

**PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORT OF BOVINES  
FROM MEXICO FOR IMMEDIATE SLAUGHTER**

APHIS VS National Center for Import and Export

March 2012

**1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1.1 No import permit is required if the bovines (defined as cattle or bison, meaning *Bos indicus*, *Bos Taurus* or *Bison bison*) for immediate slaughter are offered for entry at a land border and meet the following conditions:

1.1.1 The bovines were born in or were legally imported into Mexico and have resided there for at least 60 days.

1.1.2 The animals must not have been under movement restrictions within Mexico due to animal health reasons for at least 60 days prior to importation into the United States.

1.1.3 The importer has obtained an appointment (in advance of entry) from the APHIS Veterinary Services (VS) port veterinarian. The port veterinarian will assign a time and place for the importation to take place, if mutually satisfactory arrangements can be made for the purpose of inspecting the animals.

In any other case, the importer must obtain an import permit from:

Veterinary Services' National Center for Import and Export (NCIE)  
4700 River Road, Unit 39  
Riverdale, MD  
20737-1231

The import permit application form (VS 17-129 fillable) can be found online at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/permits/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/permits/), or by calling and requesting an application at (301) 851-3300.

1.2 A VS Form 17-29 (*Declaration of Importation*) must be filled out prior to or at the time of presentation for entry and submitted to the U.S. Customs inspector.

1.3 An official health certificate (*Certificado Zoosanitario para la Exportacion de Animales*) for slaughter bovines is required. The official health certificate must be issued by a veterinarian authorized by the Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación (SAGARPA) of Mexico; and must be endorsed by a veterinarian employed by SAGARPA, who certifies the statements and tests required in Section 3 of this protocol. All documentation (see Part 2 below) generated prior to the exportation must be reviewed and certified by SAGARPA.

1.3.1 The health certificate may not list fewer animals than the number presented for entry to the United States; but may contain strikeouts made and initialed by SAGARPA authorities for animals that were consigned for slaughter, but which

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were not loaded on the conveyance on the day of crossing, or were otherwise removed prior to arrival at the port of entry.

1.3.2 Each vehicle with bovines for immediate slaughter must have the original signed copy of the documentation for those animals. Additional vehicles in a given consignment must have separate original signed copies of the documentation for animals on those vehicles.

1.4 The bovines for immediate slaughter must be imported to a recognized slaughtering establishment approved by APHIS to receive bovines from Mexico for immediate slaughter. A list of APHIS-approved slaughter establishments is posted on NCIE's Web site at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import\\_export/downloads/slaughter\\_list.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/downloads/slaughter_list.pdf). Currently, the list does not differentiate establishments approved to receive bovines only from Mexico (or from either Mexico or Canada) from establishments approved to receive bovines only from Canada. For a given listed plant, the AVIC in whose Area the establishment is located should be contacted for this information.

1.5 The route from the VS port of entry to the APHIS-approved slaughter establishment must be provided to and authorized by the port veterinarian in advance of the arrival of the shipment.

1.6 The bovines for immediate slaughter must be slaughtered within 14 days of entry to the U.S.

## **2. IDENTIFICATION AND DOCUMENTATION**

2.1 Prior to being presented for entry to the United States, all bovines for immediate slaughter for export must be individually identified with a 'blue metal' eartag issued by SAGARPA as official identification. The tag number should be recorded in appropriate export documentation in such a manner that this identification could later be used to trace that animal back to the farm where it originated. In addition to the required 'blue metal' tag, other forms of identification tags, including SINIIGA eartags, may be present on the animals (if required for movement within Mexico prior to export).

2.2 'Blue metal' eartags, SINIIGA tags, or other forms of identification present on bovines for immediate slaughter may not be altered in any way after entry, and may be removed only at the time of slaughter.

