



Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

APHIS eFile

Guidance for Using the Veterinary Services Permitting Assistant (VSPA)

December 2024

WELCOME!

The VS Permitting Assistant (VSPA) provides guidance on APHIS Veterinary Services (VS) requirements for international import, international transit, and domestic interstate movement of VS-regulated commodities. You must complete the Permitting Assistant to learn the admissibility requirements for your commodity(ies). You will only need to complete an application if a permit is required.

If applying for a multi-ingredient animal product, make sure to add all of your materials to your product ingredient list. Examples of multi-ingredient animal products include nutraceuticals, food products, pet food, diagnostic test kits, fertilizers.

For more APHIS eFile VSPA support materials:

Check out our "How to" playlist on the [APHIS YouTube Channel](#)

Review this and other User Guides online on the [APHIS eFile Training Page](#)

I AM AN APPLICANT



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Sign in to eFile

A Navigate to <https://efile.aphis.usda.gov/s/> . Login is *OPTIONAL*. If your VSPA search results that you need to submit a permit application, you will need to login in order to complete the application.

To log in: click *Sign In/Sign Up*

- If you do not have login credentials, select **Create an Account** and follow the steps; for help, visit this site: <https://login.gov/help>. You must have valid login credentials to apply in APHIS eFile.
- Login Credentials are issued to an individual and are not to be shared with others.

B Scroll to the Find What You Need section and select the **Veterinary Services Permitting Assistant** link.

The screenshot shows the APHIS eFile website. At the top, there is a header with the USDA logo and the text 'Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service' and 'United States Department of Agriculture'. A green circle 'A' highlights the 'SIGN IN | SIGN UP >' link in the top right corner. Below the header is a navigation bar with 'HOME' and 'GUIDE ME' links. The main banner features a sunflower background and the text 'Welcome to APHIS eFile' and 'Apply and manage your APHIS applications, registrations, permits and more'. Below the banner is a section titled 'Ready to Apply?' with a dropdown menu labeled 'Select an option' and a 'Get started' button. To the right of the main content is a sidebar titled 'Is this your first time using APHIS eFile? Let us help you find what you need...'. It contains four tiles with icons and text: 1. A cat icon with the text 'Do you breed, deal in, exhibit or transport animals? Check out our Licensing and Registration Assistant.' 2. A microscope icon with the text 'Do you import, transport, or plant genetically engineered organisms? Check out our Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) Prescreening Assistant.' 3. A leaf icon with the text 'Do you import fruits and/or vegetables? Check out our Plant Protection & Quarantine Information.' 4. An elephant icon with the text 'Do you import or transit animal products, insects, bacteria, fungi, and/or viruses, and need assistance in finding out what documentation you need? Check out our Veterinary Services (VS) Permitting Assistant.' A green circle 'C' highlights the 'Check out our Veterinary Services (VS) Permitting Assistant' link in the bottom right tile.

Create your request with the VS Permitting Assistant

STEP 1

Complete the Permitting Assistant to begin the application process.

- A Select the **tab** associated with the type of material you are searching for.
- B Enter the **material details** into the appropriate search fields.
- C Select the **Search button**.

Note: Repeat steps 1-2-3 on the VSPA for all regulated commodities you wish to move. The VSPA will organize them into the appropriate applications.

The screenshot shows the 'Step 1: Select a Category Tab to Enter a Commodity's Details' interface. At the top, there are three tabs: 'Animal Products & Byproducts', 'Live Animals' (which is selected and highlighted with a green box and label 'A'), and 'Organisms & Vectors'. Below the tabs, the text 'Live animals such as livestock (including horses), germplasm (semen, ova, embryo), and eggs, and...' is visible. The main form contains three input fields: 'Movement Type' with a dropdown menu showing 'Import', 'Commodity' with a text input showing 'Alpaca (Vicugna pacos)' and a 'See List of Commodities' link below it, and 'Purpose' with a dropdown menu showing 'Zoo'. There are information icons ('i') next to the 'Commodity' and 'Purpose' labels. A green speech bubble points to the 'See List of Commodities' link with the text 'Use the "See List" hyperlinks to view full lists of your options'. Another green speech bubble points to the 'i' icon next to the 'Purpose' label with the text 'Select the "i" icons to reveal tool tips'. At the bottom left, there is a 'Country of Origin' field with a dropdown menu showing 'France' and a 'See List of Countries' link below it. At the bottom right, there is a blue 'Search' button highlighted with a green box and label 'C'. A green line connects the labels A, B, and C, indicating the sequence of steps.


