

SITPRO

International Trade Guides

Importing

Importing Products of Animal Origin Into the UK



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This guide provides basic information about the procedures and documentation you must comply with to import products of animal origin into the UK. These rules have been introduced to protect human and animal health in this country.

You should read it if you are involved in the importation of products of animal origin direct into the UK from countries outside the European Union. You should talk to your suppliers in the foreign countries and make them aware of the EU import procedures.

To which goods do the rules apply?

- Fresh meat including offal, and products of bovine (cattle), ovine (sheep), caprine (goat), porcine (pig) and equine (horse) species
- Fish products in hermetically sealed containers (stable at ambient temperature)
- Poultry, rabbit, game (farmed and wild) - meat and products
- Fresh and frozen fish
- Processed animal protein for human consumption
- Dried and, or salted fishery products
- Processed petfood, raw material for the production of petfood
- Other fishery products including bivalve molluscs, live lobsters, clams and yabbies
- Lard and rendered fats
- Animal casings
- Frogs legs and snails
- Milk and milk products for human consumption
- Semen, embryos
- Manure
- Milk and milk products NOT for human consumption
- Raw material, blood, blood products, glands and organs for pharmaceutical use
- Whole eggs, hatching eggs
- Blood products for technical use
- Egg products
- Pathogens
- Honey
- Bones and bone products
- Apiculture products
- Hides and skins
- Gelatin
- Bristles, wool, hair and feathers
- Horns and horn products, hooves and hoof products
- Hay and straw
- Hunting trophies

The list is not exhaustive. If you have any doubts you must contact the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

What are the procedures I must comply with?

All goods of animal origin must be imported through a port or airport with a Border Inspection Post (BIP) which has been approved for the category of products you are importing. Contact

Defra for a list of BIP locations and categories.

You, or your appointed agent, must notify the BIP in advance of the arrival of your consignment of animal products. The time limits are 6 working hours for air consignments and 24 working hours for all others.

Your notification can be a completed Part A of a Certificate of Veterinary Clearance (CVC) obtainable from the Port Health Authority (PHA) for the BIP concerned. Alternatively you can provide the same information in any format previously agreed with the PHA

What happens when the goods arrive?

When your consignment arrives you, or your appointed agent, must present the veterinary documents to the Port Health representative at the BIP. Your consignment will be subject to three types of check:

- **Documentary:** a documentary check is carried out on all consignments. The PHA checks that any required health certificate from the country of origin of your consignment and the completed Part A of the CVC are valid, dated, signed and correct.
- **Identity:** the PHA will check that the identity of your goods correspond fully with the veterinary documents supplied.
- **Physical:** a physical check is carried out on a percentage of consignments according to the type of animal product and the country of origin. This involves the PHA examining the contents of the consignment to ensure it does not pose a threat to public and animal health. It may also involve taking samples for laboratory tests.

Your consignment, or any part of it, may be presented to the BIP facility for the checks to be conducted.

When samples are taken from your consignment for laboratory tests you may not receive veterinary clearance for the goods until the results of these tests are known. In cases where testing is carried out because of unfavourable results of previous tests on the animal product, the consignment will not be cleared or allowed to leave the BIP until the results of the new tests are received by the authorities.

Where a consignment is tested for a substance or pathogenic agent which could present an immediate or direct danger to public or animal health, the authorities may detain the goods at the BIP.

In all cases the PHA will notify the local veterinary authorities of the place of destination in the UK that a consignment is being tested, and the results of the tests when known.

How do my goods clear the veterinary checks?

If all the checks on your consignment are satisfactory, and you have either made or guaranteed payment for the Veterinary Checks Regime (VCR), the PHA will complete Part B of the CVC.

A copy of the CVC will be presented to HM Revenue & Customs to allow Customs clearance. A further copy must travel with your goods to the first premises of destination in the UK. This copy must be retained at these premises for a minimum of 12 months.

What happens if my goods fail the checks?

The PHA will inform you, in writing, that your consignment has failed the VCR and explain the reasons why. You will then have the following options:

- re-export outside the EU; or
- destruction of the consignment.

You will also be told of your rights of appeal and the time limits for any appeal.

Are there any charges?

In addition to the charges payable to the PHA for conducting the checks, you may also be charged for the presentation and handling of your consignment at the port or airport. You may also be liable to storage charges if your consignment is detained because of the VCR.

You must realise that failure to comply with these rules may delay, or even prevent, the importation of your consignment.

Nothing in this briefing affects the requirements for your goods to clear Customs or any other statutory authority.

Further Information

Defra

1A Page Street
London SW1P 4PQ
Tel: 020 7904 6496
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/>

Food Standards Agency

Fish and shellfish imports
Aviation House, 125 Kingsway
London WC2B 6NH
Tel: 020 7276 8018

European legislation

Directive 97/78/EC and amendments
<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/ en/search/>

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- BAA Cargo
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SITPRO
Simplifying International Trade

7th Floor
Kingsgate House
66-74 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6SW

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7215 8150
Fax: +44 (0)20 7215 4242
Email: info@sitpro.org.uk
Website: www.sitpro.org.uk

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