

***Code of Practice for
Importation of Live Pigs into Northern Ireland &
ROI***

***Produced by Veterinary Practitioners in Northern Ireland and
the Republic of Ireland***

August 2015

1. Introduction

This code of practice has been developed to implement procedures which will minimise the risk of introducing disease into Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland with live shipments of pigs.

A range of complex diseases can be introduced with the importation of any live animal, making the development of a Code of Practice that totally eliminates the risk of introducing all disease a difficult process,

This Code of Practice may not cover all disease situations that could arise. However, it seeks to address best practice and should apply to the importation of all pigs. It details the quarantine facilities, transportation and testing regimens that should pertain to a range of identified diseases. Where a new disease situation arises, which is not covered by these existing protocols, application to import live pigs can be considered on an individual basis.

The administration of each consignment of imported pigs will be overseen by either the secretary of the NPHC or UFU Pork and Bacon Committee depending on whether in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland. The respective committees will nominate a group of independent veterinarians to act on a sub-committee and address issues relating to disease and biosecurity associated with the importation.

Contact must be made with the NPHC or Secretary of the UFU Pork and Bacon Committee 28 working days prior to importation, seeking clarification on particular points and, if necessary, an application considered on an individual basis. This contact should be made in advance of quarantine in the country of origin so that disease conditions specific to that area and that country can be considered in advance of an importation. Also this will allow additional measures to be implemented if, in the opinion of the NPHC / UFU sub-committee, these are necessary.

2. Country of Origin

In general, it is recommended that importations should be restricted to countries and herds that have a health status that is equal to or superior to that of BOTH Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The island of Ireland would be considered to enjoy an unequalled health status compared to neighbouring EU countries. Regional freedoms elsewhere are far more important than country status and each proposal to import should be dealt with on a case by case basis. In specific instances, increased levels of pre-import testing may be required based on risk analysis of the proposed country of origin of the animals. It is assumed that the health status between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is identical and hence this protocol does not apply to cross border trade between the two regions.

3. Health Requirements of the Herd of Origin

The health of the herd of origin should satisfy national/EU requirements. Each importer must register with the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) or Department of Agriculture & Rural Development NI (DARDNI) depending on whether in NI or ROI. DAFM / DARDNI must be notified at least 24 hours before importation via TRACES. Notwithstanding EU and DAFM/DARDNI requirements, the NPHC / UFU Pork and Bacon Committee have endorsed these guidelines which are more stringent than the intra – community requirements regarding free movement of animals within the EU, in an attempt to further reduce the possibility of disease introduction.

Pigs derived from herds of origin in the EU

The following official certification must accompany pigs imported to Northern Ireland / Republic of Ireland

- EU health certificate
- International animal transport certificate
- Zoo-technical certificate in the case of pedigree animals.

4. NPHC / UFU Scheme Requirements

Contact and certification

The secretary of the NPHC or UFU Pork and Bacon Committee must be contacted at least 28 working days before the proposed importation of pigs is due to take place.

Certificates L₁ to L₁₀ (see attached documentation) should be completed and forwarded to the secretary of the NPHC or UFU Pork and Bacon Committee at this time.

Supplementary health requirements

It is anticipated that the majority of importers will be introducing imported stock to herds of minimal disease health status. Therefore, in addition to requiring freedom from the diseases listed in the relevant certificates provided by local authorities, importers are entitled to request additional health certification for other diseases which are not present in their own herds. Certification of freedom from the latter diseases shall be arranged privately between the relevant parties.

Pigs derived from herds in Third countries

National rules for the importation of stock shall apply, except where specific EU rules exist.

5. Serological Testing of Pigs Selected for Import in the unit of origin.

Provided the donor herd can satisfy the requirements of Certificates L₁, L₂, L₃, L₄, L₅ and L₇, the pigs for export can be moved into isolation quarters in the herd of origin. The NPHC / UFU sub-committee recognises that an on-farm isolation facility is more secure than an off-site location where bio-security standards may be lower and potential for disease breakdown is greater.