Using the VSPA for Animal Products:

- Animal products are materials/products containing, derived from, or exposed to animal material (excluding organisms and vectors), hay/straw for animal feed or bedding, and used agricultural or meat equipment.
- Use the VSPA to Itemize your permit request by choosing the appropriate *animal-origin* materials/ingredients in your commodity(ies).
- There are two ways to itemize your request:

A as "single materials" - This is the case when the animal materials are being imported individually. The imported commodity has animal materials which are not mixed species/origins. For example, if you are importing bulk dried egg, bulk single-species fat, canned/bottled milk, tissue/blood samples from individual animals. Repeat the steps 1-2-3 to add each animal material from each animal and country to your request.

OR

B as a product/products containing 1 or more animal origin ingredients – The imported commodity consists animal materials are mixed together in a product). Some examples of such commodities include nutraceuticals, food products, pet food, culture media, diagnostic test kits, and fertilizers. Use the "Create or Edit Product Ingredient List" button to create a named product (you can use a generic name, such as "nutraceutical", "pet food", etc.), and then repeat steps 1-2-3 of the VSPA to add each animal origin ingredient from each animal to your named product. Do not choose ingredient/material names in the VSPA that contain the word "bulk".


 Step 1: Select a Category Tab to Enter a Commodity's Details

Animal Products & Byproducts

Live Animals


Organisms & Vectors

Materials/products containing, derived from, or exposed to animal material (excluding organisms and vectors), hay/straw for animal feed or bedding, and used agricultural or meat equipment.

B  Create and Edit Product Ingredient Lists | ▼

Using the VSPA for Organisms and Vectors:

- Organisms and vectors include all cultures or collections of organisms, or their derivatives, or vectors (such as mosquitoes, ticks, etc.) which are known to cause or disseminate infectious disease among livestock or poultry animals.
 - This includes organisms that may not have been originally isolated from animals, but are known to cause disease among livestock or poultry (such as all influenza A viruses)
- Repeat the steps 1-2-3 on the VSPA to choose all the organisms and vectors you wish to receive.
- When using the VSPA to understand the import requirements for If you are searching for an Organism and Vector and are unable to find it on the list, select the **Not Found on the Organism or Vector List** checkbox. This will reveal an “Organism or Vector Name” field where you can free-text enter the name of your Organism or Vector.
 - Please note, if your movement type is interstate, this will not be an option.

 Step 1: Select a Category Tab to Enter a Commodity's Details

Animal Products & Byproducts

Live Animals

Organisms & Vectors

Organisms, their derivatives, or vectors which may contain or be exposed to livestock, aquatic, and poultry pathogens.

Movement Type

Import

Category ⓘ

Livestock or Poultry Pathogen

Organism or Vector ⓘ

Other

☒ Not Found on the Organism or Vector List

[See Full List of Organisms & Vectors](#)

Exposed to, Isolated from Animals/Animal Products ⓘ


Ruminant Equine or Porcine

Organism or Vector Name ⓘ

Enter your Organism or Vector's Name

Country of Origin ⓘ


Search Country



Search

Using the VSPA for Live Animals:

- Live animals such as livestock (including horses), germplasm (semen, ova, embryos, and cloning tissue), birds, hatching eggs, and aquatic animals.
 - This includes horses, birds, pigs, cow, etc which may be "pets".
- Complete steps 1-2-3 on the VSPA to choose the live animals you wish to receive.



Step 1: Select a Category Tab to Enter a Commodity's Details

Animal Products & Byproducts

Live Animals

Organisms & Vectors

Live animals such as livestock (including horses), germplasm (semen, ova, embryos, and cloning tissue), birds, hatching eggs, and aquatic animals.

Movement Type

Select a Movement type

Commodity ⓘ

Enter your Commodity here

Purpose ⓘ

Select the Intended Use of your Commodity

Country of Origin ⓘ

Enter your Commodity's Country of Origin here

Search

Create your request with the VS Permitting Assistant

SEARCH PAGE

- Once you have completed step 1 of the VSPA and clicked "search", proceed to step 2 of the VSPA.

