

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: July 25, 2023

Report Number: IN2023-0053

Report Name: India - Implementation of Transition Period for the Integrated Veterinary Health Certificate for Imports of Milk and Milk Products

Country: India

Post: New Delhi

Report Category: FAIRS Subject Report

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Report Highlights:

On July 17, 2023, India's Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying/Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), published Office Memorandum (OM) L-11/1/2019-Trade (E-11542). The OM grants additional transition time to stakeholders before implementation begins on the requirement of the integrated veterinary health certificate (VHC) for the import of milk and milk products into India. The new date of implementation is set for December 31, 2023. The timeline has been extended to provide "Ease of Doing Business," as well as support various representations received from industry stakeholders to delay implementation.

DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this report was retrieved from the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying website <http://dahd.nic.in>. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Office of Agricultural Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, USDA, and/or the U.S. government make no claim of accuracy or authenticity. The Government of India has not officially endorsed this report. Import approval for any product is subject to local rules and regulations as interpreted by Indian officials at the time of product entry. [Note: Use Google Chrome to access the links that do not open in Microsoft Edge. Indian host sites will geo-block site access on a rolling basis].

GENERAL INFORMATION

On July 17, 2023, India's Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying/Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), published **Office Memorandum (OM) L-11/1/2019-Trade (E-11542)** (see, Appendix I). The OM grants additional transition time to stakeholders before implementation begins on the requirement of the integrated veterinary health certificate (VHC) for the import of milk and milk products into India. The new date of implementation is set for December 31, 2023. The timeline has been extended to provide "Ease of Doing Business," as well as support various representations received from industry stakeholders to delay implementation.

Major highlights of the DAHD's **Office Memorandum M L-11/1/2019-Trade (E-11542)** include:

1. The new integrated VHC for DAHD's post-import clearance of milk and milk products will be required **only** if the Bill of Lading or date of issuance of the VHC from the exporting country extends beyond December 31, 2023.
2. The DAHD clarifies that its provision mentioned in paragraph 4 of the previous OM (March 31, 2023) remain valid in the new OM as the exporting countries' follow their country specific regulations. The provision allows the exporting country to issue a single VHC, certified by an Official Veterinarian or certificate with an annex as per its regulations.
3. Certain exporting country regulations require the issuance of and certification of sanitary and food safety clauses by different agencies. In such cases, the DAHD specifies that the sanitary clauses should be certified by the Official Veterinarian and the food safety clauses by the Food Safety Officer. In those cases, that any exporting country issues a single certificate, certified by a single agency, covering both sanitary and food safety clauses, it should be certified by the Official Veterinarian.
4. The sanitary and food safety clauses attestations should be in the format required by the DAHD and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) respectively. The certificate issued is valid for 90-days from the date of issue.

Background:

On March 31, 2023, India's Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying/Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), published an integrated veterinary health

certificate for the import of milk and milk products into India. As a trade facilitation measure, an integrated VHC incorporating DAHD's sanitary requirements, and the FSSAI's food safety requirements was published. This integrated VHC was required to be certified by the exporting country those consignments being exported to India.

Now with the publication of the **Office Memorandum M L-11/1/2019-Trade (E-11542)**, the two Indian government agencies' technical requirements are in alignment. The authority sought to implement this revised VHC with immediate effect. However, a transition period of 60-days from the date of publication of the office of memorandum is now being granted to facilitate the "Ease of Doing Business." The 60-day grace period is applicable based on the arrival date of consignment.

The full text of **Office Memorandum M L-11/1/2019-Trade (E-11542)** is found on the DAHD's website located at:

<https://dahd.nic.in/sites/default/files/OM17July2023-VeterinaryHealthCertificateForImportOfMilkAndMilkProductsIntoIndia.pdf>.

**APPENDIX 1: INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING -
JULY 2023, REVISED OFFICE MEMORANDUM RELATING TO THE VETERINARY
HEALTH CERTIFICATE FOR THE IMPORT OF MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS**

File No. L-11/1/2019-Trade (E-11542)

भारत सरकार

Government of India

मत्स्य पालन, पशुपालन और डेयरी मंत्रालय

Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying

पशुपालन और डेयरी विभाग

Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying

कृषि भवन, नई दिल्ली -110 001,

Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi-110 001,

दिनांक / Dated the 17th July, 2023.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Veterinary Health Certificate for Import of Milk and Milk Products into India – regarding.

Vide this Department's O.M. of even number, dated 31st March, 2023 (**copy enclosed**), the integrated Veterinary Health Certificate for import of Milk and Milk Product into India, incorporating DAHD's sanitary requirements and FSSAI's food safety requirements was issued which has to be certified by the exporting country along with the consignments to be exported into India.