Blood samples should be collected from at least 25 pigs in the isolation facility after a minimum of 30 days of being placed in isolation. If there is less than 25 pigs in the consignment, then all pigs should be tested. The samples will be subjected to approved testing, with negative results in accordance with the requirements of certificates L₁, L₂, L₃, L₄, L₅ before the animals are permitted to leave the farm (country) of origin.

Where queries regarding the interpretation or significance of the test results occur, the pig veterinary sub-committee of the NPHC / UFU must be consulted. The sub-

committee will recommend a further course of action to be taken on a case by case basis. This could include increasing the numbers of samples required for specific diseases, bearing in mind geographical and other considerations deemed relevant at that time.

The following approved tests are acceptable for the diseases listed in Table 1. It is anticipated that testing methods will change and improve over time and the NPHC / UFU subcommittee reserves the right to specify an improved method if available.

Table 1. Authorised tests for live pig imports into Ireland

Disease	Authorised Serological Tests
PRRS (US &EU Strains)	, IPMA, ELISA
AD	PRV (Total Ab) ELISA
TGE	Differential ELISA
PED	ELISA (serum); PCR (faeces)
	ELISA
CSF / ASF	ELISA
Brucellosis	ELISA / CFT

6. Isolation Premises in the Country of Origin

The isolation premises in the country of origin should be as geographically remote as possible. If on-farm, then unit bio-security practices must already be in place.

The isolation premises should be convenient to the port of embarkation to facilitate transport of the isolated pigs to the point of embarkation on a route that is free of pig farms. Transport over weekends is recommended to avoid accidental contact with other pigs. Route plans are a requirement for all pigs travelling across national boundaries and these have to be approved in advance by the competent authority in the exporting country and logged onto the TRACES system.

7. Transportation

The exporter should seek prior confirmation with the port/shipping / airport authorities to ensure that the transport vehicle has secured a reservation on a specific sailing/flight prior to removal of pigs from the isolation premises. This should be the only pig consignment on board the ship / flight

8. Isolation Premises in Northern Ireland / ROI

- The isolation premises for the imported stock should not be within 5 km of pig farms and ideally at least 1km from any route along which there is regular transport / transit of pigs.
- Personnel involved with the imported pigs must not have contact with other pigs.
- Homebred sentinel pigs may be mixed with imported pigs to assist in determining whether the imported pigs are carrying any agents that the homebred pigs are unfamiliar with. The sentinels must not be moved from isolation until test results showing freedom from disease has been received. Sentinel pigs may be slaughtered and inspected to determine whether they are carrying any previously unidentified agent following contact with the imported pigs.
- All imported pigs must be injected with dihydro-streptomycin at a dose rate of 25mg/kg bodyweight, within 72 hours of arrival to treat against Leptospirosis. This treatment should be repeated 14 days later.
- After a minimum of 30 days of being placed in isolation at least 25 pigs must be blood sampled for those diseases covered by certificates L₁, L₂, L₃, L₄ and L₅ and negative results received. If there are less than 25 pigs in the consignment, then all must be tested.
- All serological test results along with other certification (L₁₀) made by the private veterinary surgeon responsible for the isolation facility, must be forwarded to the veterinary sub-committee of the UFU or NPHC.
- All relevant test results and certifications will be examined by the veterinary sub-committee in confidence. Where the sub-committee is not fully satisfied, their concerns will be notified to the NPHC or UFU. They may also refer their opinion to DAFM or DARDNI for further consideration.
- Where problems arise in respect to serological test results or certification by the herd veterinary surgeon, consultations between the herd veterinary surgeon and the veterinary sub-committee will take place to determine what further action is required (further testing or disposal). The decision of the NPHC or UFU veterinary subcommittee (where applicable) is final.

- The importer is required to sign an undertaking (L₆) that in the event of clinical or serological evidence of any of the diseases specified in certificates L₁, L₂, L₃, L₄ and L₅ being identified among imported pigs, they must be re-exported or slaughtered. Sentinel pigs must also be slaughtered. Carcasses must be disposed of using appropriate biosecurity measures.

It is recommended that importers insure against this eventuality.

