

EU official health certificates for exports to the EU – explained

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Rules on official certificates required for exporting animals and animal products to the EU

Model health certificates for animals and animal products are laid down in three Regulations:

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2021/403](#) for live terrestrial animals and germinal products

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2020/2235](#) for animal products, composite products and live fish

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2020/2236](#) for aquaculture

Update

Overview of the rules relating to EU official certificates required for exporting animals and animal products to the EU.

Background

The basic obligation to provide certificates when exporting to the EU is laid down in two complementary acts: the EU [Official Controls Regulation](#) and the EU [Animal Health Law](#). In addition, Delegated Regulation (EU) [2020/692](#) gathers together most of the rules for exporting from third countries to the EU regarding the health requirements for animals and animal products.

The Official Controls Regulation, [\(EU\) 2017/625](#):

- defines and explains the official certificate (Art. 3(27); Arts. 86–90)
- foresees the obligation to show the original official certificate at the border control post (Art. 50)
- specifies follow-up of decisions taken in relation to non-compliant consignments entering the EU from third countries (Art. 68)
- lays down pre-export controls by third countries during which competent authorities must control the content of the official certificates (Art. 73)

- foresees that Commission experts may perform controls in third countries to verify the compliance or equivalence of third-country legislation and systems, and the issuance of official certificates (Art. 120)
- foresees a possibility of equivalence of measures applied in a third country or its regions (Art. 129)
- lays down actions in the event of non-compliance (Art. 138).

The Animal Health Law, [\(EU\) 2016/429](#):

- states the obligation for an animal health certificate issued by the competent authority of the third country and verified and signed by an official veterinarian, with electronic format possible via TRACES (Art. 237)
- foresees the content of animal health certificates (Art. 238).

Overview

Animal health official certificates

Consignments of animals and animal products from third countries to the EU must be accompanied by an official certificate containing all the relevant information about the consignment.

Animal health official certificates must contain:

- public health attestation
- animal health attestation
- animal welfare attestation (for meat)

(see Table 1 for detail of each attestation and regulatory framework).

Certificates must be signed by official authorities in third countries (official veterinarian for animals and animal products; certifying officer in other cases). This guarantees that only consignments in compliance with the EU legislation are exported to the EU.

Certificates are always checked by EU official controllers at border control posts.

Certificates may be paper or electronic. The electronic form must be submitted via the EU system [TRACES NT](#) (see [TRACES NT Documentation](#)).

The minimum content to include in the official certificates is (Regulation (EU) [2016/429](#) Art. 238):

- establishment of origin and destination (names and addresses)

- description of the commodity (species, category, type)
- quantity (number, volume, weight)
- traceability (identification, registration, marking)
- demonstration of compliance with EU law.

A single mistake in the certificate is sufficient for a consignment to be rejected at the point of entry into the EU. It is crucial that the certificate is filled in carefully both by the operator and/or by the third country competent authority.

For example, a common mistake is to incorrectly state the weight of the goods. While not a sanitary issue, this will lead to rejection of the goods.

Issuing animal health certificates

The timing for issuing animal health certificates is set out in Regulation (EU) [2020/692](#).

- Third countries must be on the EU lists (see AGRINFO explainers Third country lists for animal health and Third country lists for public health). Certificates cannot be issued before the date of listing for the particular species and categories of animals, germinal products and products of animal origin (Art. 4).
- In the case of live animals and hatching eggs, the certificate must be issued within 10 days prior to the consignment's arrival. This period can be extended if consignments are travelling by sea (Art. 3c).
- No specific dates apply for consignments other than live animals and hatching eggs.

Model certificates

- Live terrestrial animals and germinal products: Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/403 (see Table 2)
- Animal products, composite products and live fish: Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2235 (see Table 3)
- Aquaculture: Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2236 (see Table 4)

Timeline

Date of publication:

- 30 December 2020 for 2020/2235 and 2020/2236
- 31 March 2023 for 2021/403

Date of application: 21 April 2021

End of transitional period: 15 March 2022

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

Any error in filling in the certificate may result in the rejection of consignments at the EU border. It is essential to pay attention to the information provided in the certificates, and to adapt the certificates whenever the EU Regulations are updated. These changes are highlighted by AGRINFO when they occur.

