

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

# FSIS NOTICE

14-07

2/26/07

## IMPORTATION OF CANADIAN CATTLE, SHEEP, AND GOATS INTO THE UNITED STATES

### I. PURPOSE

This notice provides important information to Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) personnel about the receipt, slaughter, and inspection of cattle, sheep, and goats imported from Canada. It also outlines the regulatory requirements for the importation of certain Canadian ruminants, which began July 15, 2005. This notice carries forward the instructions for inspection of these animals from FSIS Notice 15-05 with the following changes:

A. verification instructions for inspection program personnel to follow when slaughter establishment employees are authorized to break seals on livestock trucks;

B. FSIS verification of Canadian ruminants when Canadian ear tags are lost or missing at the United States (U.S.) feedlot, and the animals are retagged at the feedlot; and

C. verification instructions for inspection program personnel at establishments that receive Canadian bison for slaughter.

This notice cancels FSIS Notice 15-05.

### II. DEFINITIONS AND FORMS

**A. Definitions** – For purposes of this notice, the following words have the following meanings:

#### 1. Hold:

To “hold” the animals means that the establishment segregates the affected animals and does not move them to slaughter or outside the official premises. See the Animal Health Protection Act (AHPA) and the regulations at 9 CFR parts 93-96. In all cases, the establishment is to move animals off the means of transportation, into an area or

**DISTRIBUTION:** Inspection Offices;  
T/A Inspectors; TSC; Import Offices

**NOTICE EXPIRES:** 3/1/08

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pen at the official establishment, and treat the animals under humane conditions. To execute the holding of animals and to restrict their movement, inspection program personnel are to apply an FSIS Form 6502-1, "U.S. Rejected - U.S. Retained" tag (in this notice referred to as "U.S. Retained" tag) to the pens containing the affected animals.

## **2. Authorized United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

### **Representative:**

Per 9 CFR 93.400, this term refers to an Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) employee; an FSIS inspection program employee; a State representative; an accredited veterinarian; or an employee of an accredited veterinarian, slaughtering establishment, or feedlot who is designated by the accredited veterinarian or management of the slaughtering establishment or feedlot to remove the seal from the truck.

In the Federal Register Notice issued by APHIS on November 28, 2005, "*Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy; Minimal-Risk Regions and Importation of Commodities; Unsealing of Means of Conveyance and Transloading of Products*," APHIS broadened the definition of who is authorized to break seals on conveyances importing certain ruminants from Canada. As a result, USDA employees, including FSIS inspection program personnel, are not required to be present or available when the trucks arrive with ruminants from Canada. Establishments wishing to take advantage of the policy under which a slaughter establishment employee may break seals must enter into an agreement with APHIS. FSIS off-line inspection program personnel are to verify that one of the following is present to verify that there is an agreement between APHIS and the establishment:

1. "Slaughter Plant Compliance Agreement for Seal Breaking" (hereafter known as Compliance Agreement) (see Attachment 1 as an example); or
2. VS Form 17-36, "Inspection Report of Establishment for Immediate Slaughter of Import Animals" (see Outlook Public Folders/All Public Folders/OFO/Technical Service Center/BSE Training Info for information about the VS Form 17-36).

### **B. Forms**

In addition to Canadian health certificates, the APHIS Veterinary Services' (VS) forms that must accompany shipments of animals from Canada are:

1. for animals from Canada for immediate slaughter, VS Form 17-33, "Inspection Report of Establishment for Immediate Slaughter of Import Animals"; and
2. for animals from Canada shipped to a designated/approved feedlot in the U.S. before shipment to an official establishment, VS Form 1-27, "Permit for Movement of Restricted Animals".

### III. AWARENESS MEETING WITH ESTABLISHMENT MANAGEMENT

A. Upon receipt of this notice, Public Health Veterinarians (PHVs) are to have an awareness meeting at establishments that have chosen to, or that may choose to, receive animals from Canada. APHIS approves the establishments that receive restricted Canadian animals, and PHVs can obtain a list of establishments approved to handle animals for immediate slaughter at: [www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ncie](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ncie).

B. The PHV is to ask the establishment whether it has approval from APHIS to break seals, and if so, the PHV is to inform the establishment that it is to:

1. address the procedures for breaking seals in its HACCP system [HACCP plan, Sanitation Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), or prerequisite program] as part of its next HACCP reassessment; and

2. provide FSIS with a copy of VS Form 1-27 or VS Form 17-33 when a seal has been broken.