A Select the **Attribute Filters** to refine your material search results.

Note: For best results **complete ALL attribute filters** from top to bottom order until there is **only ONE result**. Then proceed to step 3 of the VSPA.

Be sure to click on the "i" icons to read the full explanation of the filter/question.

Some of the filters are selection-order dependent, meaning that your first selection may limit which filters you may select next.

Step 2: Select Attributes

2 filters applied [Clear All](#)

Filters:

- To Be Consumed By | Animals**
- Qualifies Under Guideline 1104 | No**

To Be Consumed By ⓘ

- ☒ Animals (1)
- ☐ Humans (0)
- ☐ Not for Consumption (0)

Qualifies Under Guideline 1104 ⓘ

- ☐ Yes (0)
- ☒ No (1)

Use the "X" to remove an individual filter and "Clear All" to remove all selected filters.

Select the "i" icons to reveal tool tips


Create your request with the VS Permitting Assistant

STEP 3


Note: You will likely not need to adjust your view of the Result Cards, as you should use all attribute filters until **one result** remains.

Use the following tools to adjust your view of the Result Cards.

- A** Use the drop-down to **change the number of Result Cards per page**.
- B** Use the arrows to **view more pages** of Result Cards.
- C** Use the drop-down to sort by **Prescreening Result number (PR #) or Outcome**.
 - Each Result Card has a unique PR #. If you need to communicate with VS about a specific result card, you can use the PR #.

 **Step 3: Select Your Material**

View My Product Ingredient Lists



Showing 3 of 5 Materials

A

Show

3

▼


results per page

C

Sort by:

PR #

▼

 **Gelatin as an Ingredient**

C

PR-011404

Gelatin Products

Attributes

To Be Consumed By

Humans

+ Add Material

+ Add to Product Ingredient List

Please add material or to an ingredients list, to see permit requirements on the summary page. Actual conditions for this material are not determined until added to your request.

B

◀◀

◀

▶

▶▶

Create your request with the VS Permitting Assistant

STEP 3

A Review the information on the Result Card.

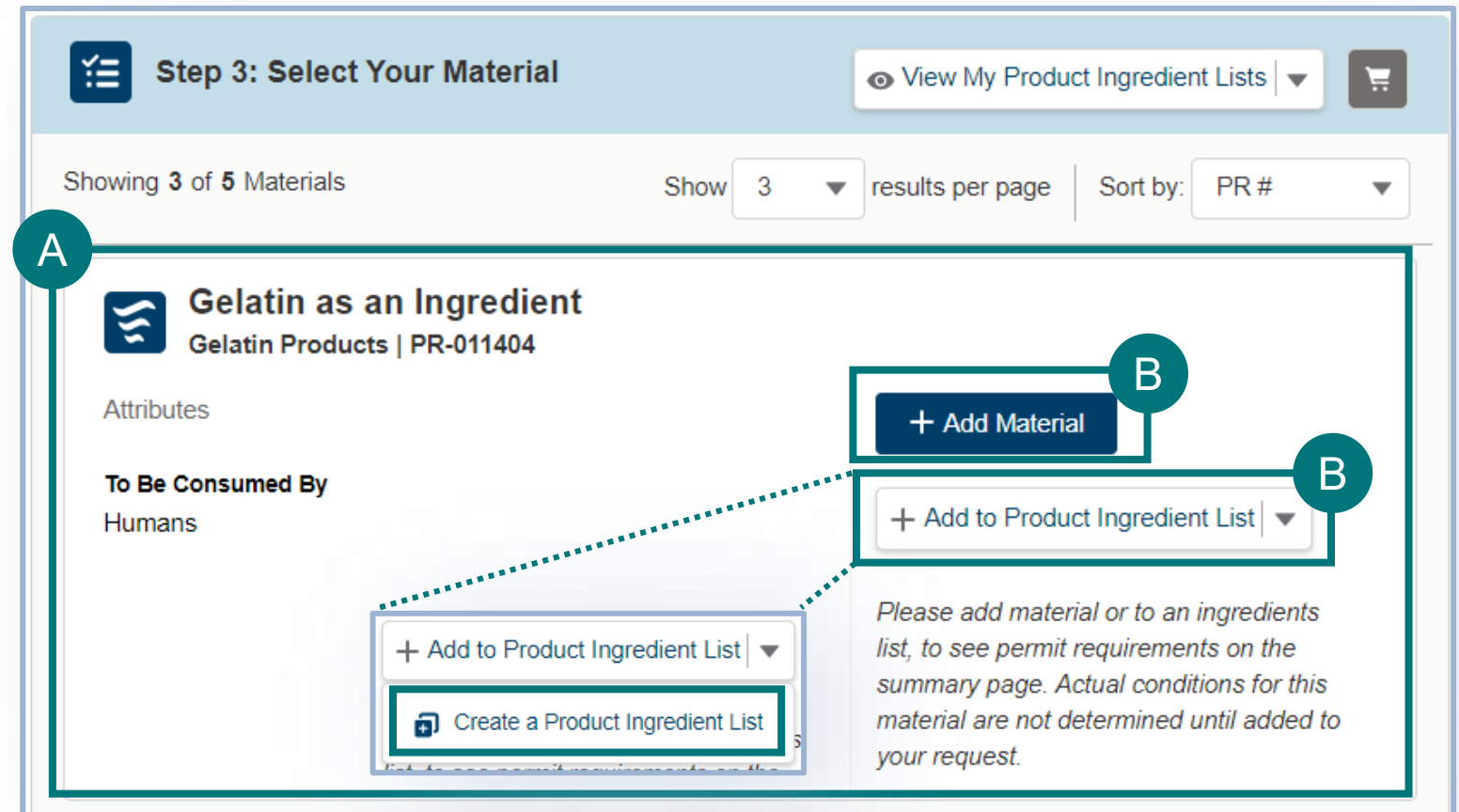
B Select **Add Material/Commodity** to add the material/commodity to your application

