EU official health certificates for exports to the EU – explained

Published by AGRINFO on 21 Dec 2022; Revised 28 Nov 2025

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

Commission Implementing Regulations:

2021/403 as regards model animal health certificates and model animal health/official certificates, for the entry into the Union and movements between Member States of consignments of certain categories of **terrestrial animals and germinal products** thereof

2020/2235 as regards model animal health certificates, model official certificates and model animal health/official certificates, for the entry into the Union and movements within the Union of consignments of **certain categories of animals and goods**, official certification regarding such certificates

2020/2236 laying down rules for the application of Regulations (EU) 2016/429 and (EU) 2017/625 as regards model animal health certificates for the entry into the Union and movements within the Union of consignments of **aquatic animals and of certain products of animal origin from aquatic animals**, official certification regarding such certificates

Update

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

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

- 2021/403 for live terrestrial animals and germinal products
- 2020/2235 for animal products, composite products, and live fish
- 2020/2236 for aquaculture (live fish).

Impacted products

Live terrestrial animals and germinal products, animal products, composite products, aquaculture (live fish)

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Overview

Official health certificates

Animals and animal products from non-EU countries can only enter the EU market if they are accompanied by an official certificate (except for shelf-stable composite products and highly refined products, where a private attestation is sufficient).

In addition to information identifying the product and its origin, the official certificate contains:

- a public health attestation
- an animal health attestation for animals (and germinal products), meat (other than from rabbits, Leporidae, and some wild animals), milk/dairy, eggs, casings, certain fish/fishery products)
- an animal welfare attestation (for meat).

See Table 1 for details on each attestation and the relevant Regulations.

Official certificates must be signed by the official veterinarians in non-EU countries. The certificates are guarantees that the consignment complies with EU legislation as set out in Table 1. Certificates are always checked during EU official controls 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 electronic form should be used wherever possible as it reduces the risk of mistakes (such as using an out-of-date certificate), and it is easier to correct.

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 (Part I) and by the non-EU country competent authority (Part II, also Part I if not filled by the operator).

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

Issuing official certificates

Official certificates can only be issued in non-EU countries that are on the relevant lists for each species and category of animals in relation to:

- public health (see Third country lists for public health – explained)
- animal health (see Animal health requirements for third countries exporting to the EU – explained)

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

- antimicrobials (from 3 September 2026 – see List of non-EU countries compliant with new EU antimicrobial requirements).

Certificates can only be issued to individual establishments that are listed on the European Commission's Establishment Lists webpage (see Approval of non-EU country establishments explained).

In the case of live animals and hatching eggs, the certificate must be issued within the 10 days prior to the consignment's arrival. This period can be extended if consignments are travelling by sea (Regulation 2020/692, Art. 3c).

Model certificates

The models of the certificates that must be used to export animals and animal products are set out in different Implementing Regulations, as follows:

- live terrestrial animals and germinal products: Regulation 2021/403 (see Table 2)
- animal products, composite products and live fish: Regulation 2020/2235 (see Table 3)
- aquaculture: Regulation 2020/2236 (see Table 4).

Timeline

Certificates are amended regularly; it is important to use the correct one. Using the digital platform TRACES avoids any mistakes – the certificates available in TRACES are always the most up-to-date ones.

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.

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Background

Legal basis

The basic principles and processes for issuing health certificates can be found in the following EU Regulations.

Under the Official Controls Regulation 2017/625:

- definition and explanation of official certificates (Art. 3(27); Arts. 86–90)
- obligation to show the original official certificate at the border control post (Art. 50)
- management of non-compliant consignments entering the EU (Art. 68)
- pre-export controls of official certificates by non-EU countries (Art. 73)
- controls by European Commission experts of non-EU-country legislation and control systems, as part of audits performed by the Commission (Art. 120)
- recognition of equivalence of measures applied in a non-EU country or its regions (Art. 129)
- actions to take in the event of non-compliance (Art. 138).

Under the Animal Health Law, Regulation 2016/429:

- issuing of animal health certificates issued by the competent authority of the non-EU country (Art. 237)
- the content of animal health certificates (Art. 238).

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

AGRINFO Webinar and FAQ: Using TRACES

Sources

Regulation (EU) 2016/429 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health (Animal Health Law)

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Commission Implementing Regulations:

- 2021/403 for live terrestrial animals and germinal products
- 2020/2235 for animal products, composite products, and live fish
- 2020/2236 for aquaculture (live fish).

Visit the AGRINFO website to view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and search the database.

