



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Inspector General
Northeast Region
Audit Report

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
International Programs
Riverdale, Maryland



Report No.
33099-02-HY
January 2001



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Washington D.C. 20250



DATE: January 25, 2001

REPLY TO

ATTN OF: 33099-02-Hy

SUBJECT: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, International Programs

TO: Craig A. Reed
Administrator
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

ATTN: William J. Hudnall
Deputy Administrator
Business Services
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

This report presents the results of the subject audit. Your written response, dated December 26, 2000, has been incorporated into the Findings and Recommendations section of the report, along with our position. The complete text of the response and the attachments is included as exhibit D.

We agree with your management decisions for each recommendation in the report; however, additional action is required to reach management decision on Recommendation No. 3. The action needed to reach management decision on this recommendation is identified in the Findings and Recommendations section of the report. Please follow your internal agency procedures in forwarding final action correspondence to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

In accordance with Departmental Regulation 1720-1, please furnish a reply within 60 days describing the specific corrective action taken or planned and the timeframes for implementation of the recommendation for which a management decision has not been reached. Please note that the regulation requires a management decision to be reached on all findings and recommendations within a maximum of 6 months from report issuance.

We appreciate the cooperation extended to us by you and your staff during our review.

/s/

JAMES R. EBBITT
Assistant Inspector General
for Audit

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS AUDIT NO. 33099-02-Hy

RESULTS IN BRIEF

We evaluated the adequacy of corrective actions taken by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) in response to our prior audit (Audit No. 33099-01-Hy, dated June

1995) of preclearance inspection operations and the inspecting and quarantining of animals prior to entry into the United States. The purpose of these programs is to protect U.S. animal and plant resources from harmful diseases and pests by excluding foreign animals and plants that might be contaminated. The preclearance program allows shippers to use APHIS inspectors at their facilities to “preclear” the commodities, thereby reducing the inspections needed at U.S. ports of entry. This audit was designed to review APHIS controls over preclearance operations and did not include a review of preclearance activities in the countries of origin. Nothing came to our attention during this review that would lead us to conclude that APHIS allowed harmful plant diseases or pests to enter the United States. We found that APHIS was in compliance with preclearance procedures at the ports of entry visited and with inspection and quarantine procedures at the land borders visited. However, we identified several areas that need to be strengthened.

Although APHIS reported to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO)¹ that corrective actions were complete in response to prior audit recommendations, we found that the agreed-to corrective actions had not always been implemented. In our prior audit, we found that animal inspection and quarantining procedures needed to be updated and operational procedures specific to ports of entry along the Canadian and Mexican borders had not been adequately developed. In response to this control deficiency, APHIS agreed to develop a national port manual to consolidate and update operational procedures. The port manual was to provide updated guidance to the port veterinarians regarding procedures to be followed when inspecting and quarantining animals at ports of entry. However, we were advised by APHIS officials this action was not taken because of other priorities. Also, current responsible officials were not clear as to what specific guidelines required updating. They could not explain why

¹ The status of this audit was reported in the Secretary's Management Report to Congress, Management Actions Taken on Audit Recommendations, April 1, 1996 through September 30, 1996.

APHIS reported to OCFO that the manual had been developed and distributed to field personnel.

Reporting procedures for reviews of country preclearance programs were not enforced and/or did not always provide sufficient information to evaluate the effectiveness of preclearance operations in countries of origin. Trip reports prepared by APHIS inspectors to report issues or potential problems identified during their inspection of 7 of 28 country preclearance programs did not always include sufficient information or were not submitted to APHIS Headquarters officials. APHIS Headquarters officials did not enforce the reporting requirements or follow up with the Plant, Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) officers to determine why the trip reports were not submitted. As a result, there is no assurance that these countries are operating in accordance with regulations and that the annual country work plans are being updated, as needed. Without adequate trip reports, APHIS cannot properly assess the preclearance program in these countries or ensure that the objectives of the program were met.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that APHIS/Veterinary Service officials develop the national port manual, to include specific instructions for the responsibilities of the port veterinarians concerning procedures to be followed for conducting inspections and quarantines of animals at ports of entry and certifying them free of communicable diseases.

Also, we recommend that APHIS update existing agency reporting policies and procedures to include specific areas that should be identified in trip reports to ensure that sufficient information is being provided to make an objective assessment of the preclearance program in participating countries. Further, we recommend that APHIS officials enforce established procedures that would require all PPQ officials to follow up and obtain reports not submitted within the established timeframe. If the reports are not submitted, take appropriate administrative action.

