

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

12-13

2/7/13

CERTIFYING PRODUCTS UNDER EXPORT VERIFICATION AND LESS THAN 30 MONTHS OF AGE VERIFICATION QUALITY SYSTEM ASSESSMENT (EV/QSA) PROGRAMS

I. PURPOSE

This notice re-issues and updates the instructions found in FSIS Notice 60-11. This notice provides inspection program personnel (IPP) with instructions for carrying out FSIS's certification process for meat and poultry products exported under Export Verification Program or a Less Than 30 Months of Age Verification Quality System Assessment Program (QSA LT-30) program (herein after EV/QSA programs), including the need to verify that a signed Statement of Verification (SOV) for Export is provided to IPP, when required. The need for an EV/QSA program and an SOV is identified in the destination country's requirements, which are documented in the Export Library. It should be noted that not all countries require an SOV.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Verifications of EV/QSA programs are conducted by FSIS as voluntary reimbursable services. Establishments and other facilities must apply for these services through the District Office (DO) in the district where the establishment or facility is located. Establishments and other facilities requesting voluntary reimbursable inspection services need to complete FSIS Form 5200-6, Application/Approval for Voluntary Reimbursable Inspection Service, and receive approval from the DO for such services before the services can be provided.

B. The Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) Grading and Verification Division administers the USDA EV/QSA programs. The Grading and Verification Division is responsible for reviewing and approving producers as eligible suppliers of meat and poultry products under the USDA EV/QSA programs and for maintaining approved supplier lists and approved product lists provided by the company, when required by the individual countries. The EV/QSA programs outline the specified product requirements for individual countries.

III. APPROVAL OF ESTABLISHMENTS UNDER AN EV/QSA PROGRAM AND RELATED FSIS RESPONSIBILITIES

A. When an establishment requests to be approved for participation in an AMS EV/QSA program, AMS will advise the Office of International Affairs (OIA), Export Programs Staff (EPS), via e-mail of the establishment's request at ImportExport@fsis.usda.gov.

1. Upon receipt of the AMS e-mail, EPS is to acknowledge receipt of the notification by replying to the e-mail at arcbranch@ams.usda.gov.
2. EPS is to forward the AMS e-mail to the DO where the establishment is located.

DISTRIBUTION: Electronic

NOTICE EXPIRES: 2/1/14

OPI: OPPD

3. The DO is to ensure that any IPP, who may be involved with the certification of product for export under an EV/QSA program, receive appropriate training prior to conducting EV/QSA-related exports.

B. If the establishment passes the initial AMS audit and is approved for an EV/QSA program, EPS will receive an electronically-transmitted copy of the audit from AMS for its establishment file. The EPS is to promptly notify the DO via e-mail of the approval and the DO instructs the IPP to update the establishment profile in PHIS. The EPS is to respond to AMS confirming receipt of the audit report. IPP are to discuss the audit report with the establishment during a weekly meeting before the first EV/QSA export. All audit reports are subject to FSIS review.

C. AMS will electronically transmit subsequent EV/QSA program establishment audit reports to the EPS for its establishment file. If the audit notes deficiencies the EPS is to notify the DO via e-mail of the deficiencies and the DO instructs the IPP to not certify the affected exports until they verify corrective actions to the establishment written EV/QSA program. As a requirement of an approved EV/QSA program, the establishment is to maintain a copy of all EV/QSA program audit reports and make them available for IPP review when needed.

D. If an establishment is delisted from an EV/QSA program by AMS, EPS will be notified of the delisting by AMS. EPS is to notify the DO via e-mail, and the DO is to notify the affected in-plant IPP to not certify exports for the affected exports until further notice and change the establishment PHIS profile accordingly. OIA will receive from AMS an electronically-transmitted copy of the notice of delisting and, the audit report. EPS is to acknowledge receipt of the delisting. EPS is to place the delisting notification and the audit report in its file for that establishment and update the eligible establishment list in the Export Library, if applicable.

IV. VERIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR EV/QSA PROGRAMS

A. IPP are to determine whether the establishment has an AMS-approved EV/QSA program. This determination can be made by asking the establishment whether it has such a program at the weekly meeting and by accessing the FSIS Export Library ([Export Requirements for Countries with an Approved USDA EV Program](#)) and following the links to the AMS web site that maintains the list of approved establishments. A link to the AMS eligible plant list is included in the countries export library.

B. IPP are to be aware of the location and contents of the establishment's approved EV/QSA program Quality Systems Assessment (QSA) Manual to verify export requirements relating to proper execution of the program.

C. IPP will find a list of products intended for export approved under the EV/QSA Program in the establishment's QSA Manual as required by AMS. The list is to include all items intended for export, the specific product code numbers, and a detailed description of each item. Maintaining this information is an AMS requirement as part of an approved EV/QSA program. The unique product identification system can be accessed by authorized FSIS inspection personnel from [FSIS' Intranet Site](#).

NOTE: In situations where a supplier and fabricator are separate establishments, the fabricator is to maintain a list of supplier establishments with approved EV/QSA suppliers, as required by AMS. In addition, AMS requires that the fabricator maintain a list of products that each EV/QSA supplier is approved to provide under its approved EV/QSA program. As part of the approved EV/QSA program, these establishment records are subject to FSIS review.