9. Procedure for Importers

The importer must forward the following information to the Secretary of the UFU Pork and Bacon Committee or Secretary of the NPHC at least 28 days before the date of the proposed importation or after a minimum of 30 days of being placed in isolation in the country of origin.

- Name and address of the proposed donor herd
- Name and address of the private veterinarian to the donor herd
- Date and location of the proposed importation
- Name and address of the importer
- Name and address of the private veterinarian to importing herd
- Name and address of the isolation farm in NI / ROI
- Name and address of the stockperson assigned to the isolation farm
- Certificate L₆ signed by the importer
- Certificate L₇ signed by exporter's veterinarian
- Certificate L₈ signed by importer's veterinarian
- Date of entry into the exporter's isolation premises (on-farm or off-farm)

The application, complete with all relevant certificates, should be made by the private veterinarian of the importing herd. This documentation must reach the NPHC / UFU secretary at least 7 working days prior to the proposed date of importation.

10. Veterinary Examiner

For each importation, the pig veterinary sub-committee of the UFU / NPHC will appoint one of its members as an import assessor. Where possible, this assessor will not be the nominated private veterinarian for the importer, to ensure transparency that there is no conflict of interest.

11. Pig Producer Register

The NPHC /UFU secretary will set up and maintain a register of all pig producers who import pigs or pig genetic material (semen or embryos, fresh or frozen) into NI or ROI.

Note: Applications to UFU should be forwarded to the secretary of the UFU Pork and Bacon Committee at the following below. NPHC applications should be forwarded to the NPHC secretary listed below. Each secretary should inform the secretary in the other region of any proposed importation prior to it being undertaken.

Secretary of the National Pig Health Committee

Irish Farm Centre,

Naas Road,

Bluebell,

Dublin 12.

00353 871150029

Secretary UFU Pork and Bacon Committee

Ulster Farmers' Union

475 Antrim Road

Belfast, Antrim

BT15 3DA.

00442890370222

Whilst every care has been taken in the preparation of this Code of Practice, no responsibility whatsoever can be taken by the NPHC / UFU or any of its participating bodies or their members or associates for any loss or damage

howsoever arising, whether directly or indirectly out of this Code of Practice, the use of any part of it, or the recommendations contained therein.

This document was compiled by the Pig Veterinary sub-committee for the UFU/NPHC and reviewed in August 2015

Attached Documentation

L1: PRRS testing in the herd of origin

L2: Aujeszky's testing in the herd of origin

L3: TGE testing in the herd of origin

L4: PED testing in the herd of origin

L5: Leptospirosis testing in the herd of origin

L6: Intention to destroy / re-export in the event of positive results

L7: Health Declaration in respect of pigs destined for import into Ireland

L8: Declaration re Irish Isolation Farm

L9: Live Pig Imports – Application Form to NPHC / UFU

L10: Health Certificate in respect of pigs imported into Ireland

Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS)
Certificate in respect of pigs destined for import into ROI/ Northern Ireland

Donor Herd		Pig ID Numbers (tags)	
Name			
Address			
Examining Lab		Veterinary Consultant	
Name			
Address			

Serological test applied:

I, consultant veterinarian to the donor herd, declare that the herd may be deemed free of PRRS on the bases of clinical or pathological⁵ examinations together with negative serological test results on 25 pigs selected from representative areas within the herd.

Signed Date

During the period of isolation

Note 1: The consultant veterinarian must blood sample at least 25 of the pigs not sooner than 30 days after being placed in isolation; using the PCR, IPMA or the ELISA test the sera must prove negative for PRRS virus or antibodies.

Note 2: Where the total number of pigs in isolation is less than 25, all pigs must be sampled.

Note 3: A donor herd which can furnish evidence of regular (i.e. a minimum of 25 pigs every six months) serological monitoring for PRRS with negative results, need only test the pigs in isolation.

Note 4: All appropriate laboratory test reports must be attached to this certificate.

Note 5: Clinical, pathological or serological evidence of disease should not have been identified in the herd within the past two years.