2. Under para 5 of said O.M. dated 31st March, 2023, it was stated that the revised integrated Veterinary Health Certificate (VHC) would come into force with immediate effect. However, considering the 'Ease of Doing Business', it will be completely in operation after transition time of 60 days i.e. Veterinary Health Certificate by DAHD issued on dated 24th December, 2019 or integrated VHC from exporting country with consignments will be considered for post-import clearance into India during migration time of 60 days".

3. Now, based upon representations received from various stakeholders, the transition/migration time has been increased till 31st December, 2023. The imported consignments of milk and milk products having bill of lading / date of issuance of VHC from exporting countries after **31st December, 2023** will only be considered for post-import clearance based upon integrated Veterinary Health Certificate for import of Milk and Milk Product into India.

4. Further, a few stakeholders has also requested clarification on para 4 of said O.M. dated 31st March, 2023 which states that "The exporting country may issue single Veterinary Health Certificate, certified by Official Veterinarian or certificate with annexure as per its regulations. The said provision has been kept to facilitate trade considering different regulations in exporting countries."

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Gagan Garg

It is to clarify that as some countries are having regulations to issue / certify Sanitary clauses and Food Safety clauses by different agencies, the said provision has been kept in Indian protocol i.e. sanitary clauses should be certified by Official Veterinarian and; Food Safety clauses should be certified by Authorized Officer (eg. Food Safety Officer). However, if any country issues single certificate from a single agency, having Sanitary clauses as well as Food Safety clauses, it should only be certified by Official Veterinarian of exporting country. In any case, the Sanitary clauses and Food Safety clauses should be as per Indian protocol.

5. This has the approval of the Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

Encl: As above.

Gagan Garg
17-07-2023

(डॉ गगन गर्ग)

(Dr. Gagan Garg)

उप-आयुक्त (व्यापार)

Deputy Commissioner (Trade)

File No. L-11/1/2019-Trade (E-11542)
भारत सरकार
Government of India
मत्स्य पालन, पशुपालन और डेयरी मंत्रालय
Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
पशुपालन और डेयरी विभाग
Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying

कृषि भवन, नई दिल्ली- 110 001,
Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi-110 001,
दिनांक / Dated the 31st March, 2023.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

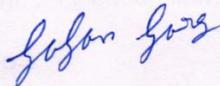
Subject: Veterinary Health Certificate for Import of Milk and Milk Products into India – regarding.

The Veterinary Health Certificate for import of Milk and Milk Product into India was made in force vide this Department's O.M. No. L-110109(4)/15/2019-Trade (E-14537), dated 24th December, 2019. Further, vide this Department's O.M. No. L-110102(1)/1/2018-Trade (E-7526), dated 10th August, 2020, it was clarified that the said requirement is applicable for import of milk and milk products into India as included under different chapters for human consumption as food in Indian import policy (whether Sanitary Import Permit is applicable or not).

2. Vide Order No. 1829/Health Certificate/FSSAI/Imports-2021, dated 3rd August, 2022, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) also notified its requirements of "Health Certificate" related to food safety. There was much confusion among stakeholders including exporting countries as well as food importers on applicability of requisite "Veterinary Health Certificate" in this regard, as this Department is regulating import of livestock products including food of animal origin for human consumption under the Live-stock Importation Act, 1898 since inception. Forum of Indian Food Importers also requested to this Department to align the technical aspects between the two Government of India agencies (DAHD and FSSAI).

3. In order to facilitate trade, the integrated Veterinary Health Certificate for import of Milk and Milk Product into India, incorporating DAHD's sanitary requirements and FSSAI's food safety requirements is enclosed herewith which has to be certified by the exporting country along with the consignments to be exported into India.

4. The exporting country may issue single Veterinary Health Certificate, certified by Official Veterinarian or certificate with annexure as per its regulations. The said provision has been kept to facilitate trade considering different regulations in exporting countries.



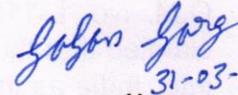
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5. The revised integrated Veterinary Health Certificate (VHC) will be into force with immediate effect. However, considering the "Ease of Doing Business", it will be completely in operation after transition time of 60 days i.e. Veterinary Health Certificate by DAHD issued on dated 24th December, 2019 or integrated VHC from exporting country with consignments will be considered for post-import clearance into India during migration time of 60 days.

6. Any proposal of mutual agreement on the clause (s) related to DAHD's sanitary requirements or FSSAI's food safety requirements shall be enrouted though this Department to avoid ambiguity in future. The food safety related negotiations and agreements shall be carried out by FSSAI and will keep DAHD informed about it. However, the decision on any proposal of mutual agreement on Veterinary Health Certificate for export of milk and milk products into India will be taken by this Department as per mandate given by Government of India, as well as considering holistic approach.

7. This has the approval of the Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

Encl: As above.


31-03-2023

(डॉ गगन गर्ग)

(Dr. Gagan Garg)

उप-आयुक्त (व्यापार)

Deputy Commissioner (Trade)

Distribution:

- All Regional Officers / Quarantine Officers, Animal Quarantine and Certification Service, Delhi / Mumbai / Bangaluru / Chennai / Kolkata / Hyderabad.

