



# Breeder cattle by sea – applying for pregnancy test certification validity extension in accordance with ASEL

Live Animal Export Branch

## 1 Purpose

This policy is a guide to applying to extend the validity of certification for pregnancy tests of breeder cattle exported by sea, as provided for in the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL).

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to exporters, accredited veterinarians (AAVs) and registered veterinarians.

This policy applies only to validity extension applications as provided for under ASEL standard 1.4.7 (a) for pregnant breeder cattle exported by sea. Pregnancy certification validity requirements for other breeds, classes or pregnancy status of livestock are required to be met in accordance with the relevant standards in ASEL.

This document outlines the process exporters must follow when seeking to make an application, and the criteria under which the department would consider any applications made. In considering the approval of applications, the department will consider whether extending the validity represents the best outcome for animal health and welfare.

This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant export legislation and standards listed under [related material](#).

## 3 Requirements

As per ASEL standard 1.4.7 (a), pregnancy test certification is valid for 30 days from the date of the procedure for pregnant breeder cattle. This validity period of 30 days applies, unless an exporter has applied for a certification validity extension and received approval in writing from the department prior to loading.

For breeder cattle that are certified in writing to be not detectably pregnant, the certificate is valid for 60 days from the date of procedure or collection of blood sample (ASEL standard 1.4.7 b)).

- There is no provision for approval of a certification validity extension for not detectably pregnant breeder cattle. The 60 day validity period in ASEL has been developed on the basis of the maximum validity the department would allow to be confident in the welfare of cattle exported.

## 4 Instructions

Exporters wishing to apply to extend the validity of the pregnancy test certification for pregnant breeder cattle must apply via email to the relevant [regional office](#), copying in the certifying Regional Veterinary Officer (RVO) if known, at least 3 business days prior to the scheduled date of export.

The application must set out the grounds for the application, and include:

- the consignment's LNC number
- the NLIS identification number of all animals under the application
- the number of days pregnant for each animal included in the application, at the time the first pregnancy test was undertaken, in accordance with ASEL standard 1.4.6
- evidence of the extenuating circumstances (outside the exporter's control) that led to the extension being sought, noting that any requests for extension should be the exception and not the norm
- evidence the extension would not be reasonably expected to cause a negative impact on animal welfare outcomes.

The application for extension must include the relevant pregnancy test certification, which must link to the consignment. This is in accordance with the [approved arrangements for livestock exports core documents](#) list.

Where the pregnancy test certification includes animals that are eligible for an extension and others that are ineligible, the exporter may request an extension for only the eligible animals on the pregnancy test certification. The application must clearly identify each animal that the extension request applies to.

If an application is approved and any circumstances of the consignment change (such as market, consignment route or vessel), this may affect the approval. If circumstances change, exporters must contact the relevant [regional office](#) to confirm if they impact previous approvals.

Unless otherwise approved in writing, an exporter must comply with the pregnancy testing validity periods in accordance with the relevant standards in ASEL.

### **Assessment of applications received by the department**

The RVO will consider applications against the criteria in accordance with this policy, and will make a recommendation to a department Senior Veterinary Officer or Principal Veterinary Officer. In making a decision, the department may also consider the latest information, advice and research relevant to the extension sought.

All applications are considered on an individual consignment basis. In deciding whether to grant an application for extension to the pregnancy certification validity, the department must be satisfied:

- that an extension to the certification validity would not compromise animal health or welfare, including consideration of these factors

- The numbers of days pregnant for each animal and the estimated length of the voyage. The cattle must not be at risk of travelling on board the vessel beyond 190 days gestation<sup>1</sup> (providing for any reasonable margins of error for estimating factors such as foetal age and voyage length).
- Whether extending the certification validity would avoid unnecessary rehandling and re-testing of the animals, without increasing risk to the animals' health or welfare during the voyage.
- with the extenuating circumstances that led to the application being made by the exporter.
  - Extensions will only be granted for reasons that could not have been reasonably foreseen by the exporter, such as unexpected vessel delay or breakdown, or bad weather.
  - Repeated applications for extensions may indicate a systematic operational concern with the management of pregnancy testing.
- with any other factor that the department considers relevant to ensure an acceptable animal health or welfare outcome, and to ensure a sound basis for the issuance of an export permit under the *Export Control Act 2020* and *Export Control (Animals) Rules 2021*.

The department will provide the exporter with a written notice of the outcome of the decision. A notice of decision will include the consignment's LNC number and, if approved, the number of days the pregnancy certification validity has been extended by.

## 5 Related material

- [Approved arrangement guidelines for the export of livestock](#)
- [Approved export program guidelines for the export of livestock](#)
- [Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock \(ASEL\)](#)
- [Core documents for approved arrangement livestock exports](#)
- [Export Control Act 2020](#)
- [Export Control \(Animals\) Rules 2021](#)
- [Regional office contact details](#)
- [Regulating live animal exports](#)
- [TRACE](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Cattle gestation period is approximately 280 days. Breeder cattle must be no more than 190 days pregnant at the scheduled date of discharge in the importing country.

## Version control

Version	Date of issue	Author	Reason for change
1.0	May 2020	Live Animal Export Branch	First publication
2.0	October 2020	Live Animal Export Branch	Update to core document requirement
2.1	June 2023	Live Animal Export Branch	Updates to department branding and document formatting

### Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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