

Equine Canada Update on Procedures for Fresh Equine Semen Imports from the United States

Ottawa, ON — Equine Canada wishes to notify the Canadian equine industry that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) stated at close of business on Friday, April 24, 2009, that import protocols for fresh equine semen from the United States are based on the January 30, 2009, requirements. While it is expected that revised procedures will be announced shortly, new procedures cannot take effect until the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) officially mandates all of its regional offices to comply.

Equine Canada will continue its ongoing discussions with the CFIA and will issue further press releases to industry whenever changes to import procedures are confirmed.

Canadians seeking timely information regarding import requirements are advised to use the CFIA's Automated Import Reference System (AIRS) at http://airs-sari.inspection.gc.ca/Airs_External/Default.aspx.

It has been reported by some importers of fresh/chilled semen that where the US stallion station or farm is located at a distance from local USDA offices, the timelines to include the original USDA-endorsed health certificate with the shipment have delayed or prevented the imports of fresh semen which begins to lose its viability 24 hours after it is collected. In response to industry feedback, Equine Canada has been in discussion with the CFIA to allow an alternative to the current procedure in an effort to mitigate delays that could render fresh semen unviable. Equine Canada will inform industry when new procedures are in place and operational.

Effective January 30, 2009: Instructions for Canadian Importers of Semen and Embryos from the US into Canada

1. Notify immediately the companies/agents/owners in the U.S. that you wish to acquire semen or embryos from and inform them that a USDA-endorsed zoosanitary export certificate (i.e., U.S. Origin Health Certificate) is required.
2. To obtain the required certificate, please visit: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/regulations/vs/iregs/animals/downloads/ca_eq_se.pdf.
3. An accredited vet **must issue** a zoosanitary export certificate (i.e., U.S. Origin Health Certificate).
4. The exporter must have the **ORIGINAL** zoosanitary export certificate endorsed by the USDA.
5. The exporter must include the **ORIGINAL USDA-endorsed** zoosanitary export certificate with the shipment to Canada where it will be inspected by the CBSA and released to the importer.
6. **Before** semen or embryos are shipped, importers in Canada must obtain an import permit from the CFIA. To download an Import Permit Application Form for Live Animals, Semen, Embryos, Animal Products and By-Products, visit the CFIA website at the following link: http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/import/permit_covere.shtml.
 - a. The Import Permit Application Form is to be completed by the importer.
 - b. Next, contact a CFIA area office (a complete list of CFIA offices can be found at the end of this release). The completed application must be faxed or mailed with payment

to the Import Office in the province you reside in or into which you will be importing the semen or embryos. CFIA have given Equine Canada assurances that you will be contacted by the Import Office within three (3) days of receipt of the application form with information on how to proceed.

c. Single entry (one time) permits cost \$35. Multiple entry permits are valid for one year and cost \$60. An agent or broker may use this method to do combined shipments of multiple stallions and/or exporters and/or destinations. To reference the responsibilities of brokers, visit the CFIA website link at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/imp/kite.shtml>.

Since the news broke in late 2008 that a number of stallions in the U.S. had tested positive for contagious equine metritis (CEM), Canadian authorities have been on high alert. The U.S. investigation revealed that shipments of frozen semen from stallions either positive for CEM or associated with quarantined premises had been sent to Canada. If a country loses its CEM-free status, there are international trade implications.

To limit Canada's exposure, revised import restrictions for all live horses, semen and embryos entering Canada from the U.S. were put in place in early 2009 as a result of the expanding investigation into CEM in the U.S. in which 18 stallions and five mares have been confirmed as positive for *T. equigenitalis* in the U.S. *None of the U.S. positive horses have yet to be identified as the source of the outbreak. Under investigation are an additional 135 exposed or positive stallions in 21 States and 638 exposed or positive mares in 45 States who are currently undergoing testing.*

CEM is a highly contagious venereal disease, caused by the bacteria *Taylorella equigenitalis*, and is a reportable disease in Canada. It is spread by infected semen during artificial insemination or introduced to the genital tract on fomites, and the transmission rate is extremely high. Stallions are the most common source of infection with *T. equigenitalis*, persisting for months or years on the reproductive tract of untreated stallions. Mares can carry the organism without symptoms, after recovering from acute disease. Most infected mares do not conceive but those that do may give birth to a normal full-term foal that can carry the organism asymptotically. Nearly every mare mated to an infected stallion will become infected. Most mares recover after treatment by washing the external genitalia with disinfectants combined with a local antibiotic treatment but some become asymptomatic carriers.

CFIA area offices:

Atlantic — Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick

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Import Officer, Animal Health, CFIA

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Moncton, New Brunswick

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Telephone: 506-851-7651

Facsimile: 506-851-3700

Quebec

Dr. Alain Lajoie / (Mr. Andre Anctil)
Import Officer, Animal Health, CFIA
Room 746-S, 2001 University Avenue
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H3A 3N2
Telephone: 514-283-8888
Facsimile: 514-283-6214

Ontario

Dr Susan Wray / (Ms. Chris Paolini)
Import Contact, Animal Health, CFIA
174 Stone Road West
Guelph, Ontario
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Telephone: 519-826-2810
Facsimile: 519-837-9771

West — Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia

Dr. Gary Kruger / (Mr. Craig Sellars)
Import Officer, Animal Health, CFIA
Western Area Office
1115 - 57 Avenue North East
Calgary, Alberta
T2E 9B2
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Facsimile: 403-292-6629

About Equine Canada

Equine Canada is a member-based association that represents, promotes and services Canada's equine community and industry. Its core areas of activity involve sport, equine health and welfare, education and safety, governance and marketing, representation and communication. Equine Canada is recognized by Sport Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), the Canadian Olympic Committee and Canadian Coaching Association of Canada as the national organization representing equestrian sport and equine interests in Canada. For more information about Equine Canada, please visit www.equinecanada.ca.