C. In a memorandum of interview, the PHV is to document whether the establishment is beginning to import cattle, sheep, and goats from Canada, or if an approval from APHIS to break seals is in place. In addition, the PHV is to include in the memorandum of interview who was present at the meeting, the date and time of the meeting, what was discussed, and what documents the PHV shared with establishment management. The PHV is to maintain a copy of the memorandum of interview in the official government file and to provide a copy to the establishment management.

D. If, from the meeting, the PHV determines that the establishment has an approval from APHIS to break seals, but the PHV-Inspector-In-Charge (IIC) has not received a copy of the signed compliance agreement or completed VS Form 17-36 from APHIS, the PHV is to contact the District Office (DO). The DO will contact the APHIS Area Veterinarian-in-Charge (AVIC) regarding the forwarding of the documents.

### IV. INSPECTION PROGRAM PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING HACCP SYSTEMS

A. If it is necessary for an establishment to perform a reassessment, PHVs are to verify into which program (i.e., HACCP plans, Sanitation SOPs, or prerequisite programs) the establishment incorporates any procedures adopted because of its reassessment. PHVs are to verify that the establishment has appropriately addressed in its HACCP system the receipt of animals from Canada to ensure that it does not slaughter ineligible animals. In addition, PHVs are to verify, consistent with the regulations, that the establishment properly segregates, removes, and disposes of the Specified Risk Materials (SRMs) (see 9 CFR 310.22).

B. Inspection program personnel are to:

1. continue to verify the execution of the establishment's food safety systems, including verifying that if the establishment has chosen to import Canadian ruminants, it has reassessed its HACCP system in accordance with 9 CFR 417.4(a)(3) because the

receipt of the Canadian animals, as a new source of raw materials, is a change at the establishment that may affect the HACCP system;

2. issue Noncompliance Records if warranted; and

3. take necessary enforcement actions if an establishment fails to follow the written procedures it has incorporated into its food safety systems (e.g., fails to implement appropriate corrective action if it presents animals above a specified age for slaughter) (see 9 CFR 417.3 and 416.15 and FSIS Directive 5000.1, Revision 2).

C. On-line inspection program personnel are to notify the PHV or, if unavailable, other off-line inspection program personnel if they believe that an establishment's SRM control program, or the establishment's segregation of Canadian animals, may be ineffective. For example, repeated presentation of contaminated heads of cattle carcasses with SRM contamination for post-mortem inspection at the rail and head inspection station indicates a failure to control SRM contamination. The PHV or other off-line personnel are to perform the appropriate HACCP or Sanitation SOP inspection procedures to evaluate the process.

## **V. VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES WHEN ANIMALS FROM CANADA ARRIVE AT OFFICIAL ESTABLISHMENTS**

### **A. Animals Shipped From Canada for Immediate Slaughter**

1. Establishments may still request that FSIS inspection program personnel break seals on trucks (e.g., at establishments where establishment employees have not been authorized to break seals under 9 CFR 93.400). If so, inspection program personnel should verify that a Canadian government seal or a U.S. government seal is present and intact on the shipping truck. If the seal on the truck is missing or broken, or otherwise tampered with, inspection program personnel are to:

a. have all animals unloaded from the truck onto the official premises;

**NOTE:** Inspection program personnel are to consider Canadian animals that are on the truck and that are nonambulatory-disabled or dead on arrival as presented for inspection. Inspection program personnel are to verify that the establishment handles the animals humanely and euthanizes animals when necessary.

b. institute a "hold" on the animals in the pen and restrict movement by applying a "U.S. Retained" tag to the pens;

c. promptly contact the DO, so that it can notify the AVIC with jurisdiction in the state where the official establishment is located (see [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/area\\_offices.htm](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/area_offices.htm) for addresses of AVICs); and

d. verify the disposition of the affected animals in accordance with the AVIC determinations (see Note below). If PHVs have concerns regarding the establishment's disposal of, or failure to dispose of, carcasses or parts of ineligible

animals, they are to notify the DO so it can notify the APHIS AVIC. The AVIC will initiate any necessary investigation.