2.3. The bovines for immediate slaughter must be accompanied by the following (bilingual or English) documents:

- Certificate of Herd of Origin

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- Annex to the Certificate of Herd of Origin, with individual animal ID numbers corresponding to the ‘blue metal’ eartags and any other official ID provided.
- Health Certificate (*Certificado Zoosanitario para la Exportacion de Animales*) with certifications (per Section 3 below).
- A certificate of treatment and inspection for ectoparasites (dip certificate) endorsed by SAGARPA (if applicable; not needed for cattle from northern Sonora or northern Chihuahua states)
- Tuberculosis (TB) test charts (these are required by SAGARPA to be present for movements within Mexico prior to export).

### **3. CERTIFICATIONS**

The following statements must be included in the official health certificate;

3.1 The animals for export have been kept in the region of export during the last 60 days immediately preceding the date of the shipment to the US, and that during this time the region has been entirely free of foot and mouth disease, rinderpest, contagious pleuropneumonia, and surra.

3.2 The animals for export have not been quarantined for communicable diseases in Mexico.

3.3 The animals for export have been inspected by an authorized veterinarian prior to export and found free of any evidence of communicable diseases; and that, as far as can be determined, they have not been exposed to any such disease during the preceding 30 days.

3.4 All animals in the shipment have been individually tested once for bovine tuberculosis between 180 and 30 days prior to export, with negative results (*as required by Mexico for internal movement prior to export*).

3.4.1 If intrastate or interstate TB testing in Mexico of cattle intended to be exported to the U.S. for immediate slaughter is waived by SAGARPA due to extenuating circumstances, this waiver must be noted on the export certificate and any TB test charts accompanying the shipment.

3.5 The animals for export are free of ectoparasites and have been dipped for ticks within 7 to 12 days of the date of exportation, in accordance with USDA regulation 9 CFR

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93.427(b)(2)(ii). [*Note: The statement about dipping is not needed for cattle from northern Sonora or northern Chihuahua states.*]

- 3.6 The animals to be exported are not Holstein or Friesian breeds, or Holstein or Friesian crossbreeds.
- 3.7 The animals in this shipment were loaded onto a clean and disinfected conveyance for direct transportation from the assembly point to the port of entry. Official seals were placed on the conveyance, and the seal numbers were recorded in the accompanying documentation.

#### **4. INSPECTIONS AT THE BORDER**

- 4.1 The entire shipment will be refused entry by VS if the conveyance arrives at the port of entry and the Mexican seals are broken, missing, or do not match the seal numbers on the health certificate.
- 4.2 The VS port veterinarian shall conduct a visual examination of the bovines to verify the general health status of the animal, and that the official forms of identification present on the animals correlate with export documents. Animals that are recumbent and cannot walk should be refused entry on an individual animal basis.
- 4.3 The accuracy of the health certificate should be verified by VS.
- 4.4 The VS port veterinarian will inspect the bovines for immediate slaughter for ticks. Except for bovines that originated in northern Sonora or northern Chihuahua, the bovines must be accompanied by Dip Certificates dated between 7-12 days prior to presentation at the border and certifying freedom from ticks. This dipping must have been conducted using Amitraz.
- 4.5 If the bovines are found free of ticks at the border, they will be dipped in Coumaphos at 3,000 ppm concentration prior to movement to the recognized slaughtering establishment.
- 4.6 If the bovines are found with ticks the entire shipment will be rejected, dipped and quarantined in Mexico for 10 to 14 days. After the quarantine period the animals may be presented for inspection at the border a second time. If the animals are found free of ticks they will be dipped and allowed entry into the U.S., if all other import requirements are met. If bovines are presented and found with ticks a second time, they will be refused entry by VS, will be branded by SAGARPA with a CN brand (Consumo Nacional), and will be sent back to Mexico.
- 4.7 Except as described in Section 4.6 above, the port veterinarian may refuse individual animals or the entire shipment at his/her discretion, with consideration given to

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factors such as the level of ectoparasitism, clinical signs of disease (particularly infectious disease), ID irregularities, broken seals, and animal welfare issues. If individual animals are refused entry, the port veterinarian will document the identification number in the Zoosanitary health certificate for the animal(s) refused entry; and cross out the identification number for each animal refused entry in the Herd of Origin Annex. Port veterinarians will make note (through the appropriate section of the Animal Import Module in VSPS) of the ID numbers of each animal refused entry. The port veterinarian will also contact the appropriate CBP officials and SAGARPA port authorities to inform them of the refusal of the shipment.

