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Approved Establishments

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There are certain serious animal diseases that could enter the United States through imported animal trophies, their hides, or their feathers. But with proper processing, the disease agents are destroyed.

To be safely imported, animal trophies and other animal hides or feathers from certain regions of the world must be sent directly to approved establishments for processing or sent to an approved warehouse for short-term storage before processing at an approved establishment, unless they are accompanied by an APHIS Veterinary Services (VS) import permit or a foreign government certificate. APHIS requires this step in order to protect American livestock and poultry from foreign animal diseases.

Animal Trophies From Canada

Trophies from Canada may enter with documentation that proves country of origin, including a bill of lading; certificate of origin; invoice; document on official letterhead prepared by the manufacturer, seller, outfitter, Provincial government, Tribal Nation, or shipper; or an official certificate issued by a veterinarian representing the Canadian national government certifying the country of origin. The trophies must be fully finished or receive special processing upon entry.

Items That DO NOT Require Special Processing

The following items do not need special processing at an approved establishment:

- Finished or mounted trophies
- Cleaned and dried bones, antlers, horns, and hooves being used as trophies
- Flint-dried hides not from countries with African swine fever
- Trophy or display materials from rabbits, rodents, fish, shellfish, and non-human primates

You should still check with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) before importing, because they may have their own import restrictions.

Items That DO Require Special Processing

Unfinished animal trophies, hides, and feathers that come from areas of the world with the following foreign animal diseases must undergo special processing to protect against introducing those diseases into the United States:

- highly pathogenic avian influenza (for bird/poultry items)
- virulent Newcastle disease (for bird/poultry items)
- foot-and-mouth disease (for split-hooved animal items)
- African swine fever (for swine items)

Information about which countries APHIS considers to be affected by these diseases is available at Animal Health Status of Regions.

If you are looking to import these trophies using an import permit or foreign certification, contact the APHIS animal product import staff by email at apie@usda.gov or visit Animal Health Permits for more information.

To bring in these materials for processing in the United States, you will need to use an APHIS-approved establishment for processing. The approved establishment will use proper processing techniques, which are specific to the animal materials and the diseases of concern, to inactivate or remove any potential disease-causing agents. After the processing is complete, they will release the materials back to you.

Find an Approved Establishment

APHIS maintains a database of approved establishments, which is sortable by State and item type. You will need to select an approved establishment before you begin the import process.

Become an Approved Establishment

If you are a taxidermist and are interested in becoming an approved establishment, you will need to work with APHIS to develop the appropriate plans and have your facility inspected by one of our veterinary officials.

VS Service Centers for Approved Establishment Program

Email us to ask about becoming an approved establishment or if you have questions or need to submit paperwork for a shipment consigned to an approved establishment.

Approved Establishment Program

Email: vets.ae@usda.gov

Approved Establishments Contacts
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