**NOTE:** The AVIC will directly notify the establishment on the disposition of the affected animals, or an establishment may have a letter on file from the AVIC regarding the disposition of animals from Canada, and the establishment is to dispose of the animals in accordance with the letter.

2. If the seal on the truck is intact, inspection program personnel are to break the seal and verify that:

a. the establishment follows its procedures for immediately off-loading the entire group of animals onto the official premises and then segregating those animals;

b. a VS Form 17-33 and a Canadian health certificate are present (the establishment may present a VS Form 17-36 in addition to the VS Form 17-33);

c. the establishment follows its procedures to ensure that the VS Form 17-33 does not list any animals that are not in the group;

d. the establishment follows its procedures to ensure that there are no animals in the group that are not listed on the health certificate; and

e. the establishment follows its procedures to ensure that the animals listed on the VS Form 17-33 are individually identified by an official Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) ear tag.

**NOTE:** Animals may arrive with forms in addition to the VS Form 17-33 and Canadian health certificate (e.g., farm records, age verification documents, shipping information, and bills of lading). Inspection program personnel are to maintain copies of any additional documents in the inspection file for two (2) years; however, there are no verification or distribution activities that inspection program personnel are to perform related to these other documents.

3. If the establishment does any of the following, inspection program personnel are to institute a hold on the affected animals with a "U.S. Retained" tag applied to the pens and promptly contact the DO, so that it can notify the APHIS AVIC:

a. does not present the VS 17-33 or the Canadian health certificate;

b. has found animals that are not listed on the health certificate;

c. has failed to follow its procedures referenced in section IV. A of this notice;

d. has found animals with missing ear tags;

e. uses procedures that do not detect the arrival of cattle 30 months of age or older, or sheep and goats 12 months of age or older; or

f. breaks the truck seal without a VS Form 17-36 or “Compliance Agreement” on file.

FSIS inspection personnel are to verify disposition of the affected animals per V.A.1.d. above.

4. Inspection program personnel are to verify that the establishment takes the appropriate action as set out in its procedures for the removal, segregation, and disposition of SRMs as incorporated into its HACCP system.

**B. Animals Shipped to an Official Establishment After Being Shipped from Canada to a Feedlot in the U.S.**

1. Inspection program personnel are to follow the instructions in Section V. A. above.

2. Inspection program personnel are to verify that:

a. a VS Form 1-27 and a Canadian health certificate accompany each shipment, and

b. the establishment follows its procedures to ensure that the VS Form 1-27 does not list any animals that are not in the group.

**NOTE:** Animals originating from Canada may leave the feedlot at different times. Thus, the Canadian health certificates may have more animals listed than on the VS Forms 1-27, and there may be more than one Canadian health certificate attached to the VS Forms 1-27. These circumstances are foreseeable and acceptable.

3. If an establishment moves animals to slaughter that had to be retagged at the feedlot (e.g., tags were lost), and all the animals are listed on **one** Canadian health certificate, the following is required:

a. VS Form 1-27 that lists the unique identification number of each animal transported on the vehicle and the official seal numbers (see Note below);

b. a copy of the Canadian health certificate that contains the ID numbers of the animals on the vehicle and the additional “retag” numbers, **or** a separate document with the Canadian ID number cross-referenced to the additional “retag” numbers, as well as to the Canadian health certificate reference number. This document should be attached to the appropriate Canadian health certificate. The documents contain the printed name and signature of the accredited veterinarian, State, or USDA representative and the date; and

c. VS Form 17-130, Ruminants Imported to Designated/Approved Feedlots, that identifies the feedlot of destination.

**NOTE:** It is acceptable to have more than one truck listed on the VS Form 1-27. However, the first page of the form must list all official seal numbers, and a copy of the VS Form 1-27 must accompany each truck.

4. If an establishment moves animals to slaughter that required retagging at the feedlot (e.g., tags were lost), and the animals are listed on any one of **two or more** Canadian health certificates, the following is required:

a. VS Form 1-27 that lists the unique identification number of each animal transported on the vehicle and the official seal numbers;

**NOTE:** These animals are moved as a group.

b. copies of all Canadian health certificates that contain the ID numbers of the animals on the vehicle and the additional “retag” numbers, **or** a separate document with the Canadian ID numbers cross-referenced to the additional “retag” numbers, as well as to the Canadian health certificate reference numbers. This document should be attached to the appropriate Canadian health certificates. The documents contain the printed name and signature of the accredited veterinarian, State, or USDA representative who prepared the documents; and

c. copies of all VS Form 17-130's.

