

Exporting animals and animal products if there's no Brexit deal

Summary

How exporting animals and animal products would be affected if the UK leaves the EU with no deal.

Detail

If the UK leaves the EU in March 2019 without a deal, find out how this would affect businesses or individuals that export animals or animal products to EU countries.

A scenario in which the UK leaves the EU without agreement (a 'no deal' scenario) remains unlikely given the mutual interests of the UK and the EU in securing a negotiated outcome.

Negotiations are progressing well and both we and the EU continue to work hard to seek a positive deal. However, it's our duty as a responsible government to prepare for all eventualities, including 'no deal', until we can be certain of the outcome of those negotiations.

For two years, the government has been implementing a significant programme of work to ensure the UK will be ready from day 1 in all scenarios, including a potential 'no deal' outcome in March 2019.

It has always been the case that as we get nearer to March 2019, preparations for a no deal scenario would have to be accelerated. Such an acceleration does not reflect an increased likelihood of a 'no deal' outcome. Rather it is about ensuring our plans are in place in the unlikely scenario that they need to be relied upon.

This series of technical notices sets out information to allow businesses and citizens to understand what they would need to do in a 'no deal' scenario, so they can make informed plans and preparations.

This guidance is part of that series.

Also included is an [overarching framing notice](<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-governments-preparations-for-a-no-deal-scenario>) explaining the government's overarching approach to preparing the UK for this outcome in order to minimise disruption and ensure a smooth and orderly exit in all scenarios.

We are working with the devolved administrations on technical notices and we will continue to do so as plans develop.

Purpose

This notice sets out how businesses or individuals that export animals or animal products to EU countries would be affected if the UK leaves the EU in March 2019 with no deal in place.

Before 29 March 2019

To export animal products and live animals to countries outside the EU, exporters must apply for, and be issued with, an Export Health Certificate (EHC). This certificate is an official document, signed by a veterinarian or authorised signatory, and is specific to the commodity being exported and the destination country. The EHC proves the consignment complies with the quality and health standards of the destination country.

Different rules apply to trade between countries within the EU. Exporting live animals and some very specific animal products (such as germplasm) requires exporters to provide either an EHC or, more generally, an EU-specific version of an EHC known as an Intra Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC). For all other animal products, no certification is required and no specific processes must be followed.

To obtain EHCs and ITAHCs, exporters contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), in Northern Ireland they contact the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA), providing details of the consignment, its destination and travel arrangements, as well as their preferred Official Veterinarian or authorised signatory to certify their products. APHA or DAERA issues a paper EHC for the exporter to provide to the country of import.

There are additional requirements when transporting live vertebrate animals for commercial or economic activity. For all journeys, the transporter must hold a valid Transporter Authorisation and drivers and attendants must hold a Certificate of Competence. For journeys over eight hours within the EU, vehicles must also have a valid vehicle approval certificate. Transporter Authorisations, Certificates of Competence and Vehicle Approval Certificates must be issued by an EU country. For journeys over eight hours where farm

livestock and unregistered horses will be transported, the transporter must also hold a Journey Log.

After March 2019 if there's no deal

If the UK leaves the EU in March 2019 with no deal in place, EHCs would be required for exports of all animal products and live animals from the UK to the EU. Consignments would need to travel through a Border Inspection Post (BIP) within the EU. EHCs would need to be signed by an Official Veterinarian or authorised signatory following inspection of the consignment.

To prepare for the potential increase in EHC numbers, work is being undertaken to make the application process simpler, and ensure there is enough capacity amongst appropriately trained veterinarians or authorised signatories to approve the additional certificates. Stakeholders will be informed of any changes to the existing process.

Requirements for trade to third countries outside the EU should not change. However changes would be required to the wording of the documentation, which would need to be agreed with the destination country, to reflect the fact the UK would no longer be a member of the EU. Defra will work to agree updates for all existing EHCs, prioritising the countries to which the UK exports the highest volumes. Exporters to non-EU third countries would need to check, before export, the latest version of the EHC for that particular destination.

The EU would require the UK to be a listed third country. In the unlikely event of a 'no deal' scenario, the UK would apply for this status but cannot be certain of the EU response or its timing. Without listed status no exports to the EU could take place. We are confident however, that the UK meets the animal health requirements to secure listing, as other countries such as Australia and New Zealand have done so.

Regular guidance, training materials and updates will be issued to industry to support exporters in preparing to leave the EU.

Transporter Authorisation, Certificates of Competence, vehicle approval and Journey Logs

The EU would also no longer recognise transport authorisations, certificates of competence, or vehicle approval certificates issued by the UK.

UK transporters wishing to transport live animals in the EU would need to appoint a representative within an EU country and apply to their relevant government department to obtain a valid Transporter Authorisation, Certificate of Competence, Vehicle Approval Certificate and, where necessary, a Journey Log. Journey logs would need to be obtained from the EU country that is the initial point of entry into the EU for export. Exporters would need to present their transport documentation at a Border Inspection Post in the EU.

UK-issued transport documentation would remain valid for transport within the UK only.

The government's manifesto made it clear that we would take early steps to control the export of live farm animals for slaughter once we leave the EU. There has been a recent call for evidence on the control of live animal exports for slaughter and to improve animal welfare during transport after the UK leaves the EU. The farm animal welfare committee (FAWC) are undertaking this review of the welfare in transport regulatory regime, and proposals will be made in light of that FAWC report.

More information

Read a [list of Border Inspection Posts (BIPs) in the EU](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/vet-border-control/bip_en).

If you are involved in exporting horses and other equines to the EU we recommend you also refer to the technical notice on [Taking horses abroad if there's no Brexit deal] (ADD WEBLINK).

Exporters should note that this technical notice only addresses the relevant sanitary requirements. Other significant factors such as customs declarations for EU member states and tariffs are covered [here](<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-to-prepare-if-the-uk-leaves-the-eu-with-no-deal#importing-and-exporting>).

This notice is meant for guidance only. You should consider whether you need separate professional advice before making specific preparations.

It is part of the government's ongoing programme of planning for all possible outcomes. We expect to negotiate a successful deal with the EU.

The UK government is clear that in this scenario we must respect our unique relationship with Ireland, with whom we share a land border and who are co-signatories of the Belfast Agreement. The UK government has consistently placed upholding the Agreement and its successors at the heart of our approach. It enshrines the consent principle on which Northern Ireland's constitutional status rests. We recognise the basis it has provided for the deep economic and social cooperation on the island of Ireland. This includes North-South cooperation between Northern Ireland and Ireland, which we're committed to protecting in line with the letter and spirit of Strand two of the Agreement.

The Irish government have indicated they would need to discuss arrangements in the event of no deal with the European Commission and EU countries. The UK would stand ready in this scenario to engage constructively to meet our commitments and act in the best interests of the people of Northern Ireland, recognising the very significant challenges that the lack of a UK-EU legal agreement would pose in this unique and highly sensitive context.

It remains, though, the responsibility of the UK government, as the sovereign government in Northern Ireland, to continue preparations for the full range of potential outcomes, including no deal. As we do, and as decisions are made, we'll take full account of the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland.

Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein are party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area and participate in other EU arrangements. As such, in many areas, these countries adopt EU rules. Where this is the case, these technical notices may also apply to them, and EEA businesses and citizens should consider whether they need to take any steps to prepare for a 'no deal' scenario.