



Australian Government
Biosecurity Australia

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BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA ADVICE 2008/19

**BIOSECURITY POLICY DETERMINATION –
IMPORTATION OF ZOO RODENTS**

This Biosecurity Australia Advice (BAA) informs stakeholders that Australia's Director of Quarantine has determined a policy for the importation of certain species of zoo rodents from Canada, New Zealand, the United States of America (USA) and Member States of the European Union (EU). Importation of zoo rodents can be permitted, subject to the *Quarantine Act 1908* and the application of sanitary measures as specified in the *Quarantine conditions for the importation of certain species of zoo rodents into Australian zoos from Canada, New Zealand, the USA and Member States of the European Union*. The policy will be taken into account by decision makers when considering import applications for zoo rodents in accordance with the *Quarantine Act 1908* and *Quarantine Proclamation 1988* as amended.

Proposed quarantine conditions for the importation of certain species of zoo rodents into Australian zoos from Canada, New Zealand, the USA and Member States of the EU, and the draft report of a review of the quarantine risks that underpinned the proposed measures, were circulated to stakeholders for comment on 26 March 2008 (BAA 2008/10). The species covered in the review were capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), Brazilian agouti (*Dasyprocta leporina*), Patagonian mara (*Dolichotis patagonum*) and Cape porcupine (*Hystrix africaeaustralis*).

Stakeholder comments have been taken into account in finalising the import policy. This included a stakeholder noting the absence of reference to encephalomyocarditis virus (ECMV) in the draft report. As ECMV is endemic in Australia and not subject to mandatory control programs, it does not require risk management measures to be applied to imports.

Consequently, the policy review has been finalised with no amendments to the proposed quarantine conditions.

Australia's Director of Quarantine has now determined the policy to permit the entry of the rodent species listed above into Australian zoos. Importation of these species can be permitted subject to the *Quarantine Act 1908* and the application of sanitary measures as specified in the *Quarantine conditions for the importation of certain species from Canada New Zealand, the USA and Member States of the European Union*, June 2008. These measures are designed to limit quarantine risk to a level which is acceptably low, consistent with Australia's conservative approach to quarantine.

The policy determination and related information have been forwarded to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS). AQIS will take the determination and policy advice into account when considering applications for import permits.

Please pass this notice to other interested parties. If those parties wish to be included in future communications on this matter they should get in touch with the contact officer listed below. Alternatively, if you wish to be removed from the distribution list, please advise the contact officer.

Information on import risk assessments being conducted by Biosecurity Australia is available on the Biosecurity Australia website.

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7 July 2008

QUARANTINE CONDITIONS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF CERTAIN SPECIES OF RODENTS INTO AUSTRALIAN ZOOS FROM CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Conditions of Administration

Importation under these conditions is restricted to certain species of rodent (Order Rodentia) of the Suborder Hystricognathi. Each animal must have been resident in a zoo or wildlife park in Canada, New Zealand, the United States of America or a Member State of the European Union for 12 months prior to export or since birth. Species that will be permitted importation are capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), Brazilian agoutis (*Dasyprocta leporina*), Patagonian maras (*Dolichotis patagonum*) and Cape porcupines (*Hystrix africaeaustralis*). Applications to import other species within the Suborder Hystricomorpha may be considered on a case by case basis. Importation is only permitted into Australian zoos.

Permission to import must be obtained in writing from the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) prior to the export of the rodent. A full description of the animal (including species, sex, age, microchip number and site of implantation) must be provided with the permit application.

Other conditions of administration, including details of import permit requirements and transport arrangements, are available from AQIS. Contact details are:

Live Animal Imports

AQIS

GPO Box 858

Canberra ACT 2601

Fax +61 2 6272 3110

E-mail animalimp@aqis.gov.au

Phone +61 2 6272 4454

The full requirements can also be viewed on AQIS' Import Conditions database (ICON) at <http://www.daffa.gov.au/aqis/import/icon-icd>.

