

Required Language Prefacing Certification Statements on Export Certificates for Canada

****This message is specific to certificates issued for the export of animal products to Canada and does not apply to any other country.****

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has requested that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS) no longer preface certification statements with a reference to a notarized affidavit (i.e., “This office has on file a notarized affidavit from [company name] verifying the accuracy of the statements below.”). With the exception of letterhead certificates posted on the International Animal Products Regulations (IREGs) page for Canada (e.g., Processed Pet Food), all certificates endorsed by APHIS/VS for the export of animal products to Canada must be prefaced using the following language:

“I, the undersigned official veterinarian, after due inquiry and to the best of my knowledge and belief, do hereby certify:”

The use of the above prefacing language does not necessarily mean that facility inspections are required prior to endorsement. The “due inquiry” process needed to assess the likelihood that the certification statements are true will vary, depending on the nature and extent of the statements.

- Statements regarding the general animal health status of the United States are the purview of APHIS Veterinary Services and can be made directly by the official endorsing veterinarian.
- Statements referring to compliance with U.S. requirements (e.g., “authorized by the competent authority”, “product manufactured in accordance with US laws and regulations”, “product may be freely sold in the U.S.”) or accepted industry practices (e.g., processing parameters; packaging methods) are generally considered true and may continue to be endorsed with a supporting notarized affidavit provided by the manufacturer.*
- Statements for which the official endorsing veterinarian has no reason to doubt the truthfulness, such as identification of species for animal origin ingredients, may also continue to be endorsed with a supporting notarized affidavit provided by the manufacturer and additional documentation (if requested), such as a product label or certificate of analysis.*
- Statements referencing specific microbiological criteria (e.g., “product is free of Salmonella”) or other laboratory claims (e.g., product has a maximum level of insoluble impurities of 0.15% in weight) must be supported by lot-specific laboratory test results.*
- Statements making public health claims (e.g., “product is fit for human consumption”) must be supported by official documentation provided by a competent public health authority.*
- Statements referencing product or processing claims which exceed U.S. regulatory requirements will, at a minimum, require supporting documentation (e.g., sourcing of inedible materials from animals that passed post-mortem inspection) or facility inspections (e.g., specified risk material [SRM] exclusion).*

- Statements exceeding U.S. regulatory requirements which are difficult to verify through facility inspections (e.g., exclusion of vertebral columns from cattle 30 months of age or older or other age-related claims) may only be endorsable through an Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) export verification program.*

*These requirements are generally applicable for official Veterinary Services endorsement of all animal product export certificates, including those endorsed on the basis of notarized affidavits. As always, the endorsing VS Area Office has the right to request a facility inspection and/or additional supporting documentation prior to the endorsement of any export certificate.

For additional information regarding the certification of animal products for export to Canada, please contact your local VS Area Office. Contact information for these offices is available at: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/area_offices/