



Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

Veterinary Services

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Mr. Zoltan Somoghi
Head of Unit
Sustainable Development and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Issues
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Rue de la Loi, 170
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FEB 11 2016

Dear Mr. Somoghi:

This letter is to advise you that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have added restrictions for imported bovine germplasm that has been sex sorted. APHIS has determined that the sex sorting process could potentially introduce cross contamination between semen from animals tested to meet current APHIS import requirements and those not tested to the same health status. As a result, APHIS is implementing restrictions to guard against potential cross contamination during the sex sorting process.

The updated export health certificate will be required for sex sorted semen shipments, effective 60 days from the date of this communication. Countries wishing to export sex sorted semen in the interim may use the updated export health certificate prior to the required date. The following requirements are being added to the current export health certificate:

- The semen must be collected and processed under the supervision of an approved Semen Collection Center veterinarian within the country of origin and be maintained under seal before and after the sex sorting process.
- The semen sexing facility used to sort the semen for export to the United States must be located in the country where the semen was collected.
- In the case of sexed semen, the semen sexing facility must have a USDA-approved "Cleaning and Disinfection Standard Operating Protocol" to process sexed semen for export to the United States, to adequately address the concerns about cross contamination, and this protocol must be followed during processing.
- The integrity of this shipment must be maintained through the semen sexing process and no semen from other donors may be mixed with semen that originated from the animals tested to meet U.S. import requirements.
- For embryos: If sexed semen is used for insemination, the same requirements above must be met.

Mr. Somoghi

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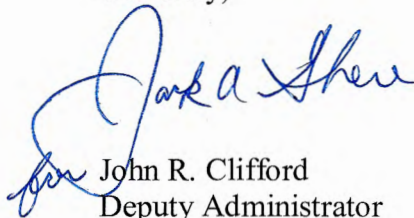
Sexed semen sorted prior to June 1, 2011, does not have to meet the new requirements as listed above. In such instances, the date of the sex sorting process should be included on the export health certificate.

The export health certificate for embryos was also amended to provide a place to indicate if sexed semen was used for insemination. The same requirements apply for the handling of the sexed semen from origination to the approved facility if sexed semen was used for bovine embryos. APHIS will maintain a list of approved facilities on our website at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/import-live-animals>. Facilities that wish to be approved should send a formal request for recognition to APHIS through their competent veterinary authority.

Attached to this letter are the modified health certificates reflecting the new requirements, with the changes highlighted in yellow. We have also updated the web link in the bovine embryo protocol. Several U.S. companies have expressed an interest in exporting semen to the European Union (EU) to undergo sex sorting prior to re-export to the United States. Such semen will be required to meet EU import requirements and should be re-exported on an EU bovine semen export health certificate.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact Dr. Oriana Beemer at (301) 851-3300 or by e-mail at Oriana.M.Beemer@aphis.usda.gov. We look forward to collaborating with you on this and other issues in the future.

Sincerely,



John R. Clifford
Deputy Administrator