AGENCY RESPONSE

In its December 26, 2000, response to the official draft report, APHIS officials generally agreed with the findings and recommendations as presented. Applicable portions of the response are incorporated, along with our position, in the Findings and Recommendations section of the report. The full text of the agency's response and attachments is included as exhibit D of the report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
RESULTS IN BRIEF	i
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	ii
AGENCY RESPONSE	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	1
OBJECTIVES	2
SCOPE	2
METHODOLOGY	3
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5
CHAPTER 1	5
PRIOR AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS WERE NOT FULLY IMPLEMENTED	5
FINDING NO. 1	5
RECOMMENDATION NO. 1	7
CHAPTER 2	8
REQUIREMENTS FOR COUNTRY TRIP REPORTS NEED TO BE STRENGTHENED AND ENFORCED	8
FINDING NO. 2	8
RECOMMENDATION NO. 2	10
FINDING NO. 3	10
RECOMMENDATION NO. 3	11
EXHIBIT A – AUDIT SITES VISITED IN FY 1999	13
EXHIBIT B – VOLUME OF FRUITS & VEGETABLES IMPORTED DURING FY 1998	14
EXHIBIT C – NUMBER OF ANIMALS IMPORTED DURING FY 1998	15
EXHIBIT D – APHIS’ RESPONSE TO DRAFT REPORT	16
ABBREVIATIONS	24

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is responsible for protecting U.S. animal and plant resources from diseases and pests in order to preserve the marketability of U.S. agricultural products within this country and abroad. To accomplish this mission, APHIS has established regional and field offices in Washington, D.C., the 50 states, airports, seaports, and land ports throughout the United States and foreign countries.

APHIS' International Services (IS) currently participate in 28 preclearance programs, which involve the inspection of foreign packing and treatment facilities, commodities, and the treatment of commodities in the country of origin prior to entering the United States. The objective of APHIS is to protect and promote U.S. agriculture by maintaining an APHIS presence in foreign countries, which are significant agricultural trading partners and may also be potential sources of economically dangerous agricultural pests and diseases. APHIS assists host country officials in the development of work plans, which outline specific requirements, and guidelines of the preclearance program to be followed, in order to prevent, control, or eradicate animal and plant diseases and pests that threaten American agriculture. The presence of APHIS personnel at overseas locations, either on permanent assignment or short-term detail, provides first line of defense against the entry of foreign plant and animal diseases and pests into our country.

Plants imported into the United States that are not precleared by IS in the foreign country are inspected at the U.S. ports of entry by APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) staff. PPQ is responsible for protecting the Nation's agricultural resources from harmful pests, and preventing the entry of plant pests and animal diseases into the United States. PPQ is also responsible for inspecting and treating plants in the United States for export to other countries. PPQ issues a phytosanitary certificate to the exporter for U.S. plants that meet the recipient country's sanitary requirements. This certifies that the shipments are considered free of pests.

Plants that have been precleared in their country of origin enter the United States through 39 ports of entry, located at seaports, airports and land border ports. PPQ's role at ports of entry is to ensure that the integrity of the preclearance program is maintained. PPQ also participates in the preclearance program with IS in foreign countries by supervising the inspection and/or treatment of the commodities to ensure that exporters are

complying with U.S. plant health importation standards. These inspectors certify that the proper inspections and/or treatments have been conducted prior to the commodities entry into the United States.

APHIS Office of Veterinary Services (VS) is responsible for protecting U.S. animals from foreign animal diseases. Animals, semen, embryos, and hatching eggs enter the United States at any of 33 points along the Canadian and Mexican borders. VS officials inspect and quarantine animals prior to their entry into the United States. Inspection and quarantine procedures used by VS are based upon the type of animal and the risk assessment of the animal's country of origin.

Generally, at the Canadian border ports, the port veterinarian (PV) reviews all necessary documents accompanying the animals, such as animal health certificates for feeder and breeder animals, and import permits. The PV conducts inspections to ensure that the animals are free from communicable diseases. The inspection procedures used at the Mexican border ports are similar to those used along the Canadian border, except that all animals are offloaded and dipped in an insecticide solution prior to release into the United States.

During fiscal year (FY) 1998, 25 foreign countries exported approximately 579 million metric tons of precleared fruits and vegetables into the United States. Approximately 17.7 million animals also entered the United States through 33 ports of entry, including seaports, airports, and land border ports along the Canadian and Mexican borders. Approximately 710,000 of these animals entered the United States through border ports of entry along the Mexican border. Information relating to the metric tons of precleared fruits and vegetables and animals entering into the United States during FY 1999 was not available, at the time of our audit, from the agency.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this audit was to determine if APHIS implemented the corrective actions agreed-to in response to recommendations made in our prior Audit Report No. 33099-01-Hy, dated June 1995.

