Importing Nonregulated Germplasm for Breeding Purposes

Last Modified:

Germplasm includes semen, embryos, oocytes, and tissue for cloning.

The following germplasm categories can enter the United States **without** an APHIS import permit:

1. Dog/canine germplasm imported for breeding purposes
2. Germplasm for breeding purposes from certain uncommon regulated species like rhinos or elephants
3. Germplasm from nonregulated species for breeding purposes like exotic carnivores, cats, rodents, or rabbits

Recommended Process for Nonregulated Germplasm Imports

- Include a valid health certificate from an accredited or licensed veterinarian in the exporting country.
    - The health certificate must state the germplasm's species of origin to validate it is not sourced from an APHIS-regulated species.

- Document the germplasm’s species of origin on manifests, invoices, foreign producer or shipper statements on letterhead, or other shipping documents.
    - Do not leave the documentation inside the shipping container.
    - Present the documentation for review when your shipment arrives at the U.S. port of entry.
- Provide a copy of these materials to your foreign producer or shipper.
- Make sure your germplasm import meets the destination State requirements.
- Disinfect germplasm containers and tanks originating from foot-and-mouth disease-affected regions at the airport in the exporting country before departure and again once the containers arrive in the United States.
- Other Federal agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, may have additional requirements for importing germplasm from certain species.

Visit APHIS’ Guidelines: Animal Products That Do Not Require an Import Permit for more information about animal products that do not require a permit, including canine semen and other animal materials imported into the United States for research purposes.

Need Help?

Live Animal Import Permit Team

Contact APHIS' Live Animal Import Permit team if you have questions before you apply for a permit.

For questions about import permits or permit applications:

Live Animal Import Permit Team

Email: laipermits@usda.gov

Phone: 301-851-3300

APHIS Port Services

For questions about import inspections at a port of entry, quarantine of animals arriving from a foreign country, or requesting approval as a private animal import quarantine facility, contact APHIS Port Services.

- Select a State - ▼

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Live Animal Import and Export

Contact APHIS' Live Animal Import and Export team for questions about current trade restrictions, or other questions not related to permits.

For general questions related to the import of a live animal:

Live Animal Import and Export

Email: laie@usda.gov

Phone: 301-851-3300

All Contacts
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