

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Vietnam Issues Draft Circular to Consolidate and Update Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Quarantine Inspection Regulations

Country: Vietnam

Post: Hanoi

Report Category: Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety, Poultry and Products, Livestock and Products, Fishery Products, Dairy and Products

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Report Highlights:

Vietnam notified the WTO on August 17, 2026, of a draft Circular consolidating and updating Circular 01/2026 on terrestrial animal quarantine and Circular 03/2026 on aquatic animal quarantine. Comments are due October 16, 2026, with adoption and publication expected in November 2026 and entry into force 45 days after publication. Overall, this draft presents a more harmonized and unified framework in which unnecessary testing or testing frequency is reduced and a more risk-based approach is introduced. However, some concerning areas remain, including retention of certain Salmonella and ruminant DNA testing requirements. This report provides an unofficial translation of the draft Circular and summarizes key proposed updates affecting trade in these products.

Summary

On August 17, 2026, Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAE) notified the WTO of a draft Circular under G/SPS/N/VNM/190 that consolidates and updates quarantine requirements for terrestrial and aquatic animals and their products. Comments are due by October 16, 2026. The Circular is expected to be adopted and published in November 2026 and to take effect 45 days after publication.

The draft consolidates the terrestrial quarantine framework under MAE's Circular 01/2026 (see Post's GAIN report [VM2026-0001](#)) and the aquatic quarantine framework under Circular 03/2026 into a single instrument, while carrying forward recent administrative simplification measures under Circular 22/2026. The draft is extensive, comprising six chapters, 40 articles, and 17 appendices, spanning 202 pages in Vietnamese. It would replace Circulars 01/2026 and 03/2026 and would repeal Article 15 of Circular 22/2026. Overall, it largely harmonizes and streamlines the existing frameworks rather than introducing a major policy overhaul. The most notable proposed updates concern risk-based product classification, sampling and testing requirements, and simplified procedures for lower-risk products.

For terrestrial animal products, the draft removes *E. coli* O157:H7 from the prescribed testing parameters, while retaining Salmonella testing for specified high-risk ruminant, pork, and poultry products and fresh poultry eggs. The Salmonella testing and ruminant DNA testing requirements are key elements that have not been updated and have been noted by trading partners as out of step with international guidelines and recommendations. For example, ruminant DNA testing continues to apply to terrestrial and aquatic animal protein meals intended for feed production, with the existing sampling frequencies and in which shipments retained at the border pending satisfactory test results.

For aquatic animals and products, the draft largely consolidates the Circular 03 framework but also proposes several trade-facilitating updates, including reducing the import quarantine registration timeframe from four to three working days, removing the initial three-consignment testing requirement for aquatic products, and narrowing the prescribed disease-testing list. The draft also removes the requirement for frozen aquatic products to remain at the border pending test results. The draft retains the existing exemption from quarantine inspection for aquatic animal products imported for export processing. Other key requirements, including testing of breeding aquatic animals and risk-based testing of live commercial animals, are retained.

Key Proposed Updates and Trade Implications

(Note: The comparison table below was compiled by the author. The headings and trade implications are provided by the author for ease of reference)

Area	Current Circulars	Draft Circular	Relevant Provision in the Draft	Trade Implications
Overall framework	Terrestrial quarantine is regulated separately under Circular 01/2026; Aquatic quarantine under Circular 03/2026.	Consolidates terrestrial and aquatic animal quarantine requirements into a single Circular.	Article 40	More unified and harmonized regulatory framework.
Definitions of high-risk and low-risk products	Circulars 01 and 03 classify risk based on product form, including fresh, chilled, frozen, and preliminarily processed products.	Definitions based on risk-analysis: - <i>High-risk product</i> : A product capable of carrying or transmitting a disease agent listed under Vietnamese regulations, or an emerging disease agent identified through risk analysis and relevant World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) recommendations. - <i>Low-risk products</i> are those treated or processed to reduce or eliminate that ability, based on risk analysis and relevant WOAH recommendations.	Article 3	Establishes a more explicitly risk-based approach to product classification.

