

**USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services,
National Center for Import and Export
Protocol Summary for the Importation of Commercial Birds or Poultry
August 2009**

Definition: The USDA defines *commercial birds* as those birds which are imported for resale, breeding, or public display. Ratites may be imported under this protocol as long as: (1) it is for non-slaughter purposes, and (2) ratites are from a pen-raised flock. Ratites are defined as: cassowaries, emus, kiwis, ostriches and rheas.

USDA also makes the distinction between birds and poultry. Avians defined as poultry include: chickens, doves, ducks, pigeons, geese, grouse, guineas fowl, partridges, pea fowl, pheasants, quail, swans, turkeys and eggs for hatching. These are not considered to be commercial birds.

1. General requirements: (for importations from all countries except from Canada)

1.1 The importer must obtain an **import permit**. Permits will only be issued for commercial birds/poultry coming from countries not currently banned by the USDA due to avian influenza concerns. For countries that are affected with Newcastle disease, there are other specific import requirements. Updated disease status can be found on the USDA website,
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/animal_disease_status.shtml

1.1.1 There are several ways that an Importer can obtain a permit to import. The application to import can be found on the APHIS website: **The VS Form 17-129, "Application for Import or in Transit Permit,"** along with the instructions, can be obtained by writing, by calling the National Center for Import and Export, or by downloading the form from the APHIS Web site.
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/forms.shtml

The address: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
Veterinary Services (VS)
National Center for Import and Export (NCIE), Unit 39
4700 River Road
Riverdale, MD 20737-1231
Telephone: (301) 734-8364
Facsimile: (301) 734-4704

Importers should submit the application and the processing fee of \$133.00 by check, money order, charge card or by providing a USDA user fee account. Submissions may be made by mail or fax to the number above. Please allow 7-10 working days for processing. If

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changes need to be made for a permit after it has been issued, there is an additional fee of \$66.00.

Importers transiting U.S. cities, with destinations to USDA Quarantine, an APHIS approved private quarantine facility, or to another airport traveling to a third country, should obtain an import permit from the National Center for Import and Export in Riverdale, Maryland, using the contact information above.

- 1.1.2** Importers can also obtain an import permit through USDA APHIS Import Center. Importers bringing a shipment of commercial birds or poultry into the US and where a 30 day quarantine is required, should get their permit directly from one of the facilities listed below. Information on user fees, airport inspection procedures, etc. can be addressed by the port veterinarians and staff.

New York Animal Import Center

USDA, APHIS, VS
200 Drury Lane
Rock Tavern, NY 12575
(845) 564-2950 (phone)
(845) 564-1075 (fax)

Miami Animal Import Center

USDA-APHIS-VS
6300 NW 36 Street
Miami, FL 33122
(305) 526-2926 (phone)
(305) 526-2929 (fax)

Los Angeles Animal Import Center

USDA, APHIS, VS
11850 South La Cienega Boulevard
Hawthorne, CA 90250
(310) 725-1970 (phone)
(310) 725-9119 (fax)

- 1.2** The importer must contact a USDA port veterinarian or a USDA Animal Import Center no later than 72 hours in advance of arrival of the bird(s) to coordinate the import process.
- 1.3** A current veterinary health certificate, issued within 30 days of importation and endorsed by a full-time salaried veterinarian of the national government of the

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exporting country, must accompany each shipment of commercial birds or poultry. The health certificate must be translated into English.

- 1.4 A VS Form 17-29, Declaration of Importation, must be completed by the representative/owner of the commercial birds/poultry. This form may be initiated by the Airport Customs Agents and forwarded to the VS office.
- 1.5 The owner or his representative must sign a witnessed statement, format to be provided by VS Port staff that the birds have not been in contact with other birds while out of the region of origin.
- 1.6 In the United States, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) regulates the importation of all avian species that are protected by the Convention on International trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the Wild Bird Conservation Act of 1992 (WBCA). These regulations are part of international conservation effort to protect exotic wild birds subject to trade. Most commercial birds (including psittacines such as parrots, parakeets, macaws, lorries, and cockatoos), and some poultry species, are affected by CITES and the WBCA. However, the budgerigar, cockatiel, and rosy-faced lovebirds are exempt. Please visit the FWS web site at: <http://www.fws.gov/permits/> or contact them at 800-358-2104, (overseas calls should be placed to (703) 358-2104) to obtain more information and the FWS permit application.