***Aujeszky's Disease (AD/PRV) Certificate:
Pigs destined for import into ROI/ Northern Ireland***

Donor Herd		Pig ID Numbers	
Name			
Address			
Examining Lab		Veterinary Consultant	
Name			
Address			

Serological test applied:

I, consultant veterinarian to the donor herd, declare that the herd may be deemed free of AD/PRV on the bases of clinical or pathological ⁵ examinations together with negative serological test results on 25 pigs selected from representative areas within the herd.

Signed Date

During the period of isolation

Note 1: The consultant veterinarian must blood sample at least 25 of the pigs not sooner than 30 days after being placed in isolation; these samples should be subjected to the AD/PRV (total Ab) ELISA and the results must indicate absence of AD/PRV field infection.

Note 2: Where the total number of pigs in isolation is less than 25, all pigs must be sampled.

Note 3: A donor herd which can furnish evidence of regular (i.e. a minimum of 25 pigs every six months) serological monitoring for AD/PRV with negative results, need only test the pigs in isolation.

Note 4: All appropriate laboratory test reports must be attached to this certificate.

Note 5: Clinical, pathological or serological evidence of disease should not have been identified in the herd within the past two years.

Note 6. ROI / Northern Ireland are Officially Aujeszky's Free (OAF)

***Transmissible Gastroenteritis (TGE) Certificate:
Pigs destined for import into ROI / Northern Ireland***

Donor Herd		Pig ID Numbers	
Name			
Address			
Examining Lab		Veterinary Consultant	
Name			
Address			

Serological test applied:

I, consultant veterinarian to the donor herd, declare that the herd may be deemed free of TGE on the bases of clinical or pathological ⁵ examinations together with negative serological test results (TGE differential ELISA) on 25 pigs selected from representative areas within the herd.

Signed Date

During the period of isolation

Note 1: The consultant veterinarian must blood sample at least 25 of the pigs not sooner than 30 days after being placed in isolation; the TGE differential ELISA results must prove negative.

Note 2: Where the total number of pigs in isolation is less than 25, all pigs must be sampled.

Note 3: A donor herd which can furnish evidence of regular (i.e. a minimum of 25 pigs every six months) serological monitoring for TGE with negative results, need only test the pigs in isolation.

Note 4: All appropriate laboratory test reports must be attached to this certificate.

Note 5: Clinical, pathological or serological evidence of disease should not have been identified in the herd within the past two years.

Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea (PED)
Certificate in respect of pigs destined for import into ROI / Northern Ireland

Donor Herd		Pig ID Numbers	
Name			
Address			
Examining Lab		Veterinary Consultant	
Name			
Address			

Serological test applied:

I, consultant veterinarian to the donor herd, declare that the herd may be deemed free of PED on the bases of clinical or pathological⁵ examinations together with negative serological test results on 25 pigs selected from representative areas within the herd.

Signed Date

During the period of isolation

Note 1: The consultant veterinarian must blood sample at least 25 of the pigs not sooner than 30 days after being placed in isolation; using an ELISA test, the sera must prove negative for PED antibodies.

Note 2: Where the total number of pigs in isolation is less than 25, all pigs must be sampled.

Note 3: A donor herd which can furnish evidence of regular (i.e. a minimum of 25 pigs every six months) serological monitoring for PED with negative results, need only test the pigs in isolation.

Note 4: All appropriate laboratory test reports must be attached to this certificate.

Note 5: Clinical, pathological or serological evidence of disease should not have been identified in the herd within the past two years.

Note 6: PED outbreaks have been recorded in both Asia and the Americas in 2013 / 2014, reaching epidemic proportions in some herds. High levels of vigilance will be required to ensure that PED is not introduced to Ireland via any imported consignment of live pigs.

Note 7: PED, TGE and delta Corona Viruses are all in the same family of enteric viruses. A comprehensive screening package for all this family of viruses may be required depending on the area from which the pigs are being imported

Porcine Leptospirosis
Certificate in respect of pigs destined for import into ROI / Northern Ireland

Donor Herd		Pig ID Numbers	
Name			
Address			
Examining Lab		Veterinary Consultant	
Name			
Address			

Serological test applied:

I, consultant veterinarian to the donor herd, declare that the herd may be deemed free of *Leptospira* serovars – pomona, grippityphosa and tarassovi on the bases of clinical or pathological ⁵ examinations together with negative serological test results on 25 pigs selected from representative areas within the herd.