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Tables & Figures

Table 1
Official health certificates contain the following attestations:

Attestation	Function	Main Regulations/requirements
Public health	Guarantees compliance with the food safety requirements Regulations based on Regulation **2022/2292** supplementing 2017/625 on public health requirements for non-EU countries	Regulations: • **178/2002** (General Food Law) • **852/2004**, **853/2004** – Hygiene package, including approval of plants • **2019/624**, **2019/627** – specific requirements for official controls of products of animal origin • **2073/2005** – microbiological criteria to be checked to ensure food safety • 2022/1644, 2022/1646, 2021/1355, 2021/2244, 37/2010, 2023/915, 396/2005 – residues • **2022/931**, **2022/932** – contaminants • **999/2001** – BSE Regulation; **1760/2000** – label; **2007/453/EC** – for ruminants and their products • **2015/1375** – trichinella mitigating treatment for pork, horse meat • Directive **2001/110** – honey • 2015/2283, 2017/2470 – insects • 210/2013, 208/2013 – sprouts Countries are listed in Regulation **2021/405**: • **Annex-I** for residues (since Regulation 2022/2293) • **Annexes I to XVI** for food safety – for meat from horses, game birds, rabbits and Leporidae, wild mammals, reptiles; casings; eggs; bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates, and marine gastropods; fishery products; horse milk; frogs and snails; gelatine and collagen; highly refined products; insects
	Guarantees compliance regarding use of antibiotics, based on Regulation **2019/6** (to be signed by the official veterinarian from 3 September 2026)*	Regulations: • **2023/905** prohibits the use of certain antimicrobial medicinal products in animals or products of animal origin exported to the EU from non-EU countries • **2022/1255** lists antimicrobials reserved for treatment of certain infections in humans
Animal health	Guarantees compliance with animal health requirements Based on Regulation **2020/692**, specific for non-EU countries, supplementing **2016/429** (Animal Health Law) Confirms that the consignment originates in an approved country	• Countries are listed in Regulation **2021/404**: • for live animals, meat (other than from horses, rabbits, Leporidae, some wild animals), milk/dairy, eggs, casings, certain fish/fishery products
Animal welfare	Confirms that the consignment complies with rules on animal welfare	Regulation **1099/2009**, animal welfare at slaughter (for meat)

* Compliance regarding use of antibiotics does not apply to: gelatine, collagen, highly refined products, composite products, wild animals, or products from insects, frogs, snails, or reptiles.

AGRINFO
www.agrinfo.eu

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Table 2
Model certificates: Live terrestrial animals and germinal products

Chapter	Animals	Certificate
Annex II of Regulation 2021/403 contains the following model official certificates:		
Ungulates (hoofed mammals)		
1	Bovine animals (cattle)	BOV-X
2	Bovine animals intended for slaughter	BOV-Y
3	Bovine animals intended for transit from Kaliningrad to other regions of Russia via the territory of Lithuania	BOV-X-TRANSIT-RU
4	Ovine (sheep) and caprine (goat) animals	OV/CAP-X
5	Ovine and caprine animals intended for slaughter	OV/CAP-Y
6	Certain ungulates that originate in the European Union (EU), are moved to a non-EU country for participation in events/shows, then moved back to the EU	ENTRY-EVENTS
7	Porcine animals (pigs) and animals of the family Tayassuidae (peccaries)	SUI-X
8	Porcine animals intended for slaughter	SUI-Y
9	Animals of families Antilocapridae (pronghorns), Bovidae (other than bovine, ovine, and caprine animals), Giraffidae, Moschidae, and Tragulidae	RUM
10	Animals of the families Tapiridae (tapirs), Rhinocerotidae (rhinoceroses), and Elephantidae (elephants)	RHINO
11	Animals of the family Hippopotamidae (hippos)	HIPPO
12	Camelids (camel) and cervids (deer)	CAM-CER
Horses		
13	Equine animals (horses) not intended for slaughter	EQUI-X
14	Equine animals intended for slaughter	EQUI-Y
15	Re-entry of horses due to competitions/races/events, for not more than 30 days	EQUI-RE-ENTRY-30
16	Temporary export, for not more than 90 days, of registered horses to compete in equestrian events	EQUI-RE-ENTRY-90-COMP
17	Temporary export, for not more than 90 days, of registered horses to compete in in specific race events in Australia, Canada, USA, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, or Qatar	EQUI-RE-ENTRY-90-RACE
Ungulates intended for a confined establishment		
18 (2)	Ruminants (cud-chewing animals)	CONFINED-RUM
19 (2)	Pigs	CONFINED-SUI
20 (2)	Tapiridae, Rhinocerotidae, Elephantidae	CONFINED-TRE
21	Animals of the family Hippopotamidae	CONFINED-HIPPO

