

**EXISTING AND ONGOING WORK ON CONTROL,
INSPECTION AND SAMPLING (G/SPS/W/234)**

Communication by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

The following communication, received on 17 June 2009, is being circulated at the request of the OIE.

I. CURRENT OIE STANDARDS RELATING TO CONTROL, INSPECTION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES

1. OIE standards pertaining to control, inspection and approval procedures are found in the normative publications of the OIE, i.e. the *Terrestrial* and *Aquatic Animal Health Codes* and Manuals.
2. For terrestrial animals, horizontal standards are found in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*) Volume 1.
3. Key standards relevant to control, testing and approval procedures include:
 - Chapter 1.1: Prescribed and alternative diagnostic tests for OIE listed diseases;
 - Chapters 4.1 and 4.2: Animal identification and traceability systems;
 - Chapter 4.16: Hygiene precautions, identification, blood sampling and vaccination;
 - Chapters 5.1, 5.2, 5.10 and 5.11: Dealing with health certification of animals and animal products;
 - Chapters 5.4 to 5.7 (inclusive): Animal health measures before departure, during transit and on arrival, including activities at border posts and quarantine stations in the importing country; and
 - Chapter 6.2: Ante and post mortem meat inspection.
4. Vertical (disease specific) standards are found in the *Terrestrial Code* Volume 2.
5. Provisions relevant to a specific disease agent are grouped together in disease specific chapters. Requirements relevant to control, inspection and testing that are commonly found in disease specific chapters include: procedures for diagnostic testing; inspection, quarantine and other procedures to prevent the spread of infection; measures for inactivation of the disease agent; and requirements for disease surveillance and for attaining disease free status for countries and zones (with or without OIE official recognition of status).
6. In addition, the OIE makes detailed and specific recommendations in regard to the control of disease agents and related inspection and sampling procedures in the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals*.

7. Provisions for aquatic animals and their products may be found in the OIE *Aquatic Animal Health Code* and the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals*.

8. In developing measures for the importation of terrestrial animals and their products, OIE Members are advised to read both volumes 1 and 2 for the provisions that are relevant to the particular commodity and disease agents of concern. More guidance on the practical use of the OIE standards for international trade can be found on the OIE website - please see:

<http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/guide%20to%20OIE%20intl%20standards%20v6.pdf>.

9. In the *Terrestrial Code* Chapters 3.1 and 3.2 the OIE makes recommendations on the quality of veterinary services, including several aspects that are relevant to control, inspection and sampling. This provides the legal basis for using the OIE Tool for the Evaluation of Veterinary Services (the OIE PVS Tool) to evaluate performance of Veterinary Services using the OIE PVS Procedure.

10. Key elements include the capacity to provide reliable international certification (Section IV-4), laboratory diagnosis (Section II-1), quarantine and border security (Section II-4) and residue testing (Section II-10).

II. FUTURE OIE WORK ON CONTROL, INSPECTION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES

11. In addition to its ongoing work in the review and updating of standards to take account of scientific developments, the OIE is placing increased emphasis on developing recommended measures for commodities that can be regarded as safe for international trade, regardless of the animal health status of the country or zone of origin of the animal product for the disease agent in question, while of course reflecting all hygiene and related inspection requirements. It is expected that the development of such "commodity standards" will help to facilitate trade from countries where the eradication of highly contagious animal diseases is not feasible in the short term. In all cases, the reliability of the health certification accompanying the product and the conduct of any required inspection and sampling procedures remain important considerations.

12. The OIE continues to collaborate closely with Codex on work that is relevant to the sanitary safety of food products of animal origin, including through participation in the Second Session of the Codex ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (October 2008); the 17th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) (November 2008); the 40th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (December 2008); the 25th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) (March/April 2009) and the Codex Electronic Working Group on Animal Feed.

13. Mindful of the importance of aligning OIE and Codex standards as these relate to inspection and certification, the OIE is currently participating in a CCFICS Working Group on the development of Codex Principles and guidelines for the Conduct of Foreign On-site Audits and Inspections.

14. The OIE continues to work on the establishment of a legal base enabling the development of joint OIE/Codex standards that would address areas of common interest, such as the control of pathogens in food products of animal origin and commodity standards. The OIE presented a paper on this issue to the 25th Session of the CCGP in May 2009. In response to the paper, the CCGP asked the secretariats of Codex and the OIE to prepare a discussion paper on the possible development of joint standards, addressing all relevant procedural issues and implications, for consideration at the next meeting of the CCGP in 2011.
