



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

Jim Barrett (301) 734-6405

Angela Harless (202) 720-4623

USDA AMENDS REGULATIONS ON IMPORTS FROM SURREY COUNTY, ENGLAND, AFTER CHANGE IN DISEASE STATUS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24, 2008--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is amending regulations governing the importation of certain animals, meat and other animal products into the United States by restoring Surrey County, England, to the list of regions of the world that are considered free of rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), but subject to additional restrictions because of those regions' proximity to or trading relations with FMD-affected regions.

This rule relieves certain FMD-related prohibitions and restrictions on imports from Surrey County, England, while ensuring the continued protection of U.S. livestock from FMD.

In August 2007, APHIS placed restrictions and prohibitions, depending on the type of product and level of processing, on the importation of products from Surrey County, England, derived from FMD-susceptible species following the confirmation of the disease in Surrey County. As a result of that interim rule, the importation of any ruminant or swine, as well as fresh (chilled or frozen) meat or animal products of any ruminant or swine from Surrey County into the United States was restricted.

APHIS recognizes that the United Kingdom immediately responded to the detection of the disease in Surrey County to ensure that it did not spread beyond its borders. In accordance with guidelines of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), APHIS examined the events that occurred during and after the outbreaks and assessed the risk associated with the resumption of imports of ruminants and swine and the fresh meat and other animal products of ruminants and swine from Surrey County, England.

FMD is a contagious viral disease of ruminants, swine and other cloven-hoofed animals. The disease is not transmissible from animals to humans, but it does have serious implications for animal agriculture in any country where the disease is detected. APHIS has a strong system in place for detecting and responding to outbreaks of foreign animal diseases like FMD and places trade restrictions on regions where the disease is detected.

Notice of this final rule is published in the Dec. 24 *Federal Register* and becomes effective Jan. 8, 2009.

#

Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS news release page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom>. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to lyris@mdrdlyriss10.aphis.usda.gov and leave the subject blank. In the message, type `subscribe press_releases`.