

IMPORT PROCEDURE

Products of animal Origin (Third Country Imports)(England) Regulations 2003 Veterinary Checks Regime - Directive 97/78/EC

1. Unless the product has come from another EU country it must enter via a Border Inspection Post, (BIP) approved by the Commission for the import of fishery products into the EU. A BIP is one included in the list to the annex to Commission Decision 2001/881/EC.
2. The product must originate in a third country that is permitted to export that category of product to the EU, and in most cases will originate from an approved establishment within that Country.
3. Prior notification must be made to the authority responsible for the BIP 6 working hours prior to the arrival of the consignment in the case of airports and at least one working day for any other BIP. Copies of the notification should go to the BIP, Port Health, Transport Company and Transit shed operator in the case of airports. Notification should be by submission of :-
 - a. Form set out in sheet 1 of schedule 1
 - b. In English and the official language of the Country of Destination in the EU if it is not England
 - c. Specify any checks already undertaken at a BIP of introduction if this is not the BIP of destinationWorking hours and working day means a day on which the BIP is open for presentation of products.
4. The original health certificate, which must be a single sheet of paper, together with any other documents as required by the BIP staff must be lodged with the Official Fish Inspector. Supporting documents usually required are copies of the Bill of Lading and invoices and /or packing lists.
5. An Official Fish Inspector means an EHO appointed as an OFI by a Local Authority in accordance with regulation 6(2)(b).
6. Photocopies and faxes of the original document will not be accepted. It is advisable to fill in all certificates with a different coloured pen to demonstrate the document is the original.
7. Payment must be made for the veterinary checks prior to clearance. It will be necessary to contact the BIP where the goods are to be cleared for entry into the EU to ascertain the local arrangements for payment and level of charges.
8. There is likely to be one charge for goods arriving during normal working hours and a higher charge for goods arriving outside of normal working hours.
9. A consignment is defined as a quantity of products of the same type covered by one health certificate, conveyed by the same transport and from the same third Country. A separate Common Veterinary Entry Document (CVED) is required for each consignment and must be submitted by the importer or agent to the BIP.

10. All consignments will be subjected to a Documentary Check. This is to ensure that the details declared on the Health Certificate/s agree with the accompanying documents. It will also enable the inspectors to check their lists of approved premises.
11. Since the 1st July 1998 all consignments are now also subjected to an Identity Check in addition to the document check. This is to ensure that the products actually correlate to those declared on the documentation. For containerised consignments a minimum of one container will be checked. Where official seals have been used and clearly recorded by the certifying veterinarian in the official veterinary certificate, this will only involve a check on the seal to ensure it has not been tampered with. If seals have not been used, or there is some doubt regarding the seal, the container will be opened and individual packages will be checked to ensure the marks correspond to those declared on the certificates.
12. Consignments not in containers will be checked to ensure the establishment numbers and Country of Origin are on the individual packages along with the requirements of the Fish Labelling (England) Regulations 2003.
13. 20% of consignments which contain fish products in hermetically sealed containers (stable at ambient temperature), fresh/frozen fish, dried/salted fishery products will be subjected to an Identity and Physical Check which may include sampling and testing of the products. The consignment may be delayed pending the outcome of test.
14. 50% of all other fishery products and bivalve molluscs will be subjected to an Identity and Physical Check.
15. A minimum of 1% and a maximum of 10% of frog's legs and snails will be subjected to an Identity and Physical Check.
16. All consignments of warm water cooked prawns and shrimps will be subjected to testing to ensure compliance with Commission Decision 93/51/EEC (see legislation)
17. Release from the BIP will not be given until the results of the samples are reported.
18. Once the appropriate checks have been undertaken the inspector will re-seal any boxes/containers and signs the CVED specifying to where the goods are released i.e. for free circulation, transit to a third country under Customs surveillance, to a specified destination or specified use or storage in a Customs warehouse.
19. The original CVED must accompany the consignment to the first premises of destination within the EU where it must be kept for a minimum period of one year. Other copies of the CVED will be kept at the BIP for 3 years. A copy is also sent to Customs to allow their clearance of the consignment.

20. Consignments that satisfy the required checks will not be released until payment of the appropriate charges. Any charges due to customs clearance will be charged separately.
21. Consignments failing to comply with any animal or public health requirements, or specific import conditions may be refused entry into the EU. The reasons for refusal will be discussed with the importer or their representative before a formal notice is issued.
22. The notice will specify the options available. These may include re-dispatch, which must take place within 60 days of the decision, destruction or use for a purpose other than for human consumption. If this is appropriate.
23. The notice will specify the time period for compliance together with the right of appeal. In the UK this is by means of an appeal to a magistrates court. This must be done within one month of the decision by the OFI not to permit entry of the product.
24. In the event of non-compliance with the notice, the consignment may be destroyed and the cost of destruction recovered from the importer.
25. In the case of serious or repeated infringements from a particular source, the next ten consignments must undergo physical checks with the costs being down to the person responsible for the consignment.
26. For further advice on any of the above, it is advisable to contact the Port Health Authority responsible for the BIP at which it is proposed to bring the goods into the EU.