



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Streamlines Animal and Animal Product Import Regulations

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13, 2012--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced today that lists of regions classified with respect to certain animal diseases and pests, as well as lists of states approved to receive horses imported from foreign regions where contagious equine metritis (CEM) exists, will now be posted on the APHIS website and, therefore, the lists will no longer be in the Code of Federal Regulations. As a result, changing the lists will no longer require rulemaking.

APHIS will continue to keep the public informed of changes to the lists and provide opportunity for public comment through notices published in the *Federal Register*.

This rule will enable APHIS to more quickly recognize changes in the disease or pest status of foreign regions and approve states to receive horses from foreign regions where CEM exists, while continuing to provide opportunity for public comment.

This rule will not change the technical criteria APHIS uses to evaluate whether a foreign region should be added to or removed from a list or the conditions states must meet in order to be approved to receive horses from regions affected with CEM.

This final rule is published in the January 10 *Federal Register*.

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