### **C. When Establishments Elect to Break Seals Per a Compliance Agreement or a VS Form 17-36 On File with APHIS**

The PHV is to verify receipt from the APHIS AVIC of a Compliance Agreement or VS Form 17-36, after the awareness meeting or when the establishment first indicates that it will begin using a Compliance Agreement to designate an employee to break seals on the conveyances coming directly from Canada to slaughter or from a feedlot. If the PHV has any questions about the agreement form, he/she is to contact the AVIC for that state and discuss the Agreement with the AVIC.

### **D. Bison Shipped from Canada**

Bison imported to the U.S. from Canada are handled in the manner cattle are handled under section V of this notice, except there are no applicable SRM provisions. If inspection program personnel have specific reasons to question any documentation provided (e.g., they find on post-mortem inspection that the bison is pregnant), the PHV is to execute a hold on the individual carcass, fetus, and all parts. The PHV is to contact the DO, so that the DO may contact the AVIC to determine the appropriate disposition of the carcass, fetus, and parts. The establishment cannot collect fetal bison serum, and such serum, if collected, is to be disposed of as set out by the AVIC.

## **VI. ANTE-MORTEM AND POST-MORTEM VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES**

## A. Ante-mortem Inspection

Inspection program personnel are to:

a. conduct routine ante-mortem inspection after the establishment has completed the procedures that it has in place for segregating cattle and as incorporated into its HACCP system.

While performing verification activities related to the age of cattle:

i. inspection program personnel are to verify randomly, in establishments using documentation, that the records support the establishment's determinations. If the records do not support the determinations, inspection program personnel are to verify that the establishment takes the appropriate corrective action under 9 CFR 417.3(a) or (b), and

**NOTE:** PHVs are not to use hands-on dentition examinations to determine the adequacy of the documentation. If a PHV is unsure whether the establishment's procedures are adequate, he or she is to contact the Technical Service Center for technical assistance.

ii. in establishments using dentition, inspection program personnel are to verify that the establishment's determinations, which the establishment would typically make at post-mortem, are consistent with the guidance provided in FSIS Notice 5-04. If the determinations made by the establishment are not consistent with the guidelines, inspection program personnel are to verify that the establishment takes the appropriate corrective action under 9 CFR 417.3(a) or (b);

**NOTE:** For sheep and goats, inspection program personnel are to conduct routine ante-mortem inspection after the establishment has completed the procedures it has in place for segregating the animals and as incorporated into its HACCP system. Inspection program personnel are to follow the instructions above related to documentation to verify that such animals are not 12 months of age or older. Sheep and goats are considered to be 12 months of age or older if the first permanent incisor has erupted.

b. verify that the establishment is properly executing its procedures to ensure that the cattle, sheep, or goats are slaughtered as a group until the marks of inspection are applied for ruminants arriving under VS Form 17-33 or VS Form 1-27;

c. institute a hold on affected animals using a "U.S. Retained" tag applied to the pens and promptly contact the DO so that it can notify the APHIS AVIC if an establishment presents for slaughter Canadian origin animals that are ineligible for slaughter;

d. verify the disposition of the affected animals per V. A. 1. d.;

e. verify that the establishment takes the appropriate action as set out in its procedures and as incorporated into its HACCP system for the removal, segregation, and disposition of SRMs;

f. continue to follow current regulations and directives for ante-mortem condemnations of eligible animals from Canada under 9 CFR Part 309; and

g. institute a “hold” on the animals if, while performing ante-mortem inspection on any domestic cattle lots, the inspection program personnel observe any animals with a CAN (C “lambda” N) brand (for cattle), C brand (for sheep and goats), or a CFIA ear tag. Inspection program personnel are to apply a “U.S. Retained” tag to the pens, and the PHV is to contact the DO so it can notify the APHIS AVIC. FSIS inspection program personnel are to verify the disposition of the affected animals per V. A. 1. d.

## **B. Post-mortem Inspection**

1. Off-line inspection program personnel are to verify execution of establishment programs for ensuring that ineligible animals are not slaughtered, and that the establishment slaughters eligible animals direct from Canada as a group. The ruminants from Canada stay together as a group through the slaughter process until the marks of inspection are applied.

