USDA APHIS VETERINARY SERVICES STRATEGY & POLICY
PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORTATION OF
WATER BUFFALO (*Bubalus bubalis*) AND YAK (*Bos grunniens*)
FOR IMMEDIATE SLAUGHTER FROM CANADA TO THE UNITED STATES

February 2022

This protocol describes the conditions required to import domestic water buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) and domestic yak (*Bos grunniens*) from Canada according to regulations found in 9 CFR Part 93, and the new rule, Importation of Sheep, Goats, and Certain Other Ruminants, published December 3 2021, Federal Register :: Importation of Sheep, Goats, and Certain Other Ruminants.

1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1.1. A USDA **import permit** is not required if the animals are moved through a land border port; otherwise, the importer must obtain an import permit from:

> USDA APHIS Veterinary Services
> Strategy & Policy
> Unit 39, 4700 River Road
> Riverdale, MD 20737-1231
> Telephone: **(301) 851-3300, Option 2**
> Fax: **(301) 734-4704**
>
> The import permit application (VS 17-129) may be found online: VS 17-129, Instructions to compete the VS 17-129 form: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/downloads/vs17_129inst.pdf. The completed import application form 17-129 may be faxed to 301-734-4704 or emailed to: laipermits@usda.gov

1.2. The importer must obtain an appointment in advance of entry from the APHIS port veterinarian. The port veterinarian will assign a time and place for the importation to take place, if mutually satisfactory arrangements can be made for the purpose of inspecting the animals.

1.3. An **official health certificate** is required. The official health certificate must be issued by a veterinarian designated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and must be endorsed by a veterinarian employed by the CFIA attesting to the certifications and tests required in this protocol.

1.4. The **official health certificate** must include:
1.4.1. name and address of the importer.
1.4.2. species, breed, and number of animals to be imported.
1.4.3. purpose of the importation.
1.4.4. individual identification, including the official Canadian eartag number or other approved forms of individual identification, and any other identification present on the animal, including registration number and brands.
1.4.5. description of the animals, age (including age in months for juveniles), sex, breed, and markings (if any).
1.4.6. region/country of origin.
1.4.7. address or other means of identifying the premises of origin and any other premises where the animals resided immediately prior to export.

USDA APHIS VETERINARY SERVICES STRATEGY & POLICY
PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORTATION OF
WATER BUFFALO (*Bubalus bubalis*) AND YAK (*Bos grunniens*)
FOR IMMEDIATE SLAUGHTER FROM CANADA TO THE UNITED STATES

February 2022

1.4.8. specific physical location of the APHIS-approved slaughtering establishment, including the applicable Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) establishment number for immediate slaughter animals.

1.4.9. name and address of the exporter.

1.4.10. port of embarkation in Canada, the mode of transportation, route of travel (slaughter animals), and port of entry in the United States.

2. **IDENTIFICATION**

2.1. All water buffalo or yaks must be individually identified with an official eartag of the country of origin traceable to the premises of origin of the animal (birthplace), and a secondary tag must be placed. The official eartag must be tamper-resistant and provide unique identification for the individual animal and either use the country code as a prefix or have a mark unique to official eartags of the country of origin. The official eartags must have one of the following numbering systems:

2.1.1. National Uniform Eartagging System; or

2.1.2. Animal identification number, composed of the 3-digit country code and a 12-digit number unique to the animal; or

2.1.3. Premises-based number system.

2.1.4. The use of UHF tags is encouraged, to expedite border inspection procedures.

2.2. **No person may alter, deface, remove, or otherwise tamper with the official identification while the animal is in the United States or moving into or through the United States, except the identification may be removed at the time of slaughter.**

3. **CERTIFICATION STATEMENTS: The following statements must be on the health certificate:**

3.1. Canada is free of Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Rinderpest, Surra, and Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia.

3.2. The animals have been inspected and found to be free from any evidence of communicable disease, and, as far as can be determined, have not been exposed to any such disease during the preceding 60 days.

3.3. The animals were born in the United States or Canada or were legally imported into Canada from a region recognized by the USDA as a region not restricted due to BSE and have been under no movement restrictions within Canada or the United States for at least 60 days prior to importation into the United States.

USDA APHIS VETERINARY SERVICES STRATEGY & POLICY
PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORTATION OF
WATER BUFFALO (*Bubalus bubalis*) AND YAK (*Bos grunniens*)
FOR IMMEDIATE SLAUGHTER FROM CANADA TO THE UNITED STATES

February 2022

3.4. The animals for export were part of Canada's national herd for a minimum period of time. Paragraphs 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 describe how the United States defines "part of the national herd" and the length of time the animals must be part of the national herd.

 3.4.1. If the animals for export were imported from countries recognized by USDA as free of FMD, then these animals must have been free of any import quarantine restrictions and able to move freely within Canada's national herd for a minimum of 60 days prior to export or isolation for export.

 3.4.2. If the animals were imported from a country not recognized by USDA as free of FMD, then the animals for export must have been free of any import quarantine restrictions and able to move freely within Canada's national herd for a minimum of 90 days prior to export or isolation for export.

3.4. The animals are not in quarantine or under movement restriction in Canada.

3.5. The animals were born on or after March 1, 1999, the date determined by APHIS to be the effective enforcement of a ruminant-to-ruminant feed ban.

3.6. The animals have been individually identified with an official Canadian eartag, and a secondary tag, applied prior to each animal's entry into the United States.

3.7. The animals are from a brucellosis and TB- free herd or from a brucellosis and TB- free region of Canada.

3.8. The animals in this shipment were loaded onto a clean and disinfected conveyance for direct transportation from the assembly point to the port of entry

4. PORT OF ENTRY INSPECTION

4.1. Animals for U.S. entry must be presented to the port of entry by appointment and accompanied by a health certificate. The port veterinarian shall conduct a visual health examination of the animals to verify identification and the accuracy of the health certificate.

4.2. Animals for immediate slaughter must be inspected and moved directly from the port of entry to the APHIS approved slaughtering establishment in conveyances that are **sealed with seals of the U.S. government at the port of entry**. The route of travel from the port of entry to the approved slaughtering establishment must be listed on the health certificate.

4.3. The seals may be broken only at the APHIS approved slaughtering establishment by an authorized USDA representative.

USDA APHIS VETERINARY SERVICES STRATEGY & POLICY
PROTOCOL FOR THE IMPORTATION OF
WATER BUFFALO (*Bubalus bubalis*) AND YAK (*Bos grunniens*)
FOR IMMEDIATE SLAUGHTER FROM CANADA TO THE UNITED STATES

February 2022

4.4.   The animals must be accompanied from the port of entry to the APHIS approved slaughtering establishment by VS Form 17-30, VS Form 17-33, and the official Canadian health certificate.

4.5.   The animals for immediate slaughter must be slaughtered within 14 days of entry to the U.S.

5.   REFUSED ENTRY

Any animal refused entry into the United States for noncompliance with the requirements of this protocol must be removed from the United States within a time period specified by the Administrator or will be considered abandoned by the importer. Pending removal or abandonment, the animal will be subject to such safeguards as the APHIS inspector determines necessary to prevent the possible introduction of ectoparasites or disease into the United States. If an animal that has been refused entry is not removed from the United States within a prescribed time period or is abandoned, it may be seized and destroyed, or otherwise disposed of as the Administrator determines necessary to prevent the possible introduction of disease into the United States.

6.   ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

Please check the animal health regulations of the importing state of destination for possible additional regulations and requirements for the proposed import (State Regulations and Import Requirements).