



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Import of Fresh and Frozen Bovine Embryos Import Information Note (IIN) BETC/2

January 2024

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1. General Information

This Import Information Note (IIN) must be read in conjunction with the IIN for general information for imports of live animals and germplasm, which provides information on pre-notifications, veterinary checks, risk categories etc.

[General information for imports of live animals and germplasm \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk)

References to European Union (EU) legislation within this document are references to direct EU Legislation which has been assimilated in Great Britain (assimilated direct legislation), as defined in the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 and can be viewed on the UK legislation website (legislation.gov.uk).

2. Scope

The importation of fresh and frozen bovine embryos (from domestic bovines) into Great Britain.

The import of fresh and frozen bovine embryos (from domestic bovines) is permitted provided that the embryos:

- come from an approved country;
- have been conceived as a result of artificial insemination or *in vitro* fertilisation with semen from a donor sire standing at a semen collection centre approved by the competent authority for the collection, processing and storage of semen;
- meet the requirements of [Directive 89/556](#) and [Decision \(EC\) 2006/168](#) for the collection, processing and storage of embryos ;
- have been collected, processed and stored by an approved embryo collection/production team approved in accordance with Article 8 of Directive 89/556; and
- are accompanied by the relevant animal health certificate.

3. Country of origin

Imports are permitted from trading partners, listed in a document published by the Secretary of State, with the consent of the Scottish and Welsh Ministers. See the documents for bovine embryos at the links below.

- [Non-EU countries](#)
- [EU and EFTA countries](#)

4. Approved collection and production teams

All semen, ova and embryos must be collected in approved centres and by approved teams in accordance with the Balai Regime. Lists of approved centres and teams are available on gov.uk:

- [List of approved centres and teams](#)

- [List of EU approved establishments](#)

5. Health certification/documentation

Imports to Great Britain must be accompanied by the appropriate health certificate, which can be found on GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bovine-germinal-products-health-certificates>

6. Additional requirements for *in vitro* embryos

The imports of embryos produced by *in vitro* fertilisation, using semen from a country listed in Annex 1 of Commission Implementing [Decision 2011/630/EU](#) can be permitted if the relevant health certificate for such semen has been completed satisfactorily.

In accordance with Article 3.2 of Decision (EC) 2006/168, imports of embryos produced by *in vitro* fertilisation, using semen which does not fully comply with the above, can be permitted only if produced in approved semen collection centres or stored in semen storage centres in third countries which comply with the animal health requirements set out in the relevant health certificate.

7. Importation of cloned embryos or embryos from the progeny of a cloned animal

Embryos which are derived by transfer of nuclei (i.e. a cloned embryo) are **NOT** currently permitted to be imported under Decision (EC) 2006/168. Only the importation of embryos conceived as a result of artificial insemination or *in vitro* fertilization are permitted.

The health certification which must accompany consignments of all embryos from an approved Third country contains a statement, which the official veterinarian in the exporting country must sign, stating that the embryos were conceived by either artificial insemination (including *in vivo* fertilization) or *in vitro* fertilization.

While unable to import cloned embryos, importers may apply for a license under the Importation of Embryos, Ova and Semen Order 1980 (1980 SI No. 12) as amended by the Importation of Embryos, Ova and Semen (Amendment) Order 1984 (1984 SI No. 1326). Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis and should be sent to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) (see below).

8. Embryos from a cloned animal

Provided that embryos obtained from a cloned animal were conceived by either artificial insemination or *in vitro* fertilization and complies with the conditions laid down in Decision (EC) 2006/168 then imports into Great Britain from an approved trading partner can take place.

9. Embryos from progeny of a cloned animal

Provided that embryos from the progeny of a cloned animal were conceived by either artificial insemination or *in vitro* fertilization and complies with the conditions laid down in Decision (EC) 2006/168 then imports into Great Britain from an approved trading partner can take place.

10. Food derived from cloned animals or their progeny

Imports of embryos from cloned animals and from progeny of clones may be imported provided they meet the conditions given above. However, food from the resulting animals may be subject to other rules, such as the Novel Food Regulations and there may be restrictions on placing such products on the market. Importers should contact the Novel Food Unit at the [Food Standards Agency](#) for further information.

11. Contact for further information

For further information regarding import requirements, contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Imports team:

Centre for International Trade - Carlisle
Eden Bridge House
Lowther Street
Carlisle
CA3 8DX

Email: Imports@apha.gov.uk

Telephone: 03000 200 301



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

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www.gov.uk/apha

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government and Welsh Government.