2. If an establishment slaughters animals that are ineligible for slaughter (including pregnant animals), PHVs are to institute a hold on the carcass and parts with “U.S. Retained” tags. PHVs are to contact the DO promptly, so it can notify the AVIC. Inspection program personnel are to verify that the establishment takes the appropriate action as set out in its procedures and as incorporated into its HACCP system for the removal, segregation, and disposition of SRMs.

**NOTE:** The establishment cannot collect fetal bovine serum, and such serum, if collected, is to be disposed of as set out by the AVIC (see 4 and 5 below).

a. PHVs are to collect and hold for the AVIC all means of identification (i.e., ear tags, VS Forms 1-27, and health certificates) and evidence regarding the age of the animals.

b. FSIS inspection program personnel are to verify the disposition of the affected animals per V. A. 1. d.

3. If PHVs have concerns regarding the establishment's disposal, or failure to dispose, of carcasses or parts of ineligible animals, they are to notify the DO, so it can notify the APHIS AVIC. The AVIC will initiate any necessary investigation. FSIS personnel are to verify that SRMs are disposed of in accordance with establishment programs under 9 CFR 310.22.

4. For post-mortem condemnations of eligible Canadian animals under 9 CFR Part 310, inspection program personnel are to follow FSIS regulations and directives. No special reporting of any condemnations of eligible animals is required.

## **VII. COMPLETING AND DISTRIBUTING FORMS**

### **A. For Animals from Canada that were Shipped for Immediate Slaughter**

After the slaughter of a shipment of animals, inspection program personnel are to:

1. sign and date VS Form 17-33 (see Outlook Public Folders/All Public Folders/OFO/Technical Service Center/BSE Training Info for information about the VS Form 17-33);
2. maintain in the inspection file for two (2) years a copy of the VS Form 17-33, the Canadian health certificate, and any other documentation arriving with the shipment; and
3. send a copy of the signed and dated VS Form 17-33 (Part 3) to the Port of Entry as written on the form.

### **B. Animals Shipped to an Official Establishment After Being Shipped from Canada to a Feedlot in the U.S.**

After the slaughter of a shipment of animals, inspection program personnel are to:

1. sign and date VS Form 1-27 (see Outlook Public Folders/All Public Folders/OFO/Technical Service Center/BSE Training Info for information about the VS Form 1-27);
2. maintain in the inspection file for two (2) years a copy of VS Form 1-27, Canadian health certificate (see above), and any other documentation arriving with the shipment; and
3. send a copy of the signed and dated VS Form 1-27 (Part 2) to the APHIS AVIC in the state where the designated feedlot is located.

Direct technical questions about this notice to the Technical Service Center at 1-800-233-3935 and all other questions through supervisory channels.



Assistant Administrator  
Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development

Attachment 1 (For example only)

**SLAUGHTER PLANT COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT  
FOR SEAL BREAKING**

Slaughter Plant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Mail City/ST/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to follow all instructions regarding the slaughter of imported feeder cattle from Canada. This includes reviewing all shipments and documentation at the time of arrival at the slaughter plant (with the evaluation of the truck seals and confirmation of the animal count). I agree to report all discrepancies to the Area Veterinarian-in-Charge (AVIC) and/or the State Veterinarian's office.

**Responsibilities/Instructions of Designee:**

- (1) Inspect and remove the intact Government seals on the vehicles transporting feeder cattle from the feedlot to the slaughter plant. Only the person listed below may break the seals.
- (2) Broken or missing seals or those that do not match the seal numbers listed on VS Form 1-27, "Permit For Movement of Restricted Animals," will be reported by immediately notifying the AVIC or State Veterinarian.
- (3) Verify the number of animals in the shipment and compare to the VS Form 1-27.
- (4) Complete Nos. 26 to 34 on VS Form 1-27 and return it to the AVIC of the originating state within 14 days of receipt of the shipment.
- (5) Review and maintain incoming documents at the slaughter plant in conjunction with the FSIS Inspector-in-Charge (IIC): VS Form 1-27, "Permit For Movement of Restricted Animals", listing all of the animals in the shipment; the Canadian health certificate listing all of the animals in the shipment by individual ear tag and age; and VS Form 17-130, "Ruminants Imported to Designated/Approved Feedlots."

Printed Name of Designee: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Plant Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Plant Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_