VETERINARY HEALTH CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORT¹ OF MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS INTO INDIA

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Veterinary Health certificate No: Date:	2. Competent Authority 2.1 Ministry: 2.2 Department: 2.3 Contact Details and Email:				
3. Invoice No. and Date:	4. Quantity:				
5. Consignor / exporter Name: Address: Tel. no. and Email:					
6. Consignee /importer: Name: Address: Tel. no. and Email:					
7. Country of origin:			ISO Code:		
8. Place of loading:					
9. Country of Destination:			ISO Code:		
10. Declared Port of Entry ²					
11. Mode of Transport:					
12. Identification of the product as described below: (multiple lines may be used for multiple products)					
a)	Description of the food along with HS code:			Intended purpose:	
b)	Name and address of Manufacturer / Establishment			Approval number/s of establishment /s (Number /Date / Validity) along with Name and address of the Registration / Accreditation Authority	
c)	Name of the product	Lot no. / Batch no.	Type of packaging	Number of packages	Net Weight
d)	Date of Manufacture or Packaging		Best before (if applicable)		Date of Expiry

¹ Import of livestock products into India is subjected to fulfillment of the Live-stock Importation Act, 1898 and the rules / regulations thereunder as notified time to time.

² Port of Entry as notified by Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India considering applicability of Sanitary Import Permit (SIP) or not, as the case may be.

II. CERTIFICATION*

The undersigned Official Veterinarian certifies that the product(s) described above satisfies the following requirement:

1. General Conditions:

- a) The source animals have never been fed with feeds produced from meat or bone meal including internal organs, blood meal and tissues of ruminant origin and porcine origin materials except milk and milk products.
- b) The milk product has not been manufactured using animal rennet.

2. Sanitary Conditions:

- a) The milk has been processed (including destruction of FMDV³) to make it fit for human consumption as recommended by World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH).
- b) The milk has been processed to a temperature, which ensures destruction of organisms causing Tuberculosis, Listeriosis, Para tuberculosis, Q fever and Brucellosis.
- c) The animals from which the milk has been derived were not exposed to Bovine Growth Hormones (BGH) / Bovine Somatotropin Hormones (BST).
- d) The Source animals were not subjected to estrogenic treatment in last 90 days.
- e) Milk / milk products do not contain preformed Bacterial toxins such as those produced by Bacteria belonging to *Staph. aureus*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Clostr. perfringens* and *Clostr. botulinum*.

3. Food Safety Conditions⁴:

The attestation from authorized official is annexed.

Official stamp:

Signature_____

Official Veterinarian	
Name:	Designation:
Address and Email:	
Date:	

³As recommended under the Article 8.8.25 of Terrestrial Animal Health Code by WOAH, wherever applicable.

⁴As notified by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

*This certificate is valid for 90 days from the date of issue.

***3. Attestation for Food Safety conditions**:**

The undersigned Official Veterinarian or Authorised Official certifies that the product(s) described above satisfies the following requirement:

- a) Were manufactured at (an) establishment (s) that has / have been approved by, or otherwise determined to be in good regulatory standing with the Competent Authority in the exporting country.
- b) Does not contain drug/ antibiotics / mycotoxins / pesticides/ heavy metal residues etc., above the limits prescribed by the Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011.
- c) Conforms to the microbiological requirements specified in Appendix 'B' of Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011.
- d) Complies with the standards of Milk and Milk products as specified under the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011.
- e) Contains only those food additives as specified in Appendix 'A' of Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011 within the limits specified.
- f) Prepared, packed, held and transported prior to export under good hygienic conditions and an effective food safety control system, implemented within the context of HACCP systems where appropriate and in accordance with the requirements specified in Schedule 4, as applicable, of the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011 (India) and such other guidelines as specified from time to time under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- g) Regular inspection/ monitoring of checks in according with FSS Act, 2006, rules and regulations made thereunder and as per the criteria specified by FSSAI.
- h) Conditions for transport / storage: Frozen / Chilled / Ambient / _____.
- i) Temperature required during storage and transportation: _____.

Official stamp:

Signature _____

Official Veterinarian or Authorised Official	
Name:	Designation:
Address and Email:	
Date:	

** Where it is not applicable, strikethrough the requirement.

*This certificate is valid for 90 days from the date of issue.

Post Import Requirements:

1. On arrival in India, the consignment and the documents shall be examined by the Regional Officer/ Quarantine Officer, Animal Quarantine and Certification Services and / or Authorized Officer designated by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.
 2. Samples may be taken from the milk / milk products for examination, if applicable.
 3. In case the documents do not conform to the requirements and the product is not as per protocol, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India and / or Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, respectively, will take appropriate action at the cost of importing agency.
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Attachments:

No Attachments.