



Veterinary regulations on the import and transit of animal semen, embryos, ova (germplasm) from third countries (the conditions to import from the EU apply for imports from **Norway**)

This document is an integral part of the import regulations published on the website of the Federal Veterinary Office (FVO) - for full information see www.bvet.admin.ch ("website" in the following text).

1. Basic principles valid for all imports

Please first read the document "General rules for importing live animals and animal products into Switzerland" on the website > Import and transit.

Germplasm products from many animal species can only be imported subject to certain conditions and from "approved" countries (or regions) and facilities (AI centres, semen storage centres). Embryos and ova of some animal species must have been obtained by accredited embryo collection teams.

Depending on the exact activity – e.g. production, storage or transfer of semen or embryos, or operation of an AI centre – and on the product category / animal species, Swiss animal disease legislation lays down different requirements with regard to the necessary permits, keeping of records and notifiability. You will find more information on this issue on the website >Animal diseases (in German under "Tierseuchen" / "Besamung" / "Embryotransfer").

For the transit of germplasm products from third countries that are transited via Swiss airports to Member States of the EU basically the same import conditions apply as for the import into Switzerland. Germplasm products which are transited by air from third countries via Switzerland to other third countries are also subject to border veterinary inspection on arrival in Switzerland. Animals and products may only transit through a Swiss airport from countries and / or regions that are also admitted for definitive imports into Switzerland. However, any restrictions on suppliers do not apply. Depending on the nature of the imported animals and animal products different veterinary certificates are required. These are listed in the appropriate sub-chapter.

1. Import and transit documents / inspections

If a **certificate** is required, as is the case for importing most germplasm products, every consignment has to be accompanied by a veterinary certificate that has been completed in full, signed and stamped by the official government veterinarian responsible in the country of origin. More detailed information and templates for the import certificates required for the various product categories can be found in the various sub-sections of the website >Import and transit >Semen, embryos and ova.

An import permit in accordance with species conservation law is required for the import and transit of products derived from all animal species listed in annexes I-III of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and from a few other species (in accordance with Swiss hunting and nature conservation laws).

Import controls see website > Border veterinary checks, for products from protected animal species also > Wild Fauna and Flora / CITES.

The Federal Office for Agriculture is responsible for regulations on animal breeding. It also issues the

general import licence required to import bovine semen, see www.blw.admin.ch >Import.

2. Specific regulations on importing certain categories of germplasm (see also in the relevant chapter of the website >import > germplasm)

NB: current import regulations only include health guarantees for certain diseases. For other diseases, such as porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) or transmissible gastroenteritis (TGE), there are no regulations. To preserve the good health of Switzerland's pig population (e.g. freedom from PRRS), and also in view of possible claims for damages, it is therefore very important that importers live up to their responsibilities. Before importing any semen, they should obtain precise details about the health of the boars and the centre or herd of origin and should request appropriate guarantees at a private level. PRRS in particular could spread rapidly and cause major damage if it were imported. If the disease were to occur, Swiss law dictates that all animals infected or suspected of infection would have to be culled.