Continued…

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Table 2
Continued

Chapter	Animals	Certificate
Birds and bird germinal products		
22	Breeding or productive poultry	BPP
23	Breeding or productive ratites (large, flightless birds)	BPR
24	Day-old chicks other than ratites	DOC
25	Day-old chicks of ratites	DOR
26	Hatching eggs of poultry other than ratites	HEP
27	Hatching eggs of ratites	HER
28	Specified pathogen-free eggs	SPF
29	Poultry intended for slaughter other than ratites	SP
30	Ratites intended for slaughter	SR
31	Less than 20 heads of poultry other than ratites	POU-LT20
32	Less than 20 hatching eggs of poultry other than ratites	HE-LT20
33	Captive birds	CAPTIVE-BIRDS
34	Racing pigeons immediately released after entry into the EU	RACING PIGEONS-IMMEDIATE RELEASE
35	Hatching eggs of captive birds	HE-CAPTIVE-BIRDS
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 of Regulation 2021/403 contains the following model official declarations:		
1	Model declaration by master of the vessel (Addendum for transport of terrestrial animals entering the Union by sea)	AT-TERRE-SEA
2	Model declaration for transshipment of horses	EQUI-TRANS

AGRINFO
www.agrinfo.eu

Source: based on Regulation 2021/403, Annexes II, III

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Table 3
Model certificates: Animal products, composite products, and live fish

Chapter	Products	Certificate
Annex III of Regulation 2020/2235 contains model official health certificates for:		
Fresh meat of ungulates (hoofed mammals)		
1	Beef	BOV
2	Sheep	OVI
3	Pork	POR
4	Horse	EQU
5	Animals of the family Bovidae (other than domestic bovine (cattle), ovine (sheep), and caprine (goat) animals), camelid (camel) and cervid (deer) animals kept as farmed game	RUF
6	Wild animals of the family Bovidae (other than domestic beef, sheep, and goats), wild camelids, and cervids (deer)	RUW
7	Farmed game of wild breeds of porcine animals (pigs) and animals of the family Tayassuidae (peccaries)	SUF
8	Wild breeds of porcine animals and animals of the family Tayassuidae	SUW
9	Zebras	EQW
10	Mechanically separated meat of domestic ruminants (cud-chewing animals)	RUM-MSM
11	Mechanically separated meat of domestic porcine animals	SUI-MSM
Meat of poultry, ratites (large, flightless birds), 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 bird meat	GBM
18	Game bird minced meat and mechanically separated meat	GBM-MI/MSM
19	Eggs	E
20	Egg products	EP
Wild Leporidae (rabbits and hares), certain wild land mammals, and farmed rabbits		
21	Fresh rabbit and hare meat, excluding minced meat, mechanically separated meat, and offal (except for unskinned and uneviscerated Leporidae)	WL
22	Fresh meat of wild land mammals other than ungulates and Leporidae	WM
23	Fresh meat of farmed rabbits	RM
Meat preparations		
24	Meat preparations	MP-PREP
Meat products		
25	Including 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	Including 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
Casings		
27	Casings	CAS

Continued…

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Table 3
Continued

Chapter	Products	Certificate
Annex III of Regulation 2020/2235 contains model official health certificates for:		
Live fish, live crustaceans, and their products; certain fishery products		
28	Live fish, live crustaceans, and their products	FISH-CRUST-HC
29	Fishery products caught by vessels flying the flag of an EU Member State and transferred in non-EU 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 non-EU country	FISH/MOL-CAP
Live bivalve molluscs, echinoderms (sea urchins), tunicates (marine invertebrates), marine gastropods, and their products, and certain processed bivalve molluscs		
31	Live bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates, marine gastropods (sea snails/slugs), and their products	MOL-HC
32	Processed bivalve molluscs of the species *Acanthocardia tuberculata* (saltwater clams)	MOL-AT
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 frog 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 non-EU country	TRANSIT-COMP
51	Seeds and sprouts	SPR
53	Products of animal origin, and certain goods that originated in the EU, moved to a non-EU country or territory, and moved back to the EU	STORAGE-TC-PAO
Annex IV of Regulation 2020/2235 contains model 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 of Regulation 2020/2235 contains a model private attestation for shelf-stable composite products containing processed products of animal origin other than processed meat		

AGRINFO
www.agrinfo.eu

Source: based on Regulation 2020/2235, Annexes III, IV, V

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

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
AGRINFO www.agrinfo.eu		

Source: based on Regulation 2020/2236, Annex I

Disclaimer: *Under no circumstances shall COLEAD be liable for any loss, damage, liability or expense incurred or suffered that is claimed to have resulted from the use of information available on this website or any link to external sites. The use of the website is at the user's sole risk and responsibility. This information platform was created and maintained with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents do not, however, reflect the views of the European Union.*

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*