

Veterinary Services: Going the Extra Mile for U.S. Exports

Over the past few years, U.S. cattle producers and exporters have benefited greatly from increased demand from Russia, Turkey, and Kazakhstan for live cattle exports. These countries have been working to build their dairy and beef herds and have looked to the U.S. market to obtain healthy animals with desirable genetics for herd breeding and development. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s Veterinary Services (VS) program has taken action to help industry meet this surge in demand: VS has adopted a more flexible approach to approving pre-export isolation facilities and establishing temporary export inspection facilities (EIFs) and ports of embarkation as needed to supplement our Nation’s permanent export facilities. All pre-export isolation facilities, temporary EIFs, and temporary ports of embarkation must meet VS’ stringent standards to ensure the health and welfare of the animals that pass through them. Temporary facilities benefit U.S. exporters by reducing the distance animals have to travel prior to export and enabling them to meet shipping deadlines. VS’ can-do attitude in dispatching personnel to approve and/or staff these temporary locations has helped to spur growth in U.S. live cattle exports and allow a broader geographic range of cattle producers to benefit from these markets.

Creating Economic Opportunities

In December 2011 alone, VS established temporary EIF’s to facilitate two large shipments totaling more than 7,100 cattle out of a temporary port in Galveston, TX, to Kazakhstan and Russia. The first shipment consisted of a mix of 1,619 Holstein dairy cows and Angus beef cattle. After undergoing pre-export isolation and testing by APHIS accredited veterinarians and then certification by VS field staff in Kansas and Oklahoma, the cattle were shipped to the temporary EIF in Galveston, TX. The second shipment contained 5,520 head of Angus beef cattle and 57 horses. After isolation and certification in Kansas, the cattle arrived at the EIF at Galveston, where VS personnel unloaded, inspected, and confirmed identification for each of the animals. Prior to being loaded on to the ship, VS personnel rested the animals for 5 hours. Because of significant pre-planning and organizational efforts, VS was able to process the larger shipment of cattle through Galveston in only 2 days.

These shipments were in addition to numerous others VS undertook in 2011. For example, 25 shipments—totaling about 17,000 head of cattle—were processed in 2011 through a temporary EIF in Turner, ME, and shipped out of a temporary port in Eastport, ME. VS also staffed seven temporary EIFs as needed to support the large volume of livestock frequently shipped out of the permanent port of embarkation in Wilmington, DE.

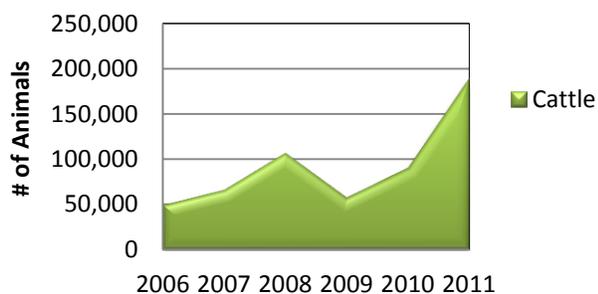
Collaborating for Success

Exporters are continuing to work with APHIS on upcoming large shipments. To ensure the success of large cattle shipments, VS establishes an incident command system structure in order to closely coordinate its work with other Federal agencies, such as Customs and Border Protection and Coast Guard, as well as ranchers, brokers, exporters, truckers, port authority officials, dockworkers, and shipping companies. Although such shipments create enormous logistical challenges, the economic opportunities they create for U.S. producers and exporters are significant—and therefore well worth VS’ extra effort.

Fast Facts

- VS established temporary EIFs at 7 new locations in 2011 as needed to support U.S. cattle exports.
- In 2011, VS facilitated the export of 17,000 head of livestock, mostly dairy cattle, out of temporary facilities in Maine. These exports provided much-needed economic support to the U.S. dairy industry.
- In total, VS facilitated the export of 190,538 head of cattle in 2011, of which 56 percent went to Russia, Turkey, and Kazakhstan.
- Cattle exports have expanded rapidly, doubling in 2011 on top of a 50 percent increase in 2010.

U.S. Cattle Exports (2006-11)



Country	# of Cattle Exported 2011	% of Total 2011 U.S. Cattle Exports
Turkey	62,403	33%
Russia	37,542	20%
Kazakhstan	5,065	3%