SCOPE

We evaluated the corrective actions agreed-to in response to recommendations made in our prior audit (Audit No. 33099-01-Hy, dated June 1995). We also reviewed and evaluated PPQ and VS procedures and operations regarding precleared fruits and vegetables at seaports and airports and inspecting and quarantining animals at land border ports. Accordingly, we visited APHIS Headquarters in Riverdale, Maryland; the PPQ Northeast Regional Office in Moorestown, New Jersey; three U.S. seaports and three land border ports of entry (see

exhibit A) to review applicable documents, records, and reports. We also visited the facilities and observed the inspections and clearance activities taking place at the selected ports of entry.

The three seaports were located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Wilmington, Delaware; and Elizabeth, New Jersey. These seaports were selected because they were visited during the prior audit and/or had a large volume of fruits and vegetables received through the preclearance program during FY 1998. These seaports received approximately 275 million metric tons or 48 percent of the precleared fruits and vegetables imported into the United States during FY 1998 (see exhibit B).

The three land border ports of entry were selected because they were visited during the prior audit and had the largest volume of animals imported into the United States. These land border ports of entry, located in El Paso, Texas; Presidio, Texas; and Nogales, Arizona; received approximately 466,600 or 66 percent of the animals that entered the United States through Mexico during FY 1998 (see exhibit C). We observed approximately 5,300 animals entering the United States through Mexico during FY 1999. We did not visit the Canadian ports because that country is considered to have an equivalent animal health status to that of the United States.

We reviewed documentation and records for the period FYs 1996 through 1999. The audit fieldwork was performed in FYs 1999 and 2000 and included such tests of program records as considered necessary to meet the audit objectives. This review was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

METHODOLOGY

To accomplish our audit objectives, we interviewed APHIS Headquarters officials for IS, PPQ and VS and reviewed documentation, weekly reports, and revised regulations and procedures to ensure that the preclearance program was being properly monitored and assessed, and that corrective action for prior audit recommendations had been implemented. We also interviewed officials from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) and reviewed agency documentation and records to ensure that final action had been completed on all recommendations in the prior audit report.

At the seaports of entry we observed preclearance operations and inspection activities to ensure that precleared commodities were not commingled with noncleared commodities and to determine if PPQ personnel followed required procedures. We also reviewed documentation related to incoming precleared shipments of fruits and vegetables to determine if it was properly completed and signed by an authorized official.

At the land borders we observed animals entering the United States from the Mexican borders to determine that VS personnel were quarantining animals and conducting inspections in accordance with established regulations. We also reviewed documentation for the animals we observed to determine if it was properly completed and approved by authorized personnel.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 1	PRIOR AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS WERE NOT FULLY IMPLEMENTED
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FINDING NO. 1

Although APHIS reported that final action was complete in the Secretary's Management Report to Congress, they had not revised or updated guidelines for inspecting and quarantining animals at ports of entry, as recommended in our prior audit report. This occurred because APHIS officials did not place a high priority on revising the guidelines. Also, they advised us they were not clear as to which specific guidelines required updating. They could not explain why they reported to OCFO that the guidelines were updated and distributed to their staff. As a result, there is a reduced assurance that diseased animals entering the United States will be detected.

According to Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR),² all animals offered for entry from Mexico, including such animals intended for movement through the United States in bond for immediate return to Mexico, should be inspected at the port of entry, and such animals found to be free from communicable disease and fever tick infestation, will be admitted into the United States. It also requires that inspections of slaughter animals imported from Canada be conducted at ports of entry to ensure that animals are free from communicable diseases.

Our prior audit (Audit Report No. 33099-01-Hy, dated June 1995) recommended (Recommendation No. 12) that VS officials develop and distribute updated guidance for conducting inspections and quarantines of animals. In its May 25, 1995 response to the audit, APHIS officials stated that they were developing a national port manual which would address this issue and that a draft would be completed in 6 months. APHIS officials also stated in its memorandum, dated July 12, 1996, to the OCFO requesting final action for this recommendation, that the manual, Import-Export Animals Port Manual, had been created and distributed to field personnel. During our review of documentation and discussions with VS officials we determined that APHIS officials had not developed a national port manual. VS officials informed us that they had started to develop the manual but because of other

² Title 9, CFR, Part 93.426, dated January 1, 1998.

priorities and uncertainty of which specific guidelines required clarification, the manual was never completed. They could not explain why they reported to OCFO that the manual had been developed and distributed to their field personnel.

We reviewed the incomplete port manual and found that some of the procedures included were outdated. We found memorandums in the manual that had been issued as far back as 1957 that did not correspond to the provisions outlined in the current CFR. We also reviewed some of the guidelines used by the VS and determined that they had not been updated.

The port manual that was to be used as an operation procedural manual for quarantining animals and conducting inspections of animals imported into the United States, should have included the PV's responsibilities based on the country risk and instructions implemented by agency officials. The information in the port manual should also correspond to the provisions outlined in the current CFR.

