (EU) [2016/429](#)

Table & Figures



Figure 1 The six parts of Regulation (EU) 2020/692 (source: European Union 2020)

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