

Importing animal products from abroad for research purposes in the UK

If you are planning on bringing samples collected on your research project abroad back to the UK for further research and analysis, then authorisation for importation needs to be approved in advance from Defra and an import licence must accompany samples being imported into the UK. **The rules regarding import licensing is currently under review and the following advice is for guideline purposes only: you should always check directly with Defra regarding the specific requirements for your own project.**

Defra Helpline 08459 33 55 77 Mon-Fri: 8am to 6pm

Animal Health Import Team
Animal Health Divisional Office
Beeches Road
Chelmsford
Essex CM1 2RU
Tel: 01245 454860
Fax: 01245 351162
Email: AHITChelmsford@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk

There are different import requirements depending on which geographical area you are importing from, what you are importing (tissue/ blood products/ secretions), if the samples are fixed or not, and if there is a pathogen being carried that could infect animals and or humans in the UK.

Please note that there is no guarantee a licence will be granted, it can take several weeks to a month for Defra to process an application form, and licences are usually granted for a period of up to 3 months from the time of issue, therefore **forward planning in your project is essential**. Where an import licence/authorisation is granted, there are strict rules about the packaging and labelling of samples for their return to the UK, and a copy of the licence/authorisation must accompany each consignment back to the UK. For further information on this contact Defra directly.

General Import Licence

Many animals and products of animal origin can be imported under 'general' licences/authorisations which are published on the Defra website. Importers do not need to apply for their own copy. Certain products imported for research purposes come under the general licence for research as detailed on the link:

<http://www.Defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/animaltrade/imports/licences/index.htm#research>

If the product and or country of origin is not included on the general import licence list, then a specific licence is required, details of which are given in the following sections.

Imports of animal derived products for research, education, diagnostic or museum purposes

The following link gives the Defra guidance for imports of animal derived products for research, education, diagnostic or museum purposes:

<http://www.Defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/animaltrade/imports/research/index.htm>

Application for an animal health import licence involves completion of an online form. The interactive online application form can be found via the following link:
<http://www.Defra.gov.uk/corporate/docs/forms/ahealth/iappo1.htm>

Please note that additional information is also required regarding the standard of the laboratory that the imported tissues will be processed in, this has to be supplied on the supplementary form, a link to which can be found on the same page above.

Imports of Animal Pathogens

It is important to note that imports of animal pathogens - or products containing certain animal pathogens - are not permitted under this regime and a separate application for importation of animal pathogens must be made. Information on the application process (which cannot be done online) can be found via the following links:

[Basis for Defra classification of animal pathogens](http://www.Defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/pathogens/classification1.htm)

<http://www.Defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/pathogens/classification1.htm>

<http://www.Defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/pathogens/index.htm#licenceiapo>

The contact point for applicants who wish to import animal pathogens or carriers into **England** is:

The Pathogens Licensing Team
Defra
Area 5A
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR
Tel: 020 7238 6211/6150
Fax: 020 7238 6105
Email: pathogens@defra.gsi.gov.uk

If you wish to apply for a licence to import an animal pathogen or carrier from a country outside the EU into Scotland or Wales, please contact the relevant licensing authority at the address below:

Scotland

Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department
Animal Health and Welfare
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive, P Spur
Edinburgh EH11 3XD
Tel: 0300 244 9794
Email: animal.health@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Wales

Welsh Assembly Government
Department for Rural Affairs
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF1 3NQ
Tel: 02920 823592
Fax: 02920 826120
Email: animal.health@wales.gsi.gov.uk

December 2010