D. If, based on their verification activities, IPP are concerned that an AMS-approved EV/QSA establishment is not properly executing its EV/QSA program (for example, attempting to ship product that is not eligible for the importing country), they are **not to sign** export applications for the product in question and are to:

1. Notify AMS at arcbranch@ams.usda.gov and provide the following information in the notification:
 - a. Establishment name, address, and number;
 - b. Product type, product code, and quantity of product;
 - c. Date of production, lot number, and shift;
 - d. Date and nature of observation;
 - e. Name of country for which product is intended;
 - f. Export certificate number (if applicable);
 - g. Any other information to verify claim; and
 - h. Name of IPP documenting concerns.
2. Send a courtesy copy of the notification to their immediate FSIS supervisor and to OIA (ImportExport@fsis.usda.gov) and maintain a copy of the message in the inspection office export file.
3. Take the appropriate enforcement actions and issue a Non-compliance Record if any of the problems with the EV/QSA requirements are also regulatory non-compliance.

V. VERIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR PRODUCT INTENDED FOR EXPORT UNDER EV/QSA PROGRAMS

A. Upon receiving FSIS Form 9060-6, Application for Export Certificate, IPP are to verify that (following the procedures in FSIS Directive 9000.1):

1. The establishment is on the AMS EV/QSA list as approved to export to the importing country, and that the product was derived from animals slaughtered after the date the establishment received AMS approval to export that type of product to that country; and
2. Each of the products listed on the application is eligible for export to the country under the country specific EV/QSA program, and each product is produced under an AMS EV/QSA program.

B. After determining that the establishment itself is eligible to export to the importing country, and that the specific products are eligible to be exported to that country, IPP are to re-inspect the product as set out in FSIS Directives 9000.1 and 9040.1.

C. If the application or product is not acceptable (for reasons such as, the application is not complete, or the regulatory requirements have not been met), IPP **are not to sign** the application and are to follow the instructions set out in FSIS Directives 9000.1 and 9040.1.

D. If the application or product is not acceptable because an EV/QSA requirement has not been met, IPP, in addition to returning the application un-signed, are to follow the instructions in section IV. D. above.

E. If the application and product are acceptable, IPP are to follow the instructions in FSIS Directive 9000.1 regarding signing the application and issuing FSIS Form 9060-5, Meat and Poultry Products Export Certificate of Wholesomeness.

F. In some cases, as part of its EV/QSA-approved program, the establishment must obtain a SOV for Export from AMS, confirming that the EV/QSA program requirements have been met, and that the products are eligible for export, before it can forward the certificate to an FSIS certifying official for signature. The product codes and descriptions are provided to the FSIS certifying official in:

1. A copy of the signed application (FSIS Form 9060-6);
2. The unsigned certificate (FSIS Form 9060-5); and
3. Any other certificates required by the importing country, including letterhead certificates.

NOTE: Establishments that need to obtain an SOV for Export need to contact AMS directly. Information about the procedure to obtain SOV's for Export and a list of countries that require an AMS SOV for Export are provided in the AMS document titled "Export Verification (EV/QSA) Programs Additional Requirements." A copy of the document can be obtained at the following link:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELDEV3103539>

G. AMS sends a signed copy of the SOV for Export to the establishment.

H. When signing an FSIS Form 9060-5, the FSIS certifying official (e.g., Public Health Veterinarian or Consumer Safety Inspector) should expect to receive the following from the establishment:

1. The original FSIS Form 9060-6 signed by the FSIS IPP;
2. The original unsigned FSIS Form 9060-5 and any other certificates required by the importing country, including letterhead certificates, and supporting documents; and
3. When required, a copy of the SOV for Export from AMS that confirms:
 - a. That AMS conducted a review of the required documents and slaughter and processing establishment information as listed; and
 - b. That AMS has determined that the items listed are eligible items approved for export to the country listed on the certificate and from the facilities listed.

I. When an FSIS certifying official receives the documents in paragraph H. above, he or she is to verify, as set out in FSIS Directive 9000.1, that the documents are complete and accurate, and that the SOV for Export confirms that EV/QSA program requirements were met.

1. If any of the documents are not accurate, he or she is to:
 - a. Notify the establishment and explain the problem;
 - b. Document the problem in a memorandum of interview; and
 - c. Maintain copies of the documents in question and the memorandum of interview in the government file.
2. If the application or product is not acceptable because an EV/QSA requirement has not been met, the certifying official is to follow the instructions in section IV. D. above; and
3. If all documents are acceptable, sign all certifications and maintain a copy of the AMS SOV for Export in the government file along with the certifications.

NOTE: As appropriate, IPP are to document noncompliance in accordance with 9 CFR Part 350.

NOTE: All time involved with EV/QSA-related verification activities by IPP is to be charged as a reimbursable service, even when IPP conduct these activities during their established tour of duty. Supervisory personnel are to ensure that IPP are appropriately billing the establishment for these activities. (See FSIS Directives 9000.1; 12,600.1; and 12,600.2.)

VI. QUESTIONS

A. Refer questions regarding this notice to the International Policy Division through [askFSIS](#) . When submitting a question, use the Submit a Question tab and enter the following information in the fields provided:

Subject Field: Enter FSIS Notice 12-13 Certifying Products Under Export Verification and Less Than 30 Months of Age Verification Quality System Assessment (EV/QSA) Programs

Question Field: Enter your question with as much detail as possible;

Product Field: Select **Exports** from the drop-down menu;

Category Field: Select **Export Certificates** from the drop-down menu;

Policy Arena: Select International (Import/Export) from the drop-down menu;

When all fields are complete, press the **Submit** button.

B. Export questions should be referred to the Export Programs Staff by calling the toll free telephone number at 1-855-444-9904.



Assistant Administrator
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