Permission to import must also be obtained from the Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts. Details are available from the Department's website: <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/trade-use/index.html>.

Documentation

Each imported rodent will be accompanied by original international veterinary certificate in accord with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code Appendix 4.1.3., signed by an Official Veterinarian* of the country of export, and the original of the permit to import, must accompany each animal.

*Note: **Official Veterinarian** means a veterinarian authorised by the Veterinary Administration of the country to perform certain designated official tasks associated with animal health and/or public health and inspections of commodities and, when appropriate, to certify in conformity with the Certification Procedures of the Code.

The veterinary certificate

1. The veterinary certificate must:

- be written in English
- meet all requirements of the veterinary certification section of these conditions
- provide the identification for each animal including species, sex, age, microchip number and site of implantation and
- include the name and address of the exporter and importing Australian zoo, and the AQIS Import Permit number.

2. An Official Veterinarian of the Government Veterinary Administration must:

- provide a separate veterinary certificate for each animal
- sign, date and stamp each page of the veterinary certificate and all documents, eg laboratory reports that form part of the extended health certification with the stamp of the Government Veterinary Administration
- record his/her name and contact details on the veterinary certificate.

3. AQIS will only accept copies of documents where each page bears the original signature, date and stamp of the Official Veterinarian.

Veterinary certification for the importation of rodents into Australian zoos

1. The animal for export has been continuously resident in a government licensed or registered zoo or wildlife park for the 12 months immediately prior to export or since birth. The premises of origin is under veterinary supervision and the animals held in the premises are subject to a health monitoring program.

2. No case of bovine tuberculosis (*Mycobacterium bovis*) has been diagnosed in the premises of origin during the past three years. No case of babesiosis has been diagnosed in rodents in the premises of origin during the past 12 months.

3. The animal has been held in pre-export quarantine (PEQ) for a period of at least 30 days. During this time it has been isolated from animals not of the same certifiable health status, and housed in accommodation which precluded access by mammalian wildlife and was screened to prevent insect entry.

4. During PEQ, the animal remained free from signs of infectious and contagious disease.

5. During the first week of PEQ, the animal was treated for endoparasites using parasiticides effective against nematodes, cestodes and trematodes, and tested by appropriate parasitological techniques 7-14 days later. The animal was re-treated if there was evidence of parasites:

Date(s) of treatment:

Active ingredients and dose rate:

6. During PEQ, the animal was treated twice at an interval of 14 days for ectoparasites using parasiticides effective against ticks, mites and lice.

Dates of treatment:

Active ingredients and dose rate:

7. The animal was examined by an Official Veterinarian within 24 hours prior to leaving the PEQ premises for the port of export and was found to be free from signs of communicable disease, free from external parasites and fit to travel.

8. The container for the transport of the animal to the port of export was new or was cleaned and disinfected to the satisfaction of the Official Veterinarian prior to loading the animal.

9. During transport to the port of export the animal had no contact with mammals except people associated with the export, and other animals of the same export consignment and with the same certified health status.

10. I am satisfied, after due enquiry, that the preparations for transport, and the container in which the animal is carried, are of a standard not less than those required by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Live Animals Regulations.

Transport

The animal must be consigned to Australia by a route approved by AQIS. It may be accompanied by other animals only with the approval of AQIS. Any transshipment requires the approval of AQIS. Stops on route will need approval from relevant authorities in the countries of transit and transshipment.

Post-arrival quarantine measures for the importation of approved species of rodents into Australian zoos

1. Each imported animal must undergo post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) in a quarantine approved premises (QAP) for 14 days.

2. During PAQ, the animal may be subject to testing and/or treatment for disease or parasites. If any animal fails a test or shows signs of disease or does not meet these requirements, that animal and any other animal in the QAP may be:

- detained in quarantine for further testing and observation
- exported at the importer's expense
- destroyed without recompense.