

Guidelines for exporting cattle, bison, sheep and goats to the United States

Following the detection of BSE in May 2003, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) restricted the importation of Canadian ruminant livestock. On March 7, 2005, the USDA plans to implement a new rule — *Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy; Minimal Risk Regions and Importation of Commodities* — to re-open the U.S. border to cattle, bison, sheep and goats, under certain conditions. The Rule also removes all BSE-related import restrictions from elk, deer, llamas and alpacas.

Specifically, the Rule permits the importation of cattle and bison less than 30 months of age and sheep and goats less than 12 months of age. These animals may be imported for immediate slaughter and feeding prior to slaughter in the U.S. Cattle, bison, sheep and goats for breeding purposes remain prohibited. This document outlines the requirements that Canadian exporters will need to follow to comply with the USDA's new import Rule.

Export Certificates

Official Canadian export certificates must be obtained for exports of cattle, bison, sheep and goats for immediate slaughter and feeding. Primary inspection and certification procedures will be conducted by private veterinary practitioners who are accredited by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to certify for the export of these commodities to the United States. Veterinarians who wish to become accredited should contact the CFIA.

Accredited veterinarians must use an export certificate supplied by the CFIA and follow the inspection process prescribed by the U.S. Rule. Once an export certificate has been completed, the accredited veterinarian must have it endorsed by the CFIA. The endorsed certificate will then be returned to the accredited veterinarian to accompany the shipment of animals. Unless the health status of the animals to be exported changes, the certificate is valid for 30 days from the inspection date.

www.inspection.gc.ca



The export certificate must confirm that the following U.S. animal health and identification requirements have been met:

Animal Health Requirements

- ◆ Cattle and bison must be less than 30 months of age when exported to the United States. Age may be determined from producer records or by an examination of each animal's dentition.
- ◆ Sheep and goats must be less than 12 months of age when exported to the United States. Age may be determined from producer records or by an examination of each animal's dentition.
- ◆ All animals must have been kept in the United States or Canada during the last 60 days before shipment to the United States.
- ◆ Veterinary inspections must verify all animals to be free from any communicable diseases. All animals must not have been exposed to any such diseases during the 60 days previous to the inspection.
- ◆ Sheep and goats must not have tested positive for a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy, such as scrapie, or be considered to pose a risk of such diseases.

Identification Requirements

- ◆ All animals must be identified with official Canadian ear tags, which can only be removed by U.S. officials at the destination slaughter establishment.
- ◆ Sheep and goats for feeding must be permanently and humanely identified before entering the United States with a distinct and legible "C" mark. This mark must be easily visible on live animals and on the carcass. It must be at least 1 inch high, readable at the time of export and applied to each animal's right hip.*
- ◆ Cattle and bison for feeding must be permanently and humanely identified before entering the United States with a distinct and legible "C?N" mark. This mark must be easily visible on live animals and on the carcass. It must be at least 2 inches high, readable at the time of export and applied to each animal's right hip.*

**Marks may be applied by hot or freeze branding, or any other means approved by the USDA. Tattooing is not accepted.*

Transporting Animals

Once animals have been certified and loaded, vehicles must be sealed by the accredited veterinarian using official federal seals. The numbers from these seals must be recorded on the Canadian health certificate. If these seals are missing, broken or do not match the numbers on the export certificate, the shipment will be refused entry into the U.S. American

border officials may remove seals to inspect the animals in the shipment. If this happens, U.S. seals will be applied.

Shipments must be accompanied by the official Canadian export certificate. Shipments must also be accompanied by **VS Form 17-29 “Declaration of Importation.”** This form, which is generally prepared by a customs broker, is available on the USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Website at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/forms>.

Sealed vehicles must move directly from the exporting premises to port of entry and from the port of entry to the designated slaughter establishment or feedlot.

Be Prepared

Exporters should be prepared to provide the following information, which is required to complete the Canadian health certificate:

- ◆ Exporter’s name and address;
- ◆ Description of each animal in the shipment:
 - ◆ Species, breed and total number of animals;
 - ◆ Age, colour, markings (including any brands on the animal) and registered name (if available);
 - ◆ Identification information (ear tag and any other registration numbers);
- ◆ Addresses of the premises that the animals resided on immediately before export (if different than that of the exporter);
- ◆ Name and address of importer;
- ◆ Address of slaughter establishment (including USDA/FSIS number) or feedlot location;
- ◆ Port of embarkation in Canada and port of entry in the United States; and
- ◆ Mode of transportation and travel route.

Additional Requirements

Unrelated to the requirements of the U.S. rule, the United States Food and Drug Administration requires exporters of live animals intended for food use (i.e., slaughter) to provide prior notice before animals enter the United States. As well, Canadian commercial feed lots exporting live animals to the United States are required to be registered with the United States Food and Drug Administration. Electronic advance notification may be also required by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Information about the registration and prior notice requirements can be found on the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Web site at http://ats.agr.ca/us/bioterrorism_e.htm. Information can also be obtained by calling a customs broker.

**For More Information
Please contact a CFIA district office
(listed in the blue pages of the telephone book).**

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