

**IMPORTATION OF SPECIES SUSCEPTIBLE
TO ARBOVIRAL ENCEPHALITIS¹**

Submission by Argentina

The following communication has been received from the Permanent Mission of Argentina.

A. EQUINE ANIMALS

A.1 Final imports

- (a) Equine animals covered by international certification may not originate in, proceed from, or, during the 30 days prior to export, have stayed in, countries/provinces/states/departments affected by West Nile Virus (WNV), or
- (b) If they proceed from countries/provinces/states/departments where cases of the disease have been recorded, the official veterinary service must be able to provide certification that:
 - 1. The equine animals to be exported have been maintained for at least the preceeding 30 days² in an establishment in the centre of an area of a radius of at least 30 kilometres in which no cases of WNV have been diagnosed (in any susceptible species);
 - 2. The equine animals to be exported have tested negative for IgM antibodies, in serological screening carried out at least ten days³ prior to shipment date;
 - 3. Steps are taken to monitor potential vectors in the places where equine animals are kept; and
 - 4. The equine animals to be exported did not display any clinical signs of encephalitis on the day of shipment.

¹ Requirement to be issued by the official health authority of the country of origin, annexed to the specific sanitary certification for the species in question.

² Twice as long as the incubation period of the disease.

³ IgM antibodies appear eight to ten days after infection.

5. If the animals have been vaccinated:

- The veterinarian responsible for signing the international animal health certificate for the export of the animals must certify that an officially licensed killed-virus vaccine has been used, including the date and serial No. of the product administered;
- the animals must be clearly identified; and
- the animals must be vaccinated prior to shipment, within the recommended deadlines for using the vaccine in question.

The following provisions apply:

- These requirements must be met in addition and without prejudice to the requirements established by existing regulations.
- On their arrival in Argentina, the animals shall be kept in import quarantine for such time as is necessary to conduct any laboratory screening that SENASA considers appropriate.
- Testing for encephalitis, including WNV, shall form part of the screening during the established quarantine period.
- In accordance with existing import regulations in Argentina (SENASA Resolutions Nos. 1354/94 and 280/2000), any animal found to be serological positive, either by displaying clinical signs or on the basis of an interpretation of the corresponding test results, shall not be allowed to enter the country.
- Animals that might react to vaccination as serological positive, through antibodies – associated or otherwise – shall only be permitted to enter the country once the absence of sanitary risk has been established, and shall be given an indelible mark.
- The vaccination record must be officially certified.
- During the import quarantine period (and prior to final import into the country), the competent official service shall give an indelible mark to any *unregistered* serological positive animal with encephalitis.
- The register of animal identification shall be traceable through a differential archive file to a register held under the monitoring system for arboviral diseases, administered by the equine diseases programme of the Directorate of Health Campaigns.
- In accordance with existing import regulations in Argentina, any animal considered to represent an animal health risk shall not be allowed to enter the country.

NB: In all cases, the Animal Quarantine Directorate of SENASA shall carry out analyses of such particular situations as may arise, applying the criteria described above.

A.2. Exchange of equine animals for sporting purposes (concerns animals which remain in national territory for less than 30 days and any equine animal that returns within 30 days of its export from Argentina).

Equine animals temporarily exported from Argentina to other countries for the purposes of sporting competition must be covered by an animal health certificate of origin and an international health certificate on their return to Argentina, as is common practice in such cases. With regard to WNV, the competent official service must be able to certify that:

- (a) The equine animals covered by the international certification have been maintained in facilities under official control, located in countries/provinces/states/departments unaffected by WNV during the length of the stay in those facilities, or
- (b) if they have been kept on premises located in countries/provinces/states/departments where cases of WNV diseases have been recorded, certification of the following must be provided:
 1. That the premises on which the equine animals have been kept are located in the centre of an area of a radius of at least 30 kilometres in which no cases of WNV have been diagnosed (in any susceptible species);
 2. that the equine animals to be exported have tested negative for IgM antibodies, in serological screening carried out no longer than ten days⁴ prior to the return shipment to Argentina;
 3. that the equine animals to be exported did not display any clinical signs of encephalitis on the day of shipment;
 4. **If the animals have been vaccinated:**
 - The veterinarian responsible for signing the international animal health certificate for the export of the animals must certify that an officially licensed killed-virus vaccine has been used, including the date and serial No. of the product administered;
 - the animals must be clearly identified; and
 - the animals must be vaccinated prior to shipment, within the recommended deadlines for using the vaccine in question.

The following provisions apply:

- If necessary, equine animals may complete the quarantine period in Argentina (in the *Lazareto Cuarentenario Capital*), for as long as is necessary to ensure, through clinical observation and laboratory screening, that the animals test negative for encephalitis.
- Animals returning from a period abroad shorter than the time needed to carry out the necessary serological screening to determine whether their entry represents an animal health risk shall be subjected to such tests as SENASA deems appropriate (in the *Lazareto Cuarentenario Capital*).

⁴ IgM antibodies appear eight to ten days after infection.

- Animals that might react to vaccination as serological positive, through antibodies – associated or otherwise – shall only be permitted to enter the country once the absence of sanitary risk has been established, and shall be given an indelible mark.
- The vaccination record must be officially certified.
- Prior to the final import of equine animals into the country, the competent official service shall give an indelible mark to any *unregistered* animal that has tested serological positive for encephalitis.
- The register of animal identification shall be traceable through a differential archive file to a register held under the monitoring system for arboviral diseases, administered by the equine diseases programme of the Directorate of Health Campaigns.
- In accordance with existing import regulations in Argentina, any animal considered to represent an animal health risk shall not be allowed to enter the country.

NB: In all cases, the Animal Quarantine Directorate of SENASA shall carry out analyses of such particular situations as may arise, applying the criteria described above.

B. BIRDS

- (a) Birds, covered by international certification may not, during the last 30 days prior to export, have stayed in countries/provinces/states/departments affected by WNV; or
- (b) if they proceed from countries/provinces/states/departments where cases of the disease have been recorded, certification of the following must be provided:

B.1 Chicks

- 1. Day-old chicks to be exported must come from establishments under official control, located in the centre of an area of a radius of at least 30 kilometres, in which no cases of WNV have been diagnosed (in any susceptible species) during the last 30 days prior to export.

B.2 Domestic and ornamental birds

- 2. Serological screening must have taken place in the establishment (under official control) where the birds are quarantined, as well as in commercial farms, in order to confirm the absence of the disease in the establishment.
- 3. During the quarantine of the birds, no clinical signs of the disease must be detected.
- 4. Steps must be taken to monitor potential vectors in the sites used for the quarantine of birds.
- 5. The site used for quarantine must be located in the centre of an area of a radius of 30 kilometres in which no cases of WNV have been recorded (in any susceptible species), for at least 30 days.

The following provisions apply to domestic and ornamental birds:

6. On their arrival in Argentina, the birds shall be kept in import quarantine for an observation period to ensure that their sanitary condition is satisfactory.
7. Where deemed necessary, SENASA shall carry out the relevant screening during quarantine, and in accordance with existing import regulations (SENASA Resolution No. 1354/94) in Argentina, birds testing positive shall not be permitted to enter the country.

NB: In all cases, the Animal Quarantine Directorate of SENASA shall carry out analyses of such particular situations as may arise, applying the criteria described above.