During the prior audit, we also questioned whether procedures were sufficient for the PV to certify that animals were free from disease. Our prior audit recommended that APHIS re-examine and revise inspection procedures for slaughter animals at Canadian land border ports, based on country risk and clarify the PV's responsibilities for certifying animals free of communicable disease.

In response to these Recommendation Nos. 9a and 9b, APHIS reported to OCFO that they revised Memorandum No. 591.38. Our review of the revised memorandum determined that it only addressed two communicable diseases, ringworm and warts, and it did not clarify the responsibilities of the PV's for certifying animals free of communicable disease. The memorandum issued was not specific enough to identify what the PV was to do or how they were to carry out their responsibilities when inspecting animals imported into the United States.

We also determined that APHIS officials had not revised the inspection procedures for slaughter animals at Canadian land border ports, based on country risk. According to APHIS officials, procedures were not revised or implemented because Canada is considered to have an equivalent animal health status to that of the United States. Therefore, PV's were not required to perform in-depth inspections of cattle coming from Canada. However, agency officials have not issued a memorandum or notice supporting this position.

APHIS officials agreed that the port manual should have been completed and that they are in the process of doing so.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

Complete the VS national port manual and develop related procedures to include specific instructions for the responsibilities of the PV's certifying animals free of communicable diseases and conducting inspections and quarantines of animals at ports of entry.

Agency Response

APHIS/VS advised that to clarify the process of certifying animals free of communicable disease, as provided in Title 9, CFR, all animals are inspected at the port of entry to determine if they are showing clinical signs of disease. In addition, tests may be required to determine if the animals have been exposed to specific diseases. In some cases, the testing requirements are stipulated in the 9 CFR. In other cases, the Administrator's broad authority is used to establish testing requirements. Testing requirements vary according to the diseases present in the country of origin and are specified in the import permit rather than in a memorandum or notice.

The current OIG draft audit states that VS has not issued a memorandum or notice outlining inspection procedures for slaughter cattle imported from Canada as previously recommended by OIG. However, a memorandum entitled, "Port Inspection of Ruminants from Canada for Immediate Slaughter," which is Veterinary Services Memorandum No. 591.56, was published on February 29, 2000. A copy of this directive is provided and we believe it addresses concerns expressed by the auditors.

Prior audit recommendations were not fully implemented due to retirement/transfer of VS personnel responsible for audit followup. As to the completion of its port manual, VS has assembled all relevant memorandums, notices, and other procedural documents and will distribute them to the appropriate staffs and field personnel for review and updating. It is anticipated VS will finalize the manual by May 1, 2001.

OIG Position

The action taken and planned is sufficient for management decision.

Trip reports for 7 of 25 countries (28 percent) with active preclearance programs during FY 1998 were either not adequately documented or submitted, as required, for evaluation by APHIS Headquarters staff. Agency officials did not follow up to obtain the missing reports or clarify the assessment. We also reported this condition in our prior audit. As a result APHIS developed procedures as agreed to, however, they were unclear regarding the required content of the reports. We question whether APHIS had sufficient documentation to assess the effectiveness of the preclearance program in those countries reviewed. As a result, there is reduced assurance that program controls are working to preclude the entry of non-precleared fruits and vegetables into the United States. Nothing came to our attention during this review, however, to indicate that APHIS allowed harmful plant diseases and pests to enter the United States.

International Regional Director's (IRD) Memorandum No. 85-3, section VII.C, Preclearance Program Guidelines, Revised, dated May 31, 1990, states in part that a written report of the preclearance operation must be prepared by each participant or an overall regional report prepared by the designated supervisor.

IRD Memorandum 94-3, International Services Trip Reports, dated June 24, 1994, established a standard format for trip reports in general terms such as locations and significant persons visited, action items/recommendations and accomplishments. It also states that trip reports are expected to be completed within 5 working days after the traveler returns to the duty station and submitted to the traveler's immediate supervisor, with a copy to the directors of Plant and Animal Health Program Staffs.

FINDING NO. 2
**TRIP REPORTS NEED TO BE
STRENGTHENED**

Two of the 25 trip reports reviewed did not include sufficient information to document and support that the preclearance program activities in the country of origin were operating as approved. This occurred because the reporting format for trip reports was unclear and APHIS Headquarters personnel allowed PPQ officers to submit inadequate documentation for completed inspections. Without adequate trip reports, APHIS cannot

properly assess the preclearance program in those countries or ensure that the objectives of the program were met.

