

**USDA APHIS VETERINARY SERVICES, STRATEGY & POLICY
PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORTATION OF SHEEP AND GOAT
SEMEN FROM AUSTRALIA**

Updated December 2025

This protocol describes the conditions required to import semen from domestic sheep (*Ovis spp.*) and goats (*Capra spp.*) according to regulations found in 9 CFR Part 98.

1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1. The importer must obtain an import permit from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS).
- 1.2. The application, **VS Form 17-129, “Application for Import or in Transit Permit,”** may be filed electronically using the [eFile system](#).
- 1.3. An official health certificate is required. This official health certificate must be issued by an Official Veterinarian from the Australian Government Department responsible for Agriculture (Australia’s Competent Authority), attesting to the certification and tests as required in this protocol. The health certificate must accompany the semen to the port of entry designated on the USDA import permit.
- 1.4. The semen must originate from a semen collection center (SCC) approved by Australia’s Competent Authority.

2. HEALTH CERTIFICATE:

- 2.1. The health certificate must include the following information:
 - 2.1.1. The name, address and approval number of the SCC where the semen was collected and processed for this shipment;
 - 2.1.2. The dates on which semen was collected for export to the United States;
 - 2.1.3. The identification of the donor by official ID number, breed and registry number (if applicable).
 - 2.1.4. The dates and methods of testing and results of the tests on the donor;
 - 2.1.5. The number of straws covered by the health certificate and the identification number or code on each straw. If any of this information is provided in code, deciphering information is attached to the health certificate for the semen;
 - 2.1.6. The name and address of the consignor and consignee;
 - 2.1.7. The name and address of the laboratory(ies) conducting the tests.

2.2. HEALTH STATUS

- 2.2.1. Australia is free of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), surra, scrapie, contagious caprine pleuropneumonia, sheep and goat pox, and *Brucella melitensis*.
- 2.2.2. Bovine tuberculosis and bovine brucellosis (*B. abortus*) are notifiable diseases in Australia.
- 2.2.3. No cases of disease caused by Schmallenberg virus have been detected or reported in Australia.
- 2.2.4. The donor sires were born, raised, and continuously resident in Australia or were part of Australia’s national flock/herd for a minimum period of time. [Note: Paragraphs 2.2.4.1 and 2.2.4.2 describe how the United States defines “part of the national flock/herd” and

**USDA APHIS VETERINARY SERVICES, STRATEGY & POLICY
 PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORTATION OF SHEEP AND GOAT
 SEMEN FROM AUSTRALIA**

Updated December 2025

the length of time the animals must be part of the national flock/herd.

- 2.2.4.1. If the donors were legally imported from countries recognized by USDA as free of FMD, then these animals must have been free of any import quarantine restrictions and able to move freely within Australia's national flock/herd for a minimum of 60 days prior to beginning the qualifications necessary for the collection of germplasm for export to the United States.
- 2.2.4.2. If the donors were legally imported from a country not recognized by USDA as free of FMD, then the animals for export must have been free of any import quarantine restrictions and able to move freely within Australia's national flock/herd for a minimum of 90 days prior to beginning the qualifications necessary for the collection of germplasm for export to the United States.
- 2.2.5. During the 60 days prior to the collection of germplasm for export to the United States, no donor has been corralled, pastured, held, or otherwise had contact with other animals of lesser health status or under any restrictions which would make it ineligible for importation to the United States under APHIS' regulations.
- 2.2.6. During the 12 months prior to the collection of semen for export to the United States, there has been no reported or confirmed cases of bovine tuberculosis, bovine brucellosis (*B. abortus*), ovine brucellosis (*B. ovis*), bluetongue, Akabane, Aino, paratuberculosis, or contagious agalactia in the donor animal or on any premises the donors were located during that time.
- 2.2.7. In the three years prior to collection of semen for export to the United States, there was no reported or confirmed cases of maedi-visna (in the case of **sheep only**) or caprine arthritis/encephalitis (CAE) (in the case of **goats only**) in the donor animals or on any premises the donors were located during that time.
- 2.2.8. The donors were kept in a SCC free from bovine tuberculosis and bovine brucellosis that only accepts animals from herds/flocks considered by the Australian Competent Authority to be free of TB/brucellosis and showed no signs of bovine tuberculosis or brucellosis on the day of collection of the semen.

