Guidelines for Importing Cattle (ruminants) into the United States (except from Canada and Mexico)

Last Modified:

Cattle from countries affected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) OR foot-and-mouth disease (FMD, OR rinderpest are not permitted to be imported into the United States.

These are general requirements for importing cattle into the United States. Contact the National Import and Export Services at 301-851-3300 for the protocol to import cattle from a specific country.

Requirements

- USDA Import Permit
- 30-day Quarantine at an USDA Animal Import Center *(Canada and Mexico are exceptions)*
- Official Health Certificate
- 60-Day Quarantine before Exporting to the United States
- Negative Test Results (see list of tests below)

How to Obtain a USDA Import Permit and Reserve Space at a Animal Import Center

You must obtain an import permit from our office. You may call our office and request a fax copy of the import permit application at 301-851-3300. If a quarantine is required, you must reserve quarantine space at:

New York Animal Import Center (AIC)
Rock Tavern, New York
845-838-5500

The Official Health Certificate must state the following:

- that the animals were born, raised, and continuously resident in a country recognized by USDA as free of FMD, BSE, and rinderpest;
- that during the past 12 months there was no evidence of exposure to diseases of concern specific to the exporting country. The protocol will list specific diseases for certification purposes;
- that the premises has been designated free of TB for 2 years immediately prior to export;
- that there were no clinical cases of Johne's disease during the last 5 years; and
- that the animals have been individually identified with unique tamper-proof identification.

Before leaving the country of origin the following conditions must be met:

- The animals must have been maintained in a tick-free status for a minimum of 60 days prior to export. Within 10 days prior to export the animals must be treated for ticks with a approved pesticide. The pesticide used, concentrations, and dates applied must be on the health certificate;
- The animals must be isolated from vectors known to carry diseases of concern specific to the exporting country; and
- The animals must be free of communicable disease or exposure to communicable disease for 60 days prior to export.

Testing Requirements

The animals must be tested twice during the 60 days prior to export with negative results to:

- Brucella abortus;
- Tuberculosis; and
- Specific diseases of concern endemic to the region of export that will be listed in the protocol.

The animals will be tested again for these diseases while in quarantine in the United States. Animals that test positive will be refused entry; animals considered exposed will undergo further evaluation as needed to determine eligibility for entry.

Contact Us

Download contacts

Live Animal Imports

For questions about import permits or permit applications:

Live Animal Import Permit Team

Email: laipermits@usda.gov

Phone: 301-851-3300

For general questions related to the import of a live animal:

Live Animal Import and Export

Email: laie@usda.gov

Phone: 301-851-3300

All Contacts
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