Our review of APHIS' Headquarters files for trip reports submitted by PPQ officers for the 25 countries with active preclearance programs during FY 1998 disclosed that the reports for Mexico and the Netherlands did not include sufficient information to evaluate the preclearance operations in those countries. The reports did not describe the work performed to ensure that the country was in compliance with the preclearance program, problems encountered and the action taken to correct them, and recommendations needed to improve the country's program for the next fiscal year. Further, there was no indication from the documentation we reviewed or discussions with APHIS officials that anyone contacted the responsible PPQ officer to obtain additional information about the preclearance programs in these two countries. Again, the information provided in these two reports was insufficient to provide APHIS with either a positive or negative assurance that the countries were complying with the objectives of the preclearance program or the approved work plan.

Existing procedures, IRD Memorandum No. 85-3 and 94-3, do not specifically identify what information should be included in the trip reports or allow for detailed information because the report is limited to two pages in length. (To function as a program control, we believe the trip report should include a description of the assignment, specific details of the work performed, tests conducted, problems encountered, locations visited, officials contacted, and recommendations for improving program operations and revising country work plans.)

We were advised the IS Area or Regional Director use these reports to update and revise the work plans which are used as a guide for the treatment, certification, and exportation of specific commodities to the United States during the next exporting season. Even though the procedures are in general terms, some of the reports we reviewed did include detailed information that would provide agency officials sufficient information to determine if the country was in compliance with the preclearance program and to update the annual work plan.

We noted that the Director of the PPQ Office prepared an informal guideline for PPQ officers to follow when preparing their reports at the conclusion of their visits. However, senior agency management did not approve this guideline. Therefore, it lacked the full authority of a policy memorandum.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2

Update existing agency reporting policies and procedures to include specific areas that should be identified in the trip report.

Agency Response

The PPQ Preclearance Staff will adopt the following steps:

1. Rewrite the present instructions regarding the submission of trip reports. This will be accomplished by January 3, 2001. Relative program directives were examined for content by PPQ and IS. A copy of IRD No. 94-3, International Services Trip Reports, issued in June 1994, is provided.
2. Place revised instructions on the PPQ bulletin board which is shared with all IS regions. We anticipate completion by January 5, 2001.
3. Place updated instructions in "country" packets which are sent to all employees who go on preclearance temporary duty (TDY). Inclusion in the informational packets will occur by January 5, 2001.

OIG Position

The actions planned are sufficient for management decision. However, the revised instructions should, at a minimum, include a description of the assignment, specific details of the work performed, tests conducted, problems encountered, locations visited, officials contacted, and recommendations for improving program operations and revising country work plans.

FINDING NO. 3

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES WERE NOT FULFILLED

Officials of Plant and Animal Health Program Staffs did not fulfill their responsibilities for ensuring that trip reports were submitted for all preclearance program inspections performed in countries of origin. Trip reports for 5 of 25 countries inspected during FY 1998 were not submitted to the appropriate agency official.

APHIS Headquarters officials in Plant and Animal Health Program Staffs did not follow up with the PPQ officers to determine why the trip reports were not submitted. As a result, there is no assurance that the countries with preclearance programs are operating in accordance with regulations and the annual work plan. Also, there was no documentation or information to update the country work plan for the next exporting season.

Our review of the trip reports and discussions with officials of Plant and Animal Health Program Staffs disclosed that a report was not submitted for

Argentina, Venezuela, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Spain. These countries exported 65 million metric tons, or 11 percent of the precleared fruits and vegetables imported to the United States. APHIS Headquarters officials did not enforce existing requirements that the reports be submitted at the completion of the assessment. According to agency officials, they could not force PPQ officers to submit the reports once the inspection was completed because there were no consequences in place for the PPQ officer's inactions.

The trip reports are an essential part of the preclearance program because they are used for reporting critical information pertaining to the treatment, certification, and exportation of commodities into the United States. In addition, the trip reports are used for evaluating the effectiveness of the preclearance program and for revising work plans for the next exporting season. We believe the supervisor responsible for monitoring the performance of PPQ officers should ensure that the appropriate reports are submitted. If reports are not submitted, appropriate administrative action should be taken.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

Require IS and PPQ officials to followup on trip reports not submitted within the established timeframe and ensure that a report is received for each country in which an assessment is conducted during the year. Take appropriate administrative action if the reports are not submitted.

Agency Response

The PPQ Preclearance Staff will implement this recommendation as follows:

1. Emphasize the importance of timely submitting trip reports as required in the IRD Memorandum 94-3. As stated in our reply to the previous recommendation, the current directive will be rewritten, placed on the PPQ Bulletin Board, and included in the "country" packets provided to employees prior to departure for preclearance TDY.
2. Change the document used to apply for the foreign TDY roster to reflect that trip reports are mandatory. By January 12, 2001, PPQ will have revised the application form.