For animals and animal products, there are about 100 different models. It is crucial to identify the correct one to use.

Resources

Online resources from the European Commission:

- About the Animal Health Law
- Animal health is your health [in 24 languages]
- Video: Animal Health Law [in 24 languages]
- List of delegated and implementing acts (as of 5 September 2022)
- TRACES NT Documentation

Sources

Regulation (EU) [2016/429](#) (Animal Health Law)

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2021/403](#)

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2020/2235](#)

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2020/2236](#)

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Table & Figures


Table 1 Animal health official certificates must contain:		
Attestation	Function	Regulations/requirements
Public health	Guarantees compliance with food safety requirements	2022/2292 supplementing 2017/625 on public health requirements for non-EU countries 178/2002 (General Food Law) Hygiene package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 852/2004, 853/2004, including approval of plants ● 2019/624, 2019/627 – specific requirements for official controls of products of animal origin ● 2073/2005 – micro-criteria ● 2022/1644, 2022/1646 and 2021/1355, 2021/2244 – residues ● 2022/931, 2022/932, contaminants ● 999/2001 (BSE Regulation) and 2007/453/EC – for ruminants and their products Countries are listed in 2021/405 Annex-I for residues (since Regulation (EU) 2022/2293) and Annex I to XVI for food safety
Animal health	Confirms that the consignment originates in an approved country	2020/692 specific for non-EU countries, supplementing 2016/429 (Animal Health Law) 2021/404
Animal welfare	Confirms that the consignment complies with rules on animal welfare	1099/2009, animal welfare at slaughter (for meat)
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Table 2 Model certificates: Live terrestrial animals and germinal products		
Chapter	Animals	Certificate
Ungulates		
1	Bovine animals	BOV-X
2	Bovine animals intended for slaughter	BOV-Y
3	Bovine animals intended for transit from the region of Kaliningrad to other regions of Russia via the territory of Lithuania	BOV-X-TRANSIT-RU
4	Ovine and caprine animals	OV/CAP-X
4a	Entry into Northern Ireland of ovine and caprine animals from Great Britain until 31 December 2024	OV/CAP-X-NI
5	Ovine and caprine animals intended for slaughter	OV/CAP-Y
6	Porcine animals and animals of the family Tayassuidae	SUI-X
7	Porcine animals intended for slaughter	SUI-Y
8	Animals of families Antilocapridae, Bovidae (other than bovine, ovine and caprine animals, Giraffidae, Moschidae and Tragulidae)	RUM
9	Animals of the families Tapiridae, Rhinocerotidae and Elephantidae	RHINO
10	Animals of the family Hippopotamidae	HIPPO
11	Camelid and cervid animals	CAM-CER
12	Certain ungulates which originate in the EU, are moved to a third country for their participation in events/shows and are then moved back to the EU	ENTRY-EVENTS
Horses		
12	Equine animals not intended for slaughter	EQUI-X
13	Equine animals intended for slaughter	EQUI-Y
14	Transit through the EU of horses not intended for slaughter	EQUI-TRANSIT-X
15	Transit through the EU of horses intended for slaughter	EQUI-TRANSIT-Y
16	Re-entry of horses due to competitions/races/events for a period of not more than 30 days	EQUI-RE-ENTRY-30
17	Temporary export for a period of not more than 90 days of registered horses to compete in equestrian events	EQUI-RE-ENTRY-90-COMP
18	Temporary export for a period of not more than 90 days of registered horses to compete in specific race events in Australia, Canada, USA, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, UAE or Qatar	EQUI-RE-ENTRY-90-RACE
Ungulates intended for a confined establishment		
19 (2)	Ruminants	CONFINED-RUM
20 (2)	Pigs	CONFINED-SUI
21 (2)	Tapiridae, Rhinocerotidae, Elephantidae	CONFINED-TRE
22	Animals of the family Hippopotamidae	CONFINED-HIPPO
Birds and germinal products		
23	Breeding or productive poultry	BPP
24	Breeding or productive ratites	BPR
25	Day-old chicks other than ratites	DOC
26	Day-old chicks of ratites	DOR
27	Hatching eggs of poultry other than ratites	HEP
28	Hatching eggs of ratites	HER
29	Specified pathogen-free eggs	SPF
30	Poultry intended for slaughter other than ratites	SP
31	Ratites intended for slaughter	SR
32	Less than 20 heads of poultry other than ratites	POU-LT20
33	Less than 20 hatching eggs of poultry other than ratites	HE-LT20
34	Captive birds	CAPTIVE-BIRDS
34a	Racing pigeons immediately released after entry into the EU	RACING PIGEONS-IMMEDIATE RELEASE
35	Hatching eggs of captive birds	HE-CAPTIVE-BIRDS
		continued


