



Factsheet

Safely Moving Organisms and Vectors: The Permitting Process

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is responsible for protecting American agriculture. As part of its role in protecting the health of the nation's livestock and poultry populations, USDA works to ensure that disease-causing organisms and materials (vectors) that could carry livestock or poultry disease-causing organisms are moved safely. Within USDA, the Veterinary Services (VS) Organisms and Vectors team regulates and issues permits for the importation and interstate transportation of these organisms and vectors. USDA issues most organisms and vectors permits to infectious disease researchers, diagnostic laboratories, or human and veterinary pharmaceutical companies. These groups study the organism/material and its disease-causing potential; conduct tests; create and evaluate new tests; and develop vaccines for humans and animals.

What Materials Need an Organisms and Vectors Permit for Interstate Movement or Import?

In general, if an organism or material is known to transmit disease in livestock or poultry, the organism or material, and its derived products would need permits for movement between states/territories or to be imported. Additionally, organisms or vectors exposed to animal products, such as fetal bovine serum, commonly used in cultures, vaccines, and to grow organisms, require a permit to be imported. Other material is subject to evaluation on a case-by-case basis.

There isn't an all-inclusive list of VS-regulated organisms and vectors, but a partial list is available at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/organisms-vectors>. If there are questions about whether your item needs an Organism and Vectors permit, you can find more information on the website listed above. You can also request an evaluation by emailing OV@aphis.usda.gov or by completing a permit application.

Examples of regulated organisms include *Clostridium perfringens*, prions like scrapie, and low pathogenic avian influenza viruses. Examples of regulated vectors include animal tissues presumed infected with regulated organisms; virus cultures for import into the United States that grew in eggs; and mosquitoes and other insects suspected of infection with regulated organisms.

What Materials are Not Regulated by Organisms and Vectors Permitting?

The Organisms and Vectors team does not issue permits for movements of select agents; plants or plant pests; licensed veterinary biological products; uninfected animals or animal products; intrastate movement; human tissues; and/or human disease agents for interstate movement.

Other groups within APHIS, other Federal agencies (such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) or State and/or local governmental agencies may have jurisdiction.

Types of Permits

The Organisms and Vectors team issues two main types of permits: import permits and interstate transport permits. The user fees for permits are \$150 for the initial application. Permits may be revised for \$75 if changes are needed, but the time period covered by the permit does not change. Permits may be renewed yearly for \$97.

Getting a Permit

To obtain a permit for movement, complete the permit application (VS form 16-3). You can use the e-Permits system, or you can submit the form to the organisms and vectors staff by mail, electronic mail or fax. You must include the user fee payment along with the permit application. Greater detail about applying for a permit is located online at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/organisms-vectors>.

USDA laboratory inspections are sometimes required prior to obtaining importation and interstate transport permits. USDA uses these inspections to ensure the laboratory has appropriate biosafety measures and knowledge to handle the agents safely.

The entity/individual receiving the permit is responsible for proper use and containment of the organism. It is important that any laboratories using organisms and vectors have appropriate biosafety practices and containment facilities in place in order to minimize the accidental release of biological agents. The individual receiving the permit is responsible for complying with all Federal, State and local regulations.

For More Information

4700 River Rd, Unit 2

Riverdale MD 20737

Phone: 301-851-3300 option 3

Email: OV@aphis.usda.gov

Web: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/organisms-vectors>