3. Develop and maintain a basic tracking system to record the submission of trip reports. The system will be in place by January 3, 2001.
4. Propose changing the rotation policy for the "Foreign TDY Roster." Currently, PPQ officers who return from preclearance TDY's are moved to the bottom of the "Foreign TDY Roster." The PPQ Preclearance Staff will propose that, if a PPQ officer fails to submit a trip report, that individual's name will remain at the bottom of the roster until a report is submitted. The last proposal will be a lengthy process requiring negotiations with National Association of Agriculture Employees Union. The Preclearance Staff will discuss this proposal with Union officials by approximately March 2002.
5. The trip report will be used as verification that travel was completed. The Preclearance Staff will require submission of a trip report as part of documentation to sign off on travel vouchers. This will commence during the 3rd Quarter of Fiscal Year 2001.

OIG Position

We agree with the actions planned. To reach management decision, however, PPQ Preclearance Staff needs to provide documentation of the National Association of Agriculture Employees Union's determination of proposal number four. If it is determined that the Union agrees with the policy change, documentation should be provided identifying when the policy change will be implemented.

EXHIBIT A – AUDIT SITES VISITED IN FY 1999

APHIS Headquarters	Riverdale, Maryland
PPQ Northeast Regional Office	Moorestown, New Jersey
Port of Wilmington	Wilmington, Delaware
Port of Philadelphia Port of Philadelphia Area Office	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Port of Elizabeth	Elizabeth, New Jersey
Port Nogales	Nogales, Arizona
Port Presidio	Presidio, Texas/Chihuahua, Mexico
Port of El Paso	El Paso, Texas/Santa Teresa, New Mexico

**EXHIBIT B – VOLUME OF FRUITS & VEGETABLES IMPORTED
DURING FY 1998**

Port	Volume of Prcleared Items	Percent of Total Prcleared Items
Port of Wilmington	84,947,427 metric tons	14.67
Port of Philadelphia	189,159,541 metric tons	32.68
Port of Elizabeth	1,029,947 metric tons	.18
TOTAL	275,136,915 METRIC TONS	47.53

EXHIBIT C – NUMBER OF ANIMALS IMPORTED DURING FY 1998

Animals Imported From Mexico			
Port	Number of Animals Imported	Percent Of Animals Imported	Number of Animals Observed During 1999 Visits
Port Nogales	111,020	15.64	1,037
Port Presidio	145,377	20.48	1,700
Port of El Paso	210,203	29.61	2,551
TOTAL	466,600	65.73	5,288

EXHIBIT D – APHIS’ RESPONSE TO DRAFT REPORT

page 1 of 8



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Washington, DC
20250

December 26, 2000

Subject: Audit No. 33099-02-HY
International Programs

To: James R. Ebbitt
Assistant Inspector General
for Audit
Office of the Inspector General

We have carefully examined the recommendations identified in the Office of the Inspector General’s discussion draft report regarding various International Programs’ activities. We consulted with our Veterinary Services and Plant Protection and Quarantine units and have enclosed their responses.

Thank you for the opportunity to review your audit and comment on the findings.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Craig A. Reed".

Craig A. Reed
Administrator

Enclosures

Recommendation 1:

Complete the Veterinary Services (VS) national port manual and develop related procedures to include specific instructions for responsibilities of port veterinarians certifying animals free of communicable diseases and conducting inspections and quarantines of animals at ports of entry.

Veterinary Services' Response:

To clarify the process of certifying animals free of communicable disease, as provided in Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations (9 CFR), all animals are inspected at the port of entry to determine if they are showing clinical signs of disease. In addition, tests may be required to determine if the animals have been exposed to specific diseases. In some cases, the testing requirements are stipulated in the 9 CFR. For example, Section 93.308(a)(3) of the 9 CFR states that horses must test negative for dourine, glanders, equine piroplasmiasis, and equine infectious anemia, with certain exceptions based on the country of origin. In other cases, the Administrator's broad authority is used to establish testing requirements. Testing requirements vary according to the diseases present in the country of origin and are specified in the import permit rather than in a memorandum or notice.

OIG previously recommended that VS develop a memorandum or notice outlining inspection procedures for slaughter cattle imported from Canada. The current OIG draft audit states that VS has not issued this document. However, a memorandum entitled, "Port Inspection of Ruminants from Canada for Immediate Slaughter," which is Veterinary Services Memorandum No. 591.56, was published on February 29, 2000. A copy of this directive is enclosed, and we believe it addresses concerns expressed by the auditors.

Prior audit recommendations were not fully implemented due to retirement/transfer of VS personnel responsible for audit follow-up. As to the completion of its port manual, VS has assembled all relevant memorandums, notices, and other procedural documents and will distribute them to the appropriate staffs and field personnel for review and updating. It is anticipated VS will finalize the manual by May 1, 2001.

