Australian Government
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

23 March 2017

BIOSECURITY ADVICE 2017/06

IMPORTATION OF FROZEN BOVINE IN VITRO PRODUCED EMBRYOS FROM CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES – FINAL REVIEW

This Biosecurity Advice informs stakeholders that the Department has finalised a review of the importation of frozen bovine in vitro produced embryos from Canada and the United States. Bovine in vitro produced embryos from Canada and the United States will be able to be imported, subject to biosecurity legislation, the negotiation of sample health certificates, and the application of sanitary measures as specified in the document *Importation of frozen bovine in-vitro produced embryos from Canada and the United States – Final review*.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has completed a review of biosecurity risks of importing frozen bovine in vitro produced embryos from Canada and the United States, following stakeholder consultation on a draft review released on 16 November 2016 (BA 2016/33). The final review is available on the department's website at: www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/risk-analysis/memos.

The department received comments on the draft review report from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Cattle Council of Australia and a member of the Ruminant Genetics Trade Advisory Group (RGTAG) Expert Panel.

Comments and main issues raised include:

Canada

- queried Australia's status with regard to bovine herpes virus 1.1 and 1.2 a as currently Australia claims freedom from these subtypes and they are not nationally notifiable.
- requested an amendment to the proposed certification in Chapter 5: Biosecurity measures for:
    - the diagnostic test protocol for testing of BoHV-1 in vaccinated donors
    - the option of unvaccinated animals being subjected to a serological test for BoHV-1 with negative results be included so that donors can also originate from non-vaccinated herds.

The United States

- queried Australia's status with regard to bovine herpesvirus (BoHV-1) subtypes 1.1 and 1.2a as currently Australia claims freedom from these subtypes. These exotic subtypes are not nationally notifiable. The United States noted that the study to support this statement was published in 2003 and relied on relatively old data and samples to claim freedom. The United States proposed that these subtypes of BoHV-1 be made nationally notifiable and that Australia conduct additional surveillance to support this claim.
- requested amendment to the proposed certification in Chapter 6: Biosecurity measures
    - include certification for bovine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis in accordance with the control programs in the United States
    - to allow storage and transport of in vitro produced embryos under the supervision of the Team Veterinarian
    - clarification if bovine semen and /or in vivo derived bovine embryos qualify for export to Australia may be transported in the same tank as in vivo produced embryos.

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Cattle Council of Australia

- advised the industry's primary concern is with bovine spongiform encephalopathy but was supportive of the approach put forward in the draft review and the industry's position was positive.

RGTAG Expert Panel Member

- advised no concerns with the proposed conditions for the importation. The member requested information on when the importation of bovine in vitro embryos from the United States and and Canada will commence.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources considered all of the stakeholder comments and the following major changes were made to the final review:

- editorial changes have been made to the section on BoHV-1 to clarify key aspects to Australia's claim for freedom from BoHV-1.1 and BoHV-1.2a. In addition, these editorial changes also clarified that biosecurity measures recommended for BoHV-1 was not dependent on Australia's BoHV-1 status but on the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code recommendations for managing significant reproductive diseases in germplasm.
- All other requested certification amendments requested by CFIA and USDA were agreed to in the final review except that the option of a virus isolation test on vaginal swab samples positive to the PCR which was not accepted.

Following completion of this biosecurity risk review, the department will advise CFIA and USDA in writing of the department's responses to their comments, and request that CFIA and USDA submit sample health certificates to the department for approval so that trade can commence.

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