2.3. TESTING

- 2.3.1. Tests of all donors was conducted at laboratories accredited by Australia's National Association of Testing Authorities to ISO/IEC 17025. The name and address of the laboratory(ies) are as follows: _____.
- 2.3.2. Arboviruses –
 - 2.3.2.1. **Bluetongue:** The donor sires:
 - 2.3.2.1.1. **EITHER:** were kept in an SCC approved by Australia's Competent Authority, located in Australia's Bluetongue Virus Transmission-Free Zone for a minimum of 60 consecutive days before commencement of, and during, collection of the semen for export; [Note: The dates of residence in the semen collection center will be included on the export health certificate.]
 - 2.3.2.1.2. **OR** were tested negative on two occasions for bluetongue virus antibodies, the first test at or near the time of collection (within 30 days prior to collection), and the second test between 30 and 180 days after collection of the semen, to an agar gel immunodiffusion test or the competitive ELISA (cELISA) test.

**USDA APHIS VETERINARY SERVICES, STRATEGY & POLICY
 PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORTATION OF SHEEP AND GOAT
 SEMEN FROM AUSTRALIA**

Updated December 2025

- 2.3.2.1.3. **OR** were tested negative for bluetongue virus on blood samples collected at the start and conclusion of, and at least every 7 days for virus isolation or every 28 days for PCR, during semen collection for this consignment.
- 2.3.2.2. **Akabane/Aino:** The donor sires:
- 2.3.2.2.1. **EITHER** were tested on two occasions, the first test at or near the time of collection (within 30 days prior to collection), and the second test between 30 and 180 days after collection of the semen, using the following tests:
- 2.3.2.2.1.1. Akabane - Negative to a serum neutralization test at 1:4 serum dilution.
- 2.3.2.2.1.2. Aino - Negative to a serum neutralization test at a 1:10 serum dilution
- 2.3.2.2.2. **OR** tested negative for Akabane and Aino on blood samples collected at the start and conclusion of, at least every 7 days for virus isolation or every 28 days for PCR, during semen collection for this consignment.

2.4. SEMEN COLLECTION, PROCESSING AND STORAGE

- 2.4.1. All collection, processing, handling and storage was according to the guidelines and standards of the *WOAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code, Chapters 4.7, Collection and Processing of Bovine, Small Ruminant and Porcine Semen*. The SCC followed the guidelines *Chapter 4.6, General Hygiene in Semen Collection and Processing Centers*.
- 2.4.2. The semen was collected and processed under the supervision of the Center veterinarian in charge of the approved SCC and placed in individual ampules or straws, which must be permanently marked with the name of the donor, his identification/registration number, and the date of collection. This information is included in the “Attachment to Veterinary Certificate.”
- 2.4.3 Ruminant products used in commercial semen extenders were sourced from countries considered by USDA to be free from foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) as listed in 9 CFR Part 94 and other official publications.
- 2.4.4. The semen shipping container was examined by the Centre Veterinarian and found empty of semen and any other biological material, before use for this shipment. New liquid nitrogen has been used.
- 2.4.5. The semen was maintained securely in the custody of the Centre Veterinarian until it was placed in the shipping container and sealed with Government of Australia seals. The seal numbers must be recorded on the health certificate.
- 2.4.6. **NOTE:** The shipment must be routed directly to the United States, with no stops en route other than those provided for on the import permit.

3. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- 3.1. Importers are advised that individual states may have additional import regulations. It is the importer’s responsibility to verify these conditions and to meet them. The importer should contact the U.S. State veterinarian ([State Regulations and Import Requirements](#)) of the destination state to determine the requirements.

4. ARRIVAL AND INSPECTION AT THE PORT OF ENTRY

**USDA APHIS VETERINARY SERVICES, STRATEGY & POLICY
PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORTATION OF SHEEP AND GOAT
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- 4.1. The shipment must be routed directly to the United States from Australia with no stops en route other than those provided on the USDA import permit. This shipment may not transit a region considered by USDA APHIS to have foot and mouth disease (FMD) as noted on the USDA APHIS webpage: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/animal-health-status-of-regions>.
 - 4.2. Upon arrival at the port of entry, the importer or the importer's agent must present the original health certificate and the original import permit for the semen to an inspector at the port.
 - 4.3. The shipping container and all straws or ampules containing semen must be made available for inspection at the port of entry and may not be removed from such port of entry until an inspector determines that the semen is eligible for importation in accordance with this protocol and releases the shipment.
- 5. SEMEN SHIPMENTS REFUSED ENTRY**
- 5.1. If any semen shipment is determined to be ineligible for importation into the United States on arrival at the port of entry, the importer must remove such shipments from the United States within 30 days, or the shipment will be destroyed.