The draft report indicates Canada is a "disease free country." We request this wording be revised to state that Canada is "considered to have an equivalent animal health status to that of the United States." This change is suggested because Canada is free of diseases which are exotic to the United States and diseases for which VS conducts control and eradication programs (e.g., brucellosis, tuberculosis, and pseudorabies).

Recommendation 2:

Update existing agency reporting policies and procedures to include specific areas that should be identified in the status report.

Plant Protection and Quarantine's Response:

Recommendations 2 and 3 refer to "status" reports. Please change that term to "trip" reports when issuing the final version of your audit. During the November 7, 2000 meeting with OIG, an International Services (IS) official requested that all audit report references to "Operational Support for IS and VS" be changed to "Plant and Animal Health Program Staffs." This will correctly reflect organizational changes.

The Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Preclearance Staff will adopt the following steps for recommendation 2:

- 1) Rewrite the present instructions regarding the submission of trip reports. This will be accomplished by January 3, 2001. Relative program directives were examined for content by PPQ and IS. A copy of IRD No. 94-3, International Services Trip Reports, issued in June 1994, is enclosed.
- 2) Place revised instructions on the PPQ bulletin board which is shared with all International Services regions. We anticipate completion by January 5, 2001.
- 3) Place updated instructions in "country" packets which are sent to all employees who go on preclearance TDY. Inclusion in the informational packets will occur by January 5, 2001.

Recommendation 3:

Require IS and PPQ officials to follow-up on status reports that are not submitted within the established time frame and ensure a report is received for each country in which an assessment is conducted during the year. Take appropriate administrative action if reports are not submitted.

Plant Protection and Quarantine's Response:

The PPQ Preclearance Staff will implement this recommendation as described below:

- 1) Emphasize the importance of timely submitting trip reports as required in the IRD Memorandum 94-3. As stated in our reply to the previous recommendation, the current directive will be rewritten, placed on the PPQ Bulletin Board, and included in "country" packets provided to employees prior to departure for preclearance TDY. Time frames are identified above.

2) Change the document used to apply for the foreign TDY roster to reflect that trip reports are mandatory. By January 12, 2001, PPQ will have revised the application form.

3) Develop and maintain a basic tracking system to record the submission of trip reports. The system will be in place by January 3, 2001.

4) Propose changing the rotation policy for the "Foreign TDY Roster." Currently, PPQ officers who return from preclearance TDY's are moved to the bottom of the "Foreign TDY Roster." The PPQ Preclearance Staff will propose that, if a PPQ officer fails to submit a trip report, that individual's name will remain at the bottom of the roster until a report is submitted. The last proposal will be a lengthy process requiring negotiations with the National Association of Agriculture Employees Union. The Preclearance Staff will discuss this proposal with Union officials by approximately March 2002.

(5) The trip report will be used as verification that travel was completed. The Preclearance Staff will require submission of a trip report as part of documentation to sign off on travel vouchers. This will commence during the 3rd Quarter of Fiscal Year 2001.

If you have any questions, please contact Frank Vollmerhausen of the Resource Management Systems and Evaluation Staff at (301) 734-8864.

United States
Department of
Agriculture

February 29, 2000

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

VETERINARY SERVICES MEMORANDUM NO. 591.56

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Subject: Port Inspection of Ruminants from Canada for Immediate Slaughter

Veterinary Services
700 River Road
Unit 39
Purcellville, MD 20737

To: Directors, VS Regions
Area Veterinarians in Charge, VS
Port Veterinarians, VS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is first, to clarify the procedures that port veterinarians must use for inspecting ruminants from Canada for immediate slaughter in the United States, and second, to ensure that all port veterinarians perform such inspections in a consistent and uniform manner.

II. BACKGROUND

According to the regulations in 9 CFR 93.408, ruminants to be imported into the United States must be inspected at the port of entry to ensure that they are free of communicable disease. Trucks carrying cattle from Canada must stop at land border ports, and each of these trucks is met by a port veterinarian from APHIS, VS.

The regulations in 9 CFR 93.420 refer specifically to ruminants imported from Canada for immediate slaughter. These animals must be "consigned from the port of entry directly to a recognized slaughtering establishment and there be slaughtered within 2 weeks from the date of entry."

VS Memorandum No. 591.15, dated March 9, 1994, describes the procedures for ensuring that ruminants imported from Canada for immediate slaughter are moved directly to an approved slaughter establishment. It also states that this establishment must send confirmation of slaughter to the port veterinarian.

With dramatic increases in port activity, port veterinarians must use a systematic approach to expedite routine inspections, decrease the time animals must be detained at the port, and ensure that each animal released has been inspected and found qualified for entry. Unloading slaughter animals from a truck is stressful for the animals and should be avoided if possible. This memorandum describes VS policy regarding inspection of slaughter animals at Canadian land border ports.

