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BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA ADVICE 2011/19

FINAL POLICY REVIEW OF THE BLUETONGUE VIRUS RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPORTATION OF CATTLE, SHEEP, GOAT AND DEER SEMEN AND EMBRYOS FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION, AND CATTLE SEMEN AND EMBRYOS FROM SWITZERLAND AND NORWAY

This Biosecurity Australia Advice (BAA) informs stakeholders that Australia's Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine has determined a quarantine policy review of the biosecurity risks for bluetongue virus (BTV) associated with the importation of ruminant semen and embryos from the European Union (EU), Switzerland and Norway. Importation of ruminant semen and embryos may be permitted subject to the *Quarantine Act 1908*, and the application of sanitary measures as specified in the *Final policy review of the bluetongue virus risks associated with the importation of cattle, sheep, goat and deer semen and embryos from the European Union and cattle semen and embryos from Switzerland and Norway*, April 2011. The policy will now be taken into account by decision makers when considering import permit applications for semen and embryos of domestic ruminants from the European Union (EU), Switzerland and Norway in accordance with the *Quarantine Act 1908* and *Quarantine Proclamation 1998* as amended.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry completed a policy review of the biosecurity risks for bluetongue virus associated with the importation of cattle, sheep, goat and deer semen and embryos from the European Union (EU), and cattle semen and embryos from Switzerland and Norway. A draft policy review was issued on 2 June 2010 for a 60 day consultation period that closed on 2 August 2010 (BAA 2010/16). The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry received submissions from three stakeholders, the European Union, the United Kingdom and Finland. The submissions raised various issues regarding zoning, vaccination and testing for bluetongue virus and potential risks to cattle embryos associated with the European strain of bluetongue serotype 8. These issues were considered in preparing the final policy (Attachment 1). In light of scientific information, which was updated in the final review to March 2011, no changes were made to the draft policy.

With completion of the policy review, Australia's Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine made a policy determination that cattle, sheep, goat and deer semen and embryos from the European Union, and cattle semen and embryos from Switzerland and Norway could continue to be permitted entry into Australia under specific quarantine conditions. These conditions are similar to the current interim measures introduced in 2008. Importation of these products may be permitted, subject to the *Quarantine Act 1908*, and the application of sanitary measures as specified in the *Final policy review of the bluetongue virus risks associated with the importation of cattle, sheep, goat and deer semen and embryos from the European Union and cattle semen and embryos from Switzerland and Norway*, April 2011. These measures are designed to limit quarantine risk to a level that is acceptably low, in order to achieve Australia's appropriate level of protection. The policy will be taken into account by decision makers when considering import permit applications for semen and embryos of domestic ruminants from the European Union and cattle semen and embryos from Switzerland and Norway in accordance with the *Quarantine Act 1908* and *Quarantine Proclamation 1998* as amended.

The final policy review is available on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website, www.daff.gov.au/ba. Stakeholder comments and the department's responses (Attachment 2) are also on the website.

Please pass this notice to other interested parties. If those parties wish to be included in future communications on this matter they should contact Animal Biosecurity at animal@daff.gov.au.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Cupit', written in a cursive style.

Dr Andrew Cupit
A/g Assistant Secretary
Animal Biosecurity