- **For animal products**

- Click add material if you are importing single materials (ex: single-species bulk material, tissue samples).

OR

- Select **Add to Product Ingredient List** to add the material to your application as an ingredient within a larger product (ex: nutraceuticals, food products, pet food, diagnostic test kits, fertilizers).
- To add a material as an ingredient you will need to **Create a Product Ingredient List**. By creating the list from this button, you'll automatically add the material to the new list.



Note: If you are importing Animal Products, **do NOT select both Add Material and Add to Product Ingredient List. Select only one option.**

Create your request with the VS Permitting Assistant

STEP 3

To remove a single material, select the Remove Material button.

To remove an ingredient, uncheck the checkbox associated with the Product Ingredient List.

Note: You must use one of these two options to remove a material. Once you have added a material, refreshing the VSPA will not remove them.

To add additional materials from other animals/countries, edit any of the search fields in step 1 and repeat the steps 1-2-3 in order.

A Once you’ve added all your materials proceed to your Application Summary by selecting the Shopping Cart icon or the View Summary button.

☰

Step 3: Select Your Material

View My Product Ingredient Lists

🛒

2

Showing 1 of 1 Materials

Show3results per page

Sort by: PR #

🌊

Bulk Gelatin or Empty Gelatin Capsules

Gelatin Products | PR-105548

Attributes

No attributes to be displayed.

✕ Remove Material

Please add material or to an ingredients list, to see permit requirements on the summary page. Actual conditions for this

🌊

Gelatin in a Product as an Ingredient

Gelatin Products | PR-104147

Attributes

Drug That is FDA-approved for Commercial Use in the U.S. (approved NDA, NADA, ANDA, ANADA or OTC monograph)

To Be Consumed By

Animals

No

+ Add Material

+ Add to Product Ingredient List

☒pet food

Create a Product Ingredient List

material are not determined until added to your request.

⏪ ⏩

View Summary

The VSPA Summary

The materials you have added have been sorted into categories. **Select each category tab** to view the results in that category.

Permit Application – Materials listed in this section require Permit applications. The materials have been sorted onto the appropriate number of applications. The materials you have added have been sorted into categories:

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply – Materials listed in this section do not require a permit application but may have additional conditions (i.e. a required certificate).

Inadmissible – Materials listed in this section are not allowed for import, transport, or transit.