Veterinary Services Memorandum No. 591.56

2

Veterinary Services believes that in light of the procedures by which imported ruminants, after visual inspection, are sent in a sealed truck directly to a specified approved slaughter establishment, importation of Canadian ruminants for immediate slaughter does not pose a risk of spreading disease to U.S. livestock. Part III below describes the procedures for U.S. port veterinarians to follow when inspecting ruminants for import from Canada for immediate slaughter.

III. PROCEDURES

Ruminants for import from Canada arrive in trucks at Canadian land border ports. Port veterinarians must follow these procedures when inspecting animals for immediate slaughter in the United States.

A. Visual Inspection--Signs To Look For

The port veterinarian must visually evaluate every animal presented for entry. If any animal in the truck is overtly sick, is down in the truck and cannot get up, or is injured, then the shipment cannot enter the United States.

B. Deciding Whether or Not to Unload Animals

For each truckload, the port veterinarian must decide whether it is possible to visually evaluate each animal without removing the animals from the truck. Since unloading animals from a truck is stressful for the animals, it should be avoided if possible. If a truck has compartments or areas where it is difficult to see all the animals, the port veterinarian may use options such as ladders and flashlights to avoid unloading, so long as all the animals are adequately viewed.

If the port veterinarian feels there may be animals in the truck unfit for entry for immediate slaughter but cannot confirm this without further examination, then the animals must be unloaded at that port or at the nearest port with unloading facilities.

Whenever the port veterinarian deems it necessary to unload, the vehicle driver or the importer is responsible for providing animal handlers to assist the port veterinarian with the unloading and inspection.

C. After the Visual Evaluation

Whether the port veterinarian does the visual evaluation while the animals are on the truck or after they are unloaded, he or she must determine that they appear free of communicable disease before they can enter the United States. Once the port veterinarian is satisfied that all the animals in the truck are fit to enter the United States for immediate slaughter, the port veterinarian then proceeds to:

Veterinary Services Memorandum No. 591.56

3

1. Apply official numbered seals to each exit gate on the truck. The seals must be intact when the truck arrives at the designated slaughter establishment, where the FSIS veterinarian or the designated plant employee (VS Memorandum No. 591.15) breaks the seals.

2. Fill out items 1 through 12 on two copies of VS Form 17-33, Animals Imported for Immediate Slaughter. This form includes, in addition to other information, the port and date of entry, the number and species of animals, the truck license number and seal numbers, and the name and address of consignor and consignee.

3. Give the truck driver one copy of VS Form 17-33 (with items 1 through 12 filled out by the port veterinarian) and allow the truck to enter the United States. Each truck with animals must have its own VS Form 17-33, which must accompany the truck to the slaughter establishment. The establishment official must fill out items 13 through 17 on the form, indicating the date the animals were slaughtered (not more than 2 weeks after the entry date) and certifying that all the animals were received and held in pens until slaughter. Then the establishment official sends the form back to the port veterinarian.

4. Send one copy of VS Form 17-33 (with items 1 through 12 filled out by the port veterinarian) to the FSIS veterinarian at the designated slaughter establishment (veterinarian at destination). After doing a post-mortem examination, the FSIS veterinarian fills out items 18 through 22 of VS Form 17-33, certifying that the animals were slaughtered and noting any lesions, and returns the form to the port veterinarian.

Thomas E. Walton *for*

Alfonso Torres
Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

International
Services

Federal Bldg.
Hyattsville, MD
20782

June 24, 1994

IRD MEMORANDUM NO. 94-3

SUBJECT: International Services Trip Reports

TO: IS Regional Directors

The purpose of this memorandum is to establish a standard format for trip reports. We will appreciate your submitting reports which adhere to this standardized format. Use of this format will allow easy extraction of information for briefings and/or development of action plans to address issues. They also identify the international contacts and describe potential working relationships with these persons.

1. Traveler:
2. Location(s) Visited and Date(s):
3. Purpose of Travel: (Objectives)
4. Action Items/Recommendations:
5. Accomplishments:
 - a. Trip Summary:
 - b. Trip Details:
6. List of Significant Persons Visited:

Your usual fine cooperation in implementing these instructions is appreciated.

Marshall F. Kirby
Acting Deputy Administrator

ABBREVIATIONS

APHIS	
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.....	i
CFR	
Code of Federal Regulations	5
FY	
Fiscal Year	2
IRD	
International Regional Director.....	8
IS	
International Services	1
OCFO	
Office of the Chief Financial Officer	i
PPQ	
Plant, Protection and Quarantine.....	ii
PV	
Port Veterinarian.....	2
TDY	
Temporary Duty.....	10
VS	
Veterinary Services	2