Signed Date

During the period of isolation

Note 1: The consultant veterinarian must blood sample at least 25 of the pigs not sooner than 30 days after being placed in isolation; the microscopic agglutination test (MAT) employing live antigens (serovars – Pomona, grippityphosa and tarassovi) is required. A negative result = less than 50% agglutination at a dilution of 1/100.

Note 2: Where the total number of pigs in isolation is less than 25, all pigs must be sampled.

Note 3: A donor herd which can furnish evidence of regular (i.e. a minimum of 25 pigs every six months) serological monitoring for leptospirosis with negative results, need only test the pigs in isolation.

Note 4: All appropriate laboratory test reports must be attached to this certificate.

Note 5: Clinical, pathological or serological evidence of disease should not have been identified in the herd within the past two years.

Undertaking by Importer: Pigs imported into ROI Northern Ireland

Donor Herd	Importer
Name
Address
.....
.....

Date of Proposed Importation:

I, on behalf of the above named importer, hereby undertake that in the event of clinical or serological evidence of PRRS, AD, TGE, PED or Leptospirosis¹ being recognised amongst the imported pigs, they will be re-exported or slaughtered and the sentinel pigs slaughtered and disposed of using good biosecurity procedures.

Signed Date

Note 1: Refers to Leptospiral serovars – pomona, grippotyphosa and tarassovi.

Health Declaration: Pigs destined for import into ROI/ Northern Ireland**Donor Herd****Consultant Veterinarian**

Name

Address

Importer**Consultant Veterinarian**

Name

Address

Date of Proposed Importation:***Declaration by the Consultant Veterinarian to the Donor Herd***

I, declare that :

All pigs which have been introduced into the donor herd within the previous six months have come from herds which were deemed free of the following diseases:

PRRS	TGE
AD	PED / delta Corona Viruses
Leptospirosis ¹	ASF / CSF

or

All pigs introduced into the donor herd within the previous six months have been tested and shown to be negative for the following diseases:

PRRS	TGE
AD	PED / delta Corona Viruses
Leptospirosis ¹	ASF / CSF

The location of the isolation premises is not within 5kms of pig farms and it is satisfactory in terms of husbandry, hygiene and general biosecurity.

Signed Date

Note 1: Refers to Leptospiral serovars – pomona, grippotyphosa and tarassovi.

Declaration re Isolation Farm in ROI/ Northern Ireland

Owner

Veterinarian

Name

.....

Address

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Date of proposed importation:

I, consultant veterinarian to the importing herd, certify that the location of the isolation premises is not within 5 kms of pig farms is at least 1 km removed from a route along which there is regular transport / transit of pigs. The isolation facility is satisfactory in terms of husbandry, hygiene and general biosecurity.

Signed.....

Date

Live Pig Imports – Application Form to UFU / NPHC

Proposed Donor Herd

Veterinarian to Donor Herd

Name

.....

Address

.....

Date of proposed importation:

.....

Place of proposed importation:

.....

Importer

Consultant Veterinarian to Importing Herd

Name

.....

Address

.....

.....

.....

Isolation Farm

Name

Address

.....

Name/Address of Stockperson designated for sole use on the isolation farm:

.....

(please tick box)

Declaration L₆ attached

Declaration L₇ attached

Declaration L₈ attached

Date of entry into exporter's isolation premises:

Health Certificate in respect of pigs imported into ROI / Northern Ireland

Importer

Private veterinarian

Name

Address

.....

Import Ref. No.

Date of Importation

Date of Dihydrostreptomycin Injection(s)

Date of Blood Sampling

I, consultant veterinarian to the importing herd, certify that, not earlier than 30 days after importation, 25 pigs were blood sampled for PRRS, AD, TGE, PED, ASF, CSF and Leptospirosis¹ with negative results².

Signed Date

Note 1: Refers to Leptospiral serovars – pomona, grippotyphosa and tarassovi.

Note 2: All appropriate laboratory test reports must be attached to this Certificate.