Permit Applications(2)

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply(1)

Inadmissible


1. VS 16-3 Import Permit Application

Subtotals (1 Products)

Estimated processing fee: \$

pet food

1 Materials



Gelatin in a Product as an Ingredient of Avian Origin

Gelatin Products | PR-104147

Import from Canada for Commercial Purposes

Attributes

Drug That is FDA-approved for Commercial Use in the U.S. (approved NDA, NADA, ANDA, ANADA or OTC monograph)

No

To Be Consumed By

Animals

✔ Permit Required

You need a permit for this request.

✔ Documentation Required

Note: Make sure you have added all the commodities from all the animals and source countries to your request by repeating steps 1-2-3 of the VSPA.

Create your request with the VS Permitting Assistant

SUMMARY PAGE

Review the outcome carefully and read the guidance information.

Permit Application (s) – click on "documentation required" and read the guidance.

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply or **Inadmissible** – click on the "view conditions letter" or "view letter of denial" button to read the reason that a permit is not needed or the reason the material is inadmissible.


[Permit Applications\(2\)](#) [No Permit Required but Conditions Apply\(1\)](#) [Inadmissible](#)

1. VS 16-3 Import Permit Application

Subtotals (1 Products) Estimated processing fee: \$

pet food

1 Materials



Gelatin in a Product as an Ingredient of Avian Origin
Gelatin Products | PR-104147
Import from Canada for Commercial Purposes

Attributes

Drug That is FDA-approved for Commercial Use in the U.S. (approved NDA, NADA, ANDA, ANADA or OTC monograph)

To Be Consumed By

No

Animals

✓ Permit Required


You need a permit for this request.

✓ [Documentation Required](#) ✓

[Permit Applications\(2\)](#) [No Permit Required but Conditions Apply\(1\)](#) [Inadmissible](#)

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply

Subtotals (1 Materials) Estimated processing fee: \$0.00



Bulk Gelatin or Empty Gelatin Capsules of Aquatic Animals Origin
Gelatin Products | PR-105548
Import from Afghanistan for Commercial Purposes

Attributes

No attributes to be displayed.

✗ NO Permit Required

You do not need a permit for this request, since you are able to meet the applicable APHIS Guideline.

✓ Documentation Required

[View Conditions Letter](#)

Create your request with the VS Permitting Assistant

SUMMARY PAGE

- A To delete a material** from your summary request, select the **trashcan icon**.
- B To add more materials**, select **Go Back** and **Add More Materials**.
- C** When applicable, download all letters by selecting the **View Conditions Letter** button associated with each material.
- D To send yourself or someone else a copy of this request summary**, enter your **email** into the field and select **Send**.

*****The summary is NOT a permit application.**

Go Back and Add More Materials

Proceed to Log-In

Permit Applications(2)


No Permit Required but Conditions Apply(1)

Inadmissible

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply

Subtotals (1 Materials)

Estimated processing fee: \$0.00



Bulk Gelatin or Empty Gelatin Capsules of Aquatic Animals Origin
Gelatin Products | PR-105548
Import from Afghanistan for Commercial Purposes

Attributes

No attributes to be displayed.

X NO Permit Required

You do not need a permit for this request, since you are able to meet the applicable APHIS Guideline.

✓ Documentation Required

View Conditions Letter

Applications Summary

Subtotal (3 Materials):
2 Permit Applications
1 No Permit Required but Conditions Apply
0 Inadmissible

VS 16-3 Import Permit Application

\$

- pet food
- Gelatin in a Product as an Ingredient

VS 16-3 Import Permit Application

\$

- Bulk Gelatin or Empty Gelatin Capsules

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply


\$0.00

- Bulk Gelatin or Empty Gelatin Capsules

Estimated Processing Fee

\$

Disclaimer



United States Department of Agriculture

12/28/2020

Letter of Conditions

Dear Applicant,

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services regulates the international import, international transit, or interstate transport of certain animal-origin material, organisms, and vectors to ensure that infectious livestock and poultry diseases are not introduced into and/or disseminated within the United States. International movement of such material must be cleared by Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection (DHS, CBP) Agriculture Specialists/Inspectors at the U.S. port of arrival.

Email a Copy of the Overall Summary

Enter your email here

Send

Proceed to Application(s) from VSPA

- A Once you have reviewed all your results, select the **Proceed to Applications button** (it may appear as "**proceed to log in**" if you did not sign in yet) to continue to complete and submit your applications in eFile.
- Only the items from your summary which require the permit application will be transferred to the permit application.
 - If no items require a permit, then you will not be able to log in and apply for a permit.

