

UPDATE: Canada Delays Enforcement of New Aquatic Animal Import Regulations

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has delayed the enforcement of the changes to their *Health of Animals Regulations* and *Reportable Diseases Regulations* until December 10, 2012. Because of the potential for significant impact on international trade in aquatic animals, CFIA has implemented a Stream of Commerce Policy to facilitate trade during a transition to enforcement period between December 10, 2011 and December 10, 2012. Additional information regarding the Stream of Commerce Policy is at: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/aqua/20111118inde.shtml>

Background: On December 22, 2010, CFIA published changes to the Canadian *Health of Animals Regulations* and *Reportable Diseases Regulations* in Canada Gazette II. These changes resulted in new import controls for aquatic animals that were listed in Schedule III, covering hundreds of aquatic animal species. New phased-in import requirements for these animals will include the need for importers in Canada to obtain an import permit issued from CFIA, and for shipments of listed aquatic animals to be accompanied by a zoosanitary (health) certificate issued in the country of origin. This effort is focused on preventing the introduction, and/or spread within Canada, of certain animal diseases. The new regulations and list of regulated aquatic species (finfish, mollusk and crustacean), developed in a context of end-purposes and aquatic animal diseases, can be found at: <http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p2/2010/2010-12-22/html/sor-dors296-eng.html>

Until December 10, 2012, U.S. exporters may ship aquatic animals listed in Schedule III without an import permit and zoosanitary/health certificate. However, exporters should be aware that the additional delay of enforcement does not eliminate the need to eventually comply with Canada's new regulations, and should carefully review the information at the website above to determine the relevance of these changes for their exported aquatic animals. Exporters are encouraged to work with their Canadian import counterparts regarding the exact import conditions that will come into effect for their specific exports in December 2012.

Regarding health certification, the three U.S. federal agencies that function as Competent Authorities for exported aquatic animals (the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service [USDA-APHIS]; the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service [NOAA Fisheries]; and the U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Services [FWS]) will work with CFIA on specific export requirements that will facilitate continued US trade in aquatic animals and products with Canada. Additional information will be provided by these agencies as more progress is made.

NOTE: Commodities previously regulated under the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Canada, Fish Health Protection Regulations, should continue to follow those movement requirements.

For concerns or questions regarding specific exports please contact the appropriate offices below.

- Live aquatic animals intended for relay or rearing in Canada: please contact APHIS National Center for Import and Exports (NCIE) Animals Export staff (301) 734- 8364.
- Aquatic animals intended for direct retail or human consumption: please contact NOAA Seafood Inspection Program at (800) 422-2750.
- Aquatic products for bait and pet food: please contact APHIS NCIE Products staff at (301) 734- 3277.