Table 2 Continued		
Chapter	Animals	Certificate
Bees		
36	Queen honeybees	QUE
37	Bumble bees	BBEE
Germinal products		
39–47	Cattle	BOV-SEM-A-ENTRY, BOV-SEM-B-ENTRY, BOV-SEM-C-ENTRY, BOV-OOCYTES-EMB-A-ENTRY, BOV-in vivo-EMB-B-ENTRY, BOV-in vitro-EMB-C-ENTRY, BOV-in vitro-EMB-D-ENTRY, BOV-GP-PROCESSING-ENTRY, BOV-GP-STORAGE-ENTRY,
48–53	Sheep and goats	OV/CAP-SEM-A-ENTRY, OV/CAP-SEM-B-ENTRY, OV/CAP-OOCYTES-EMB-A-ENTRY, OV/CAP-OOCYTES-EMB-B-ENTRY, OV/CAP-GP-PROCESSING-ENTRY, OV/CAP-GP-STORAGE-ENTRY
54–58	Pigs	POR-SEM-A-ENTRY, POR-SEM-B-ENTRY, POR-OOCYTES-EMB-ENTRY, POR-GP-PROCESSING-ENTRY, POR-GP-STORAGE-ENTRY
59–67	Horses	EQUI-SEM-A-ENTRY, EQUI-SEM-B-ENTRY, EQUI-SEM-C-ENTRY, EQUI-SEM-D-ENTRY, EQUI-OOCYTES-EMB-A-ENTRY, EQUI-OOCYTES-EMB-B-ENTRY, EQUI-OOCYTES-EMB-C-ENTRY, EQUI-GP-PROCESSING-ENTRY, EQUI-GP-STORAGE-ENTRY
68	Confined terrestrial animals	GP-CONFINED-ENTRY
Annex III contains the following model official declarations:		
1	Model declaration by the master of the vessel (Addendum for transport of terrestrial animals entering the Union by sea)	AT-TERRE-SEA
2	Model declaration transshipment of Equidae	EQUI-TRANS
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Table 2 source: based on Implementing Regulation (EU) [2021/403](#) Annexes II, III