Go Back and Add More Materials

Permit Applications(1)

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply(1)

Inadmissible

1. VS 16-3 Import Permit Application

Subtotals (1 Materials)

Estimated processing fee: \$1

anti-Human influenza A virus antibodies

Livestock or Poultry Pathogen | PR-178207

Import from Canada | Exposed To: Not Exposed to or Not Isolated from Animals

Attributes

No attributes to be displayed.

✓ Permit Required

You need a permit for this request.

✓ Documentation Required

Applications Summary

Subtotal (2 Materials):

1 Permit Applications

1 No Permit Required but Conditions Apply

0 Inadmissible

VS 16-3 Import Permit Application

• anti-Human influenza A virus antibodies

\$

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply

• Tissues or Glands

\$0.00

Estimated Processing Fee

\$

Go Back and Add More Materials

Permit Applications(2)

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply(1)

Inadmissible

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply

Subtotals (1 Materials)

Estimated processing fee: \$0.00

Bulk Gelatin or Empty Gelatin Capsules of Aquatic Animals Origin

Gelatin Products | PR-105548

Import from Afghanistan for Commercial Purposes

Attributes

No attributes to be displayed.

✗ NO Permit Required

You do not need a permit for this request, since you are able to meet the applicable APHIS Guideline.

✓ Documentation Required

View Conditions Letter

Applications Summary

Subtotal (3 Materials):

2 Permit Applications

1 No Permit Required but Conditions Apply

0 Inadmissible

VS 16-3 Import Permit Application

• pet food

• Gelatin in a Product as an Ingredient

\$

VS 16-3 Import Permit Application

• Bulk Gelatin or Empty Gelatin Capsules

\$

No Permit Required but Conditions Apply

• Bulk Gelatin or Empty Gelatin Capsules

\$0.00

Estimated Processing Fee

\$

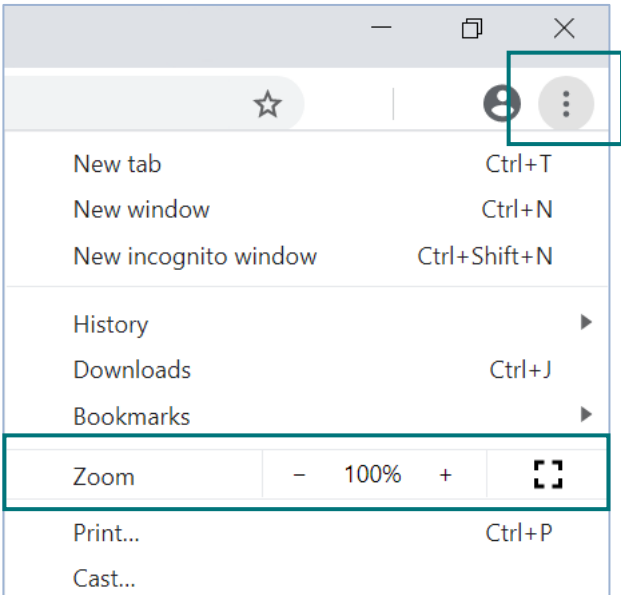
Disclaimer

Note: In the two images shown, you can proceed to the permit application *only* for the permitted materials. The commodities not needing a permit will not be transferred to a permit application.

APPENDIX

System Setup

- **Browser** – For the best user experience, please use Google Chrome.
Other available browsers include Firefox, Safari, and Edge.
- **Emails** – Add aphis.efile@usda.gov to your address book so that any Request Summaries sent from the VSPA do not go to your junk box
- **Zoom** –100%



Contact

If you require assistance with your **applications** (such as status requests, help with understanding the VSPA, etc), please contact:

Veterinary Services

(301) 851 3300

Animal Product, Organism & Vector Help:

APIE@usda.gov

Live Animals Help:

LAIPermits@usda.gov

If you require **technical assistance**, please contact:

[*help@usda.gov*](mailto:help@usda.gov)

Technical support includes account management, errors within the APHIS eFile system, or problems accessing information such as an issued permit. ***DO NOT** contact the helpdesk requesting a status on an application.