4.8 If all of the requirements for entry have been met, the port veterinarian will seal the shipment with APHIS seals and issue a completed VS Form 17-30, '*Report of Animals, Poultry or Eggs Offered for Importation*'. The port veterinarian will also issue a completed VS Form 17-33 (two copies) '*Animals Imported for Immediate Slaughter*'. The U.S. seal numbers will be written on the VS Form 17-33 along with any Mexican official seal numbers that remain intact on the conveyance.

4.9 The port veterinarian will establish a file for the reconciliation of completed VS Forms 17-33 in accordance with Section 5.6 below.

**5. POST-ENTRY PROCEDURES FOR BOVINES IMPORTED FROM MEXICO FOR IMMEDIATE SLAUGHTER**

- 5.1. Bovines imported from Mexico for immediate slaughter may be held up to 14 days after entry at approved slaughtering establishments with sufficient dedicated capacity to hold them. During this time, such bovines must be segregated by load in holding pens and may not be allowed any contact with domestic cattle being held for slaughter at the same facility, or with any other cattle present at the facility. (**Note:** Immediate slaughter cattle imported from Mexico must be held in pens that are part of the official establishment and are considered presented for slaughter; thus the establishment cannot remove them from the official establishment premises without obtaining a prior written approval from APHIS).
- 5.2 The bovines must be moved directly from the port of entry to a recognized slaughtering establishment along the approved route of transportation. If any emergencies occur during transportation, the driver must notify VS port personnel or the VS Area Office for further instructions. VS port personnel will provide VS contact information to the driver.
- 5.3 Except for emergencies (and pending further instruction from VS per Section 5.2 above) the seals may be broken only at the recognized slaughtering establishment by a USDA representative (e.g., an APHIS VS employee, an FSIS inspector, a State Representative, an accredited veterinarian or an employee of an accredited veterinarian, or a recognized slaughtering establishment or feedlot representative who has been designated to perform the functions involved).

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- 5.3 All conveyances used to transport the animals, and the pens where imported animals are held prior to slaughter, must be cleaned and disinfected under the supervision of federal or state regulatory personnel, after the animals have been removed from the conveyance or premises and prior to use of the conveyance (including return to Mexico) or holding pens for other animals. Any disinfectants referenced in Section 71.10 of Title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations may be used; Virkon S or 1-Stroke Environ (formulated and applied per manufacturer's instructions) may also be used as a disinfectant.
- 5.6. Designated slaughter plant personnel will contact VS at contact numbers that will be provided by the relevant Area office within 24 hrs. of arrival of the shipment to notify VS that the correct number of bovines listed on the VS Form 17-33 arrived at the plant under intact sealed conditions. Any discrepancies between the number of bovines listed on the VS Form 17-33 and the number reported to be received at the plant should be resolved by the VS Area Office or VS port personnel.
- 5.7 Inspection plant personnel will submit fully completed VS Forms 17-33 to the VS port veterinarian within 14 days of the bovines' arrival at the recognized slaughtering establishment. If the fully completed VS Form 17-33 is not returned to the port veterinarian within 14 days, the port veterinarian should contact the recognized slaughter establishment. If the recognized slaughter establishment is not responsive to this follow-up request, the port veterinarian should contact the AVIC, who will then contact the FSIS District Office. The VS Regional Import/Export Coordinator should be copied on these communications.