

Export Requirements for Live Sheep and Germplasm from the United States

Task: Conduct a review of the requirements to export meat and certain ovine products and byproducts from the United States to countries around the world. The review should include a summary of these requirements and an assessment of countries which are currently not open but which may provide an opportunity for future markets.

Materials Utilized:

- The IREG database maintained by the National Center for Import and Export (NCIE), USDA, APHIS.
- Database maintained by USDA, Food Safety Inspection Service
- Requirements posted by foreign countries

Trade in Products

Due to the wide diversity of animal products and byproducts, the exportation of products from the United States may or may not be dependent on negotiated protocols. Certain countries required pre-approved certificates or certification statements. Other countries require the importer to apply for an import permit which states the requirements. Government endorsement may or may not be required. Most of the requirements are dependent upon the product and risk which it may pose. Countries usually take into account:

- the disease status of the exporting country,
- the tissue of origin (i.e. likelihood of harboring agent)
- the method of processing (likelihood of destroying the agent)

Country requirements were reviewed to determine if current protocols were in existence. The protocols were reviewed to verify if the certifications could be made. If a country allowed certain products for importation a determination was made as to whether other products may be allowed based on the disease concerns and levels of risk. In general, the primary reason provided for prohibitions on the importation of certain ovine products and byproducts was the risk of introducing a Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) agent. For some countries there were complete bans on most ruminant products and other countries allowed ruminant products with a number of restrictions. Many countries followed guidelines established by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). Per the Scrapie Chapter of the OIE Terrestrial Code products of low/no risk include:

“Regardless of the scrapie status of the *exporting country*, *Veterinary Authorities* should authorise without restriction the import or transit through their territory of *meat* (excluding materials as referred to in Article 14.9.11.), *milk*, *milk products*, wool and its derivatives, hides and skins, tallow, derivatives made from this tallow and dicalcium phosphate originating from sheep and goats.”

The Code recommends prohibiting the following tissues from countries known to have scrapie:

- skulls including brains,
- ganglia and eyes,
- vertebral column including ganglia and spinal cord,
- tonsils,

- thymus,
- spleen,
- intestine,
- adrenal gland,
- pancreas,
- liver,
- protein products derived from any of these tissues

Meat and bone meal and other rendered products especially those containing central nervous system and lymphoreticular tissue from ruminants is considered to have considerable risk. The OIE recommends that meat and bone meal containing any sheep tissues from countries having scrapie should not be traded for use in feed for ruminants.

Methodology:

After reviewing the available materials and taking into consideration the OIE recommendations, a determination was made on the likelihood of being able to export ovine products or byproducts from the United States into a third country. The ability to export categories of products was assessed as follows:

- **Likely** (highlighted in green) – there is a current protocol in place with no apparent disease risk which may void the negotiated agreement.
- **High likelihood or importations already taking place with no negotiated protocol.** (highlighted in yellow) – This category covers those countries already receiving products but without a negotiated/approved protocol with USDA. In many cases the exports may require an import permit and/or a US byproducts certificate (16-4). This category also covers those countries which may currently not be accepting US products but the certain product category carries little or no risk for the importing country.
- **Not likely at this time** (Prohibition on importations -highlighted in red) – the importing country has a specific ban in place. A determination was made that testing or other certifications statements would likely not be sufficient to satisfy the country's concerns.
- **Unknown** (highlighted in purple) – No protocols or prohibitions listed. This designation is used for those products which may carry some risk for importing countries where there is no posted protocols/certificates.

Findings: Countries are listed by regions of the world in the attached tables. Promoting the trade in lamb/mutton, hides and skins and wool to any country of the world should be facilitated by the OIE recommendations. The exportation of other byproducts from the US is more problematic given the wide distribution of the scrapie agent in the body of an infected sheep. The trade in certain byproducts may be enhanced if promoted for uses which would not expose other ruminants to the products. In addition, removal of the highest risk tissues (CNS and lymphoreticular tissues) also reduces risk.