2. HEALTH CERTIFICATIONS

Each commercial bird/poultry shipment presented for import to the United States must have a **Health Certificate** that is no older than 30 days from the date presented for United States entry. Health Certificates must contain statements attesting to the health status of the commercial birds/poultry contained in the shipment. Those statements are summarized here:

- 2.1 All commercial birds/poultry covered by the certificate have been inspected by the veterinarian issuing the certificate.
- 2.2 There has been no evidence of Newcastle disease, chlamydiosis, or other communicable disease of avians (poultry and birds) during the 90 days immediately preceding their exportation.
- 2.3 The commercial birds/poultry have not been vaccinated with Newcastle disease or avian influenza vaccines

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- 2.4 Newcastle disease has not occurred anywhere on the premises from which the commercial birds/poultry are to be exported or on adjacent premises during the 90 days preceding the exportation.
- 2.5 The commercial birds/poultry were placed into previously unused containers at the premises or origin.

3. U.S. PORT and Quarantine PROCEDURES

At the first port of arrival into the United States, a Veterinary Services (VS) port veterinarian will review all documentation..

- 3.1 All commercial birds/poultry must be inspected and/or monitored by VS at the first port of arrival to the United States (or at other locations en route to quarantine, as applicable). The importer must arrange for VS inspection(s) at least 72 hours in advance by contacting the USDA Port Veterinary Office at the telephone number listed on the import permit.
- 3.2 Except for species that originate from Canada (see Section, all commercial birds/poultry must be quarantined for a minimum of 30 days, or longer if required by the Administrator.
- 3.3 Commercial bird/poultry quarantines must take place at one of the USDA facilities in section 1.1.2 above, or may occur in a privately owned quarantined facility that has been approved by APHIS. Such facilities may be used as long as a pre-funded Cooperative Trust Fund Agreement has been executed prior to the start of the quarantine. Please contact the VS Area Veterinarian in Charge in the state where approval is sought for additional information.
- 3.4 The importer is responsible for providing transportation to the quarantine site after the VS veterinarian has inspected an imported consignment.
- 3.5 During the quarantine period, all commercial birds/poultry will be tested to determine if they are free of certain communicable diseases of avians. The cost for this diagnostic testing will be charged to the importer and is separate from the quarantine fee.
- 3.6. Estimated User fees can be provided to the importer by the USDA Animal Import Center(s) to address quarantine costs; or if at a privately owned facility, are listed in the Cooperative trust Agreement. All fees must be paid before the end of the Quarantine period.

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- 3.7** If commercial birds/poultry need to be offloaded from an aircraft while transiting the US en route to quarantine or to a third country, contingency holding and monitoring arrangement must be submitted to and approved in advance by the VS AVIC in the state(s) of transit. It is the importer's responsibility to make adequate arrangements for these situations. Please contact the VS AVIC in the specific state for additional information.

4. Commercial birds/poultry imported from Canada

- 4.1** Commercial birds/poultry from Canada are not required to be quarantined. However, shipments must be accompanied by a veterinary health certificate issued within 30 days of importation and endorsed by a full time salaried veterinarian of the Canadian government. An import permit is not required for commercial birds/poultry imported from Canada through a land-border port. However, if commercial birds/poultry enter the US via an airport, an import permit (VS 17-135 is required. Permits may be obtained by contacting the USDA office as listed above. Commercial birds/poultry must be inspected by a VS veterinarian at the first United States port of entry. The importer must arrange for VS inspection(s) at least 72 hours in advance by contacting the USDA Port Veterinary Office at the telephone number listed on the import permit