6. Respect the rules...

STAY COMPLIANT

Strict enforcement of animal import requirements is necessary in order to protect Ireland from an incursion of an exotic disease. Any outbreak of an exotic disease could have a devastating impact on agricultural exports and the economy.

It is critically important that the purchaser of imported animals ensures that:

1. All required pre-movement tests and treatments (including vaccinations) have been carried out in accordance with EU Regulations.
2. A valid Intra-EU Health Certificate accompanies the consignment en route to Ireland and the animals are delivered to the place of destination indicated in the document.
3. Local Regional Veterinary Office is contacted in advance in order that post-import checks can be carried out without delay.
4. Post-import isolation recommendations are implemented.

7. Assess the financial risk...

RISK COSTS

1. The import of animals into a herd/flock is a personal decision of the purchaser which carries a financial risk for them in the event of animals testing positive for an exotic disease.
2. The risks involved with regard to the introduction of an exotic disease through animal importation into Ireland are personal risks to be borne by the purchaser.
3. Should imported animals test positive for an exotic disease DAFM may introduce control/eradication measures such as:
   - slaughter or destruction of animals
   - quarantine
4. In such situations DAFM may offer assistance or support to the purchaser. The decision to do this is however discretionary.
5. If DAFM decides to offer assistance, it will take into account any risk mitigation measures taken by the importer.

THE PURCHASER MAY INCUR A FINANCIAL LOSS IN THE EVENT OF IMPORTED ANIMALS TESTING POSITIVE FOR AN EXOTIC DISEASE. THE DECISION OF DAFM TO OFFER ASSISTANCE TO THE PURCHASER IS DISCRETIONARY.

8. Summary checklist...

EXERCISE CAUTION

- ☐ Seek advice on import requirements by contacting your local Regional Veterinary Office.
- ☐ Ask questions with regard to the provenance and health status of the animals prior to purchase.
- ☐ Obtain written evidence of the pedigree status if relevant and any health measures that the vendor claims to have taken.
- ☐ Check that the vendor has consulted the competent authority in their country regarding export requirements.
- ☐ Check on- farm isolation facilities before purchase.
- ☐ Check arrangements for animal transportation.
- ☐ Ensure necessary or recommended pre-purchase tests are carried out and results received before animals are moved from vendor's holding.
- ☐ Isolate animals upon arrival for a minimum of 4 weeks.
- ☐ Implement biosecurity measures on farm to minimise potential disease spread from imported livestock to other animals.
- ☐ Inform local RVO upon arrival of animals to organise post-import tests.
- ☐ Observe animals closely for any signs of disease and seek veterinary attention where required.

IF YOU SUSPECT THE PRESENCE OF AN EXOTIC DISEASE ON YOUR HOLDING CONTACT YOUR PVP OR LOCAL REGIONAL VETERINARY OFFICE WITHOUT DELAY.

DURING NORMAL OFFICE HOURS CONTACT YOUR LOCAL REGIONAL VETERINARY OFFICE BY PHONE (DETAILS CAN BE FOUND AT https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/9dc27-contact-us/).

OUTSIDE OF NORMAL OFFICE HOURS CALL THE NATIONAL DISEASE EMERGENCY HOTLINE ON 01 492 8026 TO REPORT A SUSPECT CASE.

An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

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BIOSECURITY ADVICE FOR FARMERS IMPORTING LIVESTOCK

PREVENT DISEASE ENTRY INTO YOUR HERD OR FLOCK

1. Don't make quick decisions...

PLAN AHEAD

THE IMPORTATION OF LIVESTOCK CARRIES THE GREATEST RISK FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF EXOTIC DISEASE INTO IRELAND

Animals can carry disease without exhibiting any clinical signs so it is essential to plan your purchase carefully to avoid importing disease.

