Information about the Color Banners on APHIS websites

You may have noticed that certain APHIS websites have become a lot more colorful lately as color-coded banners appear within the APHIS International Regulations (IRegs) Website and Pet Travel Website. These banners will help USDA Accredited Veterinarians determine when APHIS’ online system for digital issuance and/or endorsement of export health certificates for live animals and germplasm (semen, embryos, oocytes) can be used, as well as the type of signature (digital versus original ink) accepted on health certificates by each destination country.

APHIS’ online Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS) is an electronic system for the creation, issuance, and endorsement of U.S. veterinary export health certificates for international export of live animals and germplasm. VEHCS allows you, the USDA Accredited Veterinarian, to issue and digitally sign health certificates through a secure server after logging in with your eAuthentication account. You can submit health certificates and supporting documentation through VEHCS to USDA-APHIS-VS for review and endorsement, thereby removing the money and time required for shipping health certificates to your USDA Endorsement Office. This also means your clients can expect to receive their APHIS-endorsed certificates in less time than with traditional mail-in endorsement. (For more information on creating a VEHCS User Account, please visit https://pcit.aphis.usda.gov/pcit.)

The IRegs page is where you can find the most current and accurate information on the country-specific requirements for the movement (export) of live animals, excluding pets but including livestock, horses, poultry, aquaculture, and germplasm from the United States to a foreign country. The APHIS Pet Travel Website is where you can find information regarding the movement requirements for privately-owned pets (e.g. dogs, cats, ferrets, rabbits, etc.) from the United States to countries around the globe. On both websites, at the top of each destination country’s page, there will be a color-coded banner indicating the type of signature that country accepts on health certificates from both the issuing USDA Accredited Veterinarian (AV) and the endorsing APHIS Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO).

NOTE: A printed paper copy of the completed health certificate must accompany EVERY live animal and germplasm shipment, regardless of how it is issued/endorsed.

Explanation of color-coded banners:

- **The RED banner** indicates that an original ink signature is required from both the AV and the VMO. Certificates **cannot be accepted** through VEHCS for this country.

- **The ORANGE banner** indicates that AVs **may** digitally sign and issue health certificates electronically through VEHCS. The health certificate **must** then be printed by APHIS and requires a VMO's original ink signature with application of the APHIS embossed seal.

- **The GREEN banner** indicates that AVs **may** digitally sign and issue health certificates electronically through VEHCS, and an APHIS VMO may digitally endorse. The APHIS embossed seal of the printed hardcopy is not required when the certificate is digitally endorsed.

- **The YELLOW banner** indicates the country has varied requirements:
  - For certain commodities (i.e. types of animals), AVs **may** digitally sign and issue health certificates electronically through VEHCS, and the APHIS VMO may digitally endorse.
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The APHIS embossed seal of the printed hardcopy is not required when the certificate is digitally endorsed; OR

- For all other commodities, original ink signature is required from both the AV and the APHIS VMO, with application of the APHIS embossed seal.

Please read the information under each commodity heading on the IRegs page for that country to determine which type of signature is accepted.

- The **PURPLE** banner indicates that AVs may digitally sign and issue all animal health certificates for that country electronically through VEHCS. The endorsing APHIS VMO will then **EITHER:**
  - For certain commodities (i.e. types of animals), the APHIS VMO can digitally endorse the health certificate. The APHIS embossed seal of the printed hardcopy is not required when the certificate is digitally endorsed; OR
  - For all other commodities, the health certificate must be printed by APHIS and requires a VMO's original ink signature with application of the APHIS embossed seal.

  Please read the information under each commodity heading on the IRegs page for that country to determine which type of VMO signature is accepted.

- The **BLUE** banner indicates that AVs may digitally sign and issue health certificates electronically through VEHCS, and the VMO may digitally endorse. Once the health certificate is digitally endorsed by the VMO in VEHCS, the AV must print a hard copy and apply his or her original ink signature atop the printed digital signature line, prior to export. The APHIS embossed seal of the printed hardcopy is not required when the certificate is digitally endorsed, even though an original ink signature is placed over the digital signature by the AV.

Color-coded banner summary chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accredited Veterinarian Signature</th>
<th>RED</th>
<th>ORANGE</th>
<th>GREEN</th>
<th>YELLOW</th>
<th>PURPLE</th>
<th>BLUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original signature</td>
<td>Original signature</td>
<td>Digital signature</td>
<td>Digital signature</td>
<td>Digital signature for SOME commodities only (Please refer to IREGs)</td>
<td>Digital signature</td>
<td>Digital signature with subsequent original signature after APHIS digital signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APHIS VMO Signature</td>
<td>Original signature and apply embossed seal</td>
<td>Original signature and apply embossed seal</td>
<td>Digital signature DO NOT APPLY EMBOSSED SEAL</td>
<td>Digital signature for SOME commodities only (Please refer to IREGs)</td>
<td>Digital signature for SOME commodities only (Please refer to IREGs)</td>
<td>Digital signature DO NOT APPLY EMBOSSED SEAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>