Table 3		
Model certificates: Animal products, composite products and live fish		
Chapter	Products	Certificate
Fresh meat of ungulates		
1	Beef	BOV
2	Sheep	OVI
3	Pork	POR
4	Horse	EQU
5	Animals of the family Bovidae (other than domestic bovine, ovine and caprine animals, camelid and cervid animals kept as farmed game)	RUF
6	Wild animals of the family Bovidae (other than domestic bovine, ovine and caprine animals, wild camelid animals and wild cervid animals)	RUW
7	Farmed game of wild breeds of porcine animals and animals of the family Tayassuidae	SUF
8	Wild breeds of porcine animals and animals of the family Tayassuidae	SUW
9	Zebra	EQW
10	Mechanically separated meat of domestic ruminants	RUM-MSM
11	Mechanically separated meat of domestic porcine animals	SUI-MSM
Meat of poultry, ratites and other game birds, eggs and egg products		
13	Fresh poultry meat	POU
14	Minced meat and mechanically separated meat of poultry other than ratites	POU-MI/MSM
15	Fresh ratite meat	RAT
16	Ratite minced meat and mechanically separated meat	RAT-MI/MSM
17	Fresh game birds' meat	GBM
18	Game birds' minced meat and mechanically separated meat	GBM-MI/MSM
19	Eggs	E
20	Egg products	EP
Wild Leporidae, of certain wild land mammals and of farmed rabbits		
21	Fresh rabbits and hares' meat, excluding minced meat, mechanically separated meat and offal except for unskinned and unviscerated Leporidae	WL
22	Fresh meat of wild land mammals other than ungulates and Leporidae	WM
23	Fresh meat of farmed rabbits	RM
24	Meat preparations	MP-PREP
Meat products (including rendered animal fats and greaves, meat extracts and treated stomachs, bladders and intestines other than casings)		
25	Rendered animal fats and greaves, meat extracts and treated stomachs, bladders and intestines, that are not required to undergo a specific risk-mitigating treatment	MPNT
26	Rendered animal fats and greaves, meat extracts and treated stomachs, bladders and intestines, other than casings, that are required to undergo a specific risk-mitigating treatment	MPST
27	Casings	CAS
Live fish, live crustaceans, and their products and certain fishery products		
28	Live fish, live crustaceans and their products	FISH-CRUST-HC
29	Fishery products caught by vessels flying the flag of a Member State and transferred in third countries with or without storage	EU-FISH
30	Fishery products derived from bivalve molluscs, entering the EU directly from a reefer, freezer or factory vessel flying the flag of a third country	FISH/MOL-CAP
Live bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates, marine gastropods, and their products and certain processed bivalve molluscs		
31	Live bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates, marine gastropods and their products	MOL-HC
32	Processed bivalve molluscs of the species <i>Acanthocardia tuberculatum</i>	MOL-AT
		continued

Table 3 continued		
Chapter	Products	Certificate
Raw milk, dairy products, colostrum and colostrum-based products		
33	Raw milk	MILK-RM
34	Dairy products derived from raw milk or not required to undergo a specific risk-mitigating treatment	MILK-RMP/NT
35	Dairy products required to undergo a pasteurisation treatment	DAIRY-PRODUCTS-PT
36	Dairy products required to undergo a specific risk-mitigating treatment other than pasteurisation	DAIRY-PRODUCTS-ST
37	Colostrum	COLOSTRUM
38	Colostrum-based products	COLOSTRUM-BP
39	Chilled, frozen or prepared frogs' legs	FRG
40	Snails	SNS
41	Gelatine	GEL
42	Collagen	COL
43	Raw materials for the production of gelatine and collagen	RCG
44	Treated raw materials for the production of gelatine and collagen	TCG
45	Honey and other apiculture products	HON
46	Highly refined chondroitin sulphate, hyaluronic acid, other hydrolysed cartilage products, chitosan, glucosamine, rennet, isinglass and amino acids	HRP
47	Reptile meat	REP
48	Insects	INS
49	Other products of animal origin derived from domestic ungulates, poultry, rabbits or fishery products intended for human consumption	PAO
50	Composite products	COMP
52	Composite products for transit through the EU to a third country	TRANSIT-COMP
51	Seeds and sprouts	SPR
53	Products of animal origin and certain goods that originated in the EU, are moved to a third country or territory and moved back to the EU	STORAGE-TC-PAO
Annex IV contains model animal health certificates for:		
1–4	Live animals in the case of ante-mortem inspection at the holding of provenance	
5	Live animals in the case of emergency slaughter	
Annex V contains a model private attestation for shelf-stable composite products containing processed products of animal origin other than processed meat		
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Table 3 source: based on Implementing Regulation EU [2020/2235](#) Annexes III, IV, V

Table 4 Model certificates: Aquatic animals linked to aquaculture		
Annex	Animals	Certificate
II	Aquatic animals intended for certain aquaculture establishments, for release into the wild, or for other purposes, excluding human consumption	AQUA-ENTRY-ESTAB/RELEASE/OTHER



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Table 4 source: based on Implementing Regulation EU [2020/2236](#) Annex I

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