



IMPORTATION OF ANIMALS AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS

In terms of the Animal Diseases Act, Act No. 35 of 1984 all South African citizens may import animals and/or animal-derived products, which are considered to be safe, into South Africa. Importation is subject to compliance with the relevant import requirements, as stipulated on the veterinary import permit.

What are animal products?

Animal products or animal-derived products are made of or contain animal material. Examples are milk, cheese, meat, biltong, skins, furs, game trophies, animal feed containing animal material, vaccines as well as medicines made from animal material and laboratory samples of animals.

Import requirements

Certain import requirements have to be met when you want to import animals and/or animal products into the country. These requirements are aimed at preventing the introduction of exotic (foreign) diseases into South Africa. This is done in order to protect the national animal (and human) population, as well as our export markets. For certain products other government authorities have their own import requirements which must be complied to, for example meat is also controlled by the Directorate Veterinary Public Health, which will evaluate the slaughtering procedures and abattoirs of the exporting country.

- Each consignment of animal and/or animal products for importation into South Africa must be accompanied by:
 - An original veterinary import permit, issued by the National Directorate Animal Health,
 - An original health certificate, duly completed in English and in accordance with the requirements of the import permit, and signed (in blue ink) by the competent veterinary authority of the exporting country.

Please note: *faxes, photostat, carbon or other copies will not be acceptable.*

- All conditions of the veterinary import permit must be complied with and it is the responsibility of the importer.

How to apply for a veterinary import permit

- You must fill in an application form.
- Get the correct application form at your local state veterinary office, an approved port of entry into South Africa (see page 3) or the National Directorate Animal Health in Pretoria, telephone number (012) 319 7405.

- The service is currently free of charge, but a tariff will be introduced in the near future.
- The completed application form can be faxed to (012) 329 8292 or posted to the Sub-directorate Import and Export Control, Private Bag X138, Pretoria, 0001.
- The application must be submitted to the Pretoria office at least 4 to 6 weeks before the proposed import.

Other authorities to be contacted

Contact the following authorities for information on the importation of:

	Tel. nos
Domestic animals, embryos and semen	
(a) Registrar Livestock Improvement and Brands	(012) 319 6000
(b) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
Cats and dogs	
(a) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
Game, game products and reptiles	
(a) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
(b) Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation of the relevant Province	
Fresh meat (domestic animals, poultry and birds)	
(a) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
(b) Directorate Veterinary Public Health	(012) 319 6000
(c) Boards on Tariffs and Trade	
Dairy products	
(a) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
(b) Board on Tariffs and Trade	(012) 310 9791
Live poultry, birds (excluding game birds) and eggs	
(a) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
(b) Registrar Livestock Improvement and Brands	(012) 319 6000
Game birds	
(a) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
(b) Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation of the relevant Province	
Pet foods	
(a) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
(b) Registrar Act No. 36/1947	(012) 319 6000
(c) Board on Tariffs and Trade	(012) 310 9791
Biologicals	
(a) Medicines Control Council	(012) 312 0000
(b) Subdirectorate Import and Export Control (D:AH)	(012) 319 6000
(c) Registrar Act No. 36/1947	(012) 319 6000
(d) Registrar Act No. 101/1965	(012) 312 0000
Stock remedies	
(a) Registrar Act No. 36/1947	(012) 319.6000

D:AH = Directorate Animal Health

Illegal importation

Any consignment of animals and/or animal products imported into South Africa without an original veterinary import permit can be regarded as an illegal importation.

NB: The veterinary import permit must be issued before the consignment leaves the exporting country.

Consequences of illegal importation

Various measures can be taken, depending on the type of import, including:

- refusal of entry and detaining of the illegal consignment
- an order will be served on the importer to remove the consignment from South Africa or the consignment will be destroyed
- prosecution of the importer can be instituted

The act makes provision for the following:

- first conviction: a fine of up to R4 000 or imprisonment for a period of up to 2 years, or both;
- second conviction: a fine of up to R8 000 or imprisonment for a period of up to 4 years, or both
- third or subsequent conviction: imprisonment without the option of a fine
- if it can be proven that the importation constituted an animal disease risk, the Act makes provision for (first offence) imprisonment for up to 7 years only.

Approved ports of entry

Animals or animal products may be imported at the following approved ports of entry:

- Airports:
 - Johannesburg International
 - Cape Town International
 - Durban International
- Harbours:
 - Cape Town
 - Durban
 - Port Elizabeth (only selected products)
 - East London
- Border posts with neighbouring countries:
 - Namibia (Nakop and Vioolsdrif)
 - Botswana (Ramatlabam)
 - Zimbabwe (Beit Bridge)
 - Swaziland (Golela and Oshoek)

- Mozambique (Komatipoort—Lebombo)

Flow chart of the process

Importer applies for a South African Veterinary Import Permit, which must be issued in Pretoria

After receiving the export health certificate, the import takes place and the consignment can be released if everything is in order

which will result in a happy importer

If you want further information on the importation of animals and/or animal products into South Africa, you can enquire at the Subdirectorate Import and Export Control in Pretoria at telephone number (012) 319 6000, fax number (012) 329 8292 or you can write to:

**Directorate Animal Health
Subdirectorate of Import and Export Control
Private Bag X138
Pretoria 0001**

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