1. Is the import necessary? Can the required genetic gain or breed be:
   - sourced locally or
   - obtained through more biosecure means e.g. artificial insemination?
2. How many animals do you intend to buy? Plan to purchase as few animals as is necessary in order to keep disease risks to a minimum.
3. Do you intend to purchase pregnant animals? Pregnant animals are a higher risk. Some diseases such as Bluetongue, Johne's disease and BVD can be transmitted to the foetus.
4. Are there adequate isolation facilities on your own farm? Ensure that you can house the imported animals for at least 4 weeks post arrival in isolation from the rest of the herd or flock.
5. Will the animals be sourced from a single herd/flock? Plan to purchase from a single closed herd or flock if possible. A herd/flock is closed only where there is no movement of animals onto the farm.
6. Are there any animal disease restricted areas in the country or region that you intend to purchase animals from? e.g. Bluetongue, African swine fever. Discuss with your local Regional Veterinary Office (RVO) both at planning stage and prior to movement.
7. Are there certain risk periods for disease introduction that could be avoided? Vector borne diseases such as bluetongue which can be spread by midges are a lower risk in colder periods (December-March).
8. How are the animals to be transported? Consider the means of transportation ensuring compliance with Council Regulation (EC) No.1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.
9. Have you consulted your Private Veterinary Practitioner (PVP) about other non-regulated diseases that are relevant to your herd/flock and possible precautions or tests that could be carried out?

CONSULT YOUR LOCAL REGIONAL VETERINARY OFFICE FOR ADVICE CONCERNING IMPORT RECCOMMENDATIONS PRIOR TO THE PURCHASE OF ANIMALS.

PLEASE NOTE MEASURES IN ADDITON TO THOSE DESCRIBED IN THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE REQUIRED FOR LIVESTOCK IMPORTS FROM OUTSIDE THE EU, WHERE PERMITTED.

2. Before you confirm...

ASK QUESTIONS

INCREASED FREQUENCY OF ANIMAL MOVEMENTS RESULTS IN INCREASED RISK OF ANIMAL DISEASE SPREAD

Ask questions about the origin of the animals and any disease precautions that the vendor may take such as:

1. Were the animals bred on the vendor's farm or did they source the animals from elsewhere?
2. Does the vendor operate an accredited herd health programme?
3. Is there any recent history of disease on the farm and can the vendor provide evidence of any health measures that are applied on their holding? e.g. vaccination records from their PVP.
4. Can the vendor provide any additional guarantees concerning the animals? e.g. pregnancy examination results
5. Are the animals that you intend to purchase isolated from other animals on the farm? e.g. animals returning from shows.
6. Has the vendor consulted with their local competent authority regarding health certification requirements for export?
7. Have you checked in consultation with your local RVO and PVP what pre-purchase tests are recommended? e.g. PCR (polymerase chain reaction) blood test for Bluetongue.

ALL ANIMALS IMPORTED INTO IRELAND FROM OTHER EU MEMBER STATES MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A VALID INTRA EU HEALTH CERTIFICATE

3. During transport...

MINIMISE STRESS

1. All livestock transporters and their vehicles must comply with the requirements of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.
2. Consult with the transporter about the planned route as it may involve the requirement for additional treatments prior to or during transport e.g. insecticide treatment of the vehicle.
3. Information on the transport of animals can be found in the https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/f7279-transport-of-live-animals/.

4. Upon arrival...

ISOLATE IMPORTED ANIMALS

1. Unload livestock directly into the area reserved for isolation.
2. House all imported animals in isolation from other animals upon arrival for 4 weeks. This will help minimise vector borne diseases from spreading such as bluetongue.
3. Ensure that animal welfare requirements are met at all stages.
4. Do not allow isolated animals to share airspace or drinking water with other livestock.
5. Wear protective clothing when working with isolated livestock and change clothing and disinfect footwear before moving to other areas of the farm.
6. Plan your working day to work with isolated animals after other livestock.
7. Equipment that is used for isolated animals should not be moved or used on other areas of the farm.
8. Feed, bedding and slurry from isolated animals should not come into contact with other livestock.

NOTIFY YOUR LOCAL REGIONAL VETERINARY OFFICE IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL AS POST IMPORT TESTS SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT WITHOUT DELAY

5. Disease control measures...

POST IMPORT TESTS

ANIMALS SHOULD REMAIN HOUSED AND ISOLATED UNTIL ALL REQUIRED TESTS RESULTS ARE CONFIRMED NEGATIVE BY DAFM

The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) may carry out animal identity checks post importation and certain risk based tests to help prevent the introduction of an exotic disease or as part of a disease control programme. For example, all ruminants originating from or travelling through a Bluetongue restricted zone will be tested for Bluetongue as soon as possible upon arrival into Ireland. Imported livestock should be closely observed for any clinical changes or illness and **veterinary attention should be sought in any such cases.**