Administrative procedures and processing times	Circulars 01/2026 and 03/2026: four working days for Vietnam's Department of Animal Health and Production (DAHP) to issue quarantine approval and guidance after receiving a complete and valid application.	Reduced to three working days for both terrestrial and aquatic import quarantine registration.	Article 10.1(c) – terrestrial animals; Article 11.1(c) – terrestrial animal products; Article 26.1(c) – aquatic animals and products	Shortens the pre-import administrative processing period by one working day for both terrestrial and aquatic imports.
Testing requirements for terrestrial animals and terrestrial animal products				
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 – terrestrial animal products for human consumption	Circular 01 prescribes <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 testing, together with Salmonella spp. and relevant animal disease agents, for specified chilled, frozen, and preliminarily processed ruminant, pork, and poultry products.	<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 is removed from the prescribed testing parameters.	Appendix XII, Section II.1(a)	Reduces prescribed microbiological testing requirements
Salmonella – terrestrial animal products	Salmonella applies to specified high-risk ruminant, pork, and poultry products and fresh poultry eggs; processed dairy and egg products are also specifically tested.	Retained for specified high-risk products and fresh poultry eggs. Prescribed Salmonella testing is removed for processed dairy and egg products, with applicable parameters instead based on agreement with the exporting country.	Appendix XII, Section II.1(a)	Maintains Salmonella controls for higher-risk products while reducing prescribed testing for processed dairy and egg products.
Sampling and testing of high-risk terrestrial animal products	Disease-agent testing generally applies to every consignment; Salmonella and <i>E. coli</i> follow a three-consignment regime followed by one in three where compliant.	Prescribed testing follows three initial consignments, followed by one randomly selected consignment in every three if compliant.	Appendix XII, II.1(b.1)	Reduces routine disease-agent sampling for compliant imports.

Low-risk terrestrial animal products	One in every five consignments is sampled and tested.	No routine sampling is expressly prescribed; The border quarantine authority checks the dossier, physical conditions, and consistency of the consignment with the quarantine documentation.	Appendix XII, II.1(b.2)	Reduces routine border testing for processed products.
Specified finished feeds	Generally sampled for disease agents at a frequency of one in five consignments.	No routine disease-agent sampling; The border quarantine authority checks the dossier, physical conditions, and consistency of the consignment with the quarantine documentation.	Appendix XII, II.2(b.1)	Reduces routine testing.
Animal-origin feed ingredients	Disease-agent testing applies to every consignment.	One randomly selected consignment out of every three is sampled	Appendix XII, II.2(b.2)	Reduces testing frequency.
Testing exemption for feed and feed ingredients	Exemption applies where the exporting country or territory is recognized by WOAHA as free from the relevant disease.	Broadened to include disease status recognized by WOAHA or accepted by Vietnam and products that cannot transmit the relevant disease under WOAHA standards or risk assessment.	Appendix XII, II.2(b.4)	Provides a more explicitly risk-based basis for exemption.
Ruminant DNA testing for animal-origin ingredients used in feed production	One in five consignments from WOAHA-recognized negligible BSE-risk countries; one in three from other countries.	Existing frequencies are retained.	Appendix XII, II.2(c.1) - (c.2)	No substantive change to the DNA testing requirement.
Border hold for ruminant DNA-tested consignments	Consignments selected for ruminant DNA testing must remain at the border until satisfactory results are obtained.	Retained.	Appendix XII, Section II.2(d)	Existing logistics, storage, and clearance burdens remain.

Testing requirements for aquatic animals and aquatic animal products				
Aquatic animal product disease testing	Circular 03 contains a broader species- and disease-specific testing list.	Appendix XVI contains a narrower prescribed list of disease/product combinations.	Appendix XVI, Part B.I	Reduction in prescribed disease-agent testing.
Aquatic animal product sampling	First three consecutive consignments are tested; if compliant, sampling falls to one in five.	Sampling begins at one randomly selected consignment in every five; three consecutive consignments are triggered after non-compliance.	Appendix XVI, Part B.II.1	Reduction in routine sampling.
Aquatic import documentation /risk analysis	Circular 03 requires a model export health certificate for aquatic animals and their products where no model has been agreed, and expressly lists live commercial aquatic animals for risk analysis.	The model-certificate requirement appears limited to aquatic animals, and live commercial aquatic animals are no longer expressly listed for risk analysis, although general risk-based authority remains.	Article 26.1(b); Appendix IVb.1, IVb.4	May reduce documentation and automatic risk-analysis requirements in some cases.
Frozen aquatic animal products pending test results	Frozen aquatic animal products must remain at the import border gate until satisfactory quarantine results are available	The specific border-hold requirement appears to be removed; the draft generally allows movement to qualifying storage pending results.	Article 26.2	Potentially reduces port storage and demurrage
Exemption for aquatic animal products imported for export-processing	Circular 03 allows exemption from quarantine inspection for aquatic animal products imported for export-processing	Exemption continues to be maintained.	Appendix II.b	No change to the exemption procedure

Post will continue to monitor and report on developments related to the draft Circular. Post recommends that relevant stakeholders undertake their own review of the draft Circular and submit comments by October 16, 2026.

Should U.S. exporters have any questions regarding this draft Circular, please contact FAS Hanoi at aghanoi@usda.gov.

Attachments:

[Appendix English Translation.pdf](#)

[Draft Circular English Translation.pdf](#)