



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Marketing and  
Regulatory  
Programs

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

Washington, DC  
20250

MAY 2 2002

Dr. J. Burokas  
State Food and Veterinary Service  
Seisiku Str. 19  
LT-2010 Vilnius  
Lithuania

Dear Dr. Burokas:

This is a reply to your August 28, 2001, letter providing information to support a request for recognition of freedom from foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). We have conducted an initial evaluation of the information you provided and found it to be well organized, informative, and presented in a most professional manner. However, to complete our evaluation, we are requesting additional information concerning your veterinary infrastructure and FMD program activities. A detailed list of questions organized into the 11-factor format is enclosed. We appreciate your response to these questions.

Your letter indicated Lithuania's particular interest in exporting ice cream to the United States. Currently, it is not necessary for the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to recognize Lithuania as free of FMD for Lithuania to export ice cream to the United States. Individuals who wish to import ice cream into the United States may apply for an import permit issued by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The ice cream may be eligible for entry as long as the milk used as an ingredient is processed in a manner that will inactivate the FMD virus.

You can obtain more information on import restrictions for milk and ice cream and on our permitting system by contacting Dr. Christopher Robinson, Technical Trade Services, National Center for Import & Export, Veterinary Services, APHIS, USDA, 4700 River Road, Unit 40, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231. Dr. Robinson's phone number is (301) 734-3277; his facsimile number is (301) 734-8226; and his email is [Christopher.C.Robinson@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Christopher.C.Robinson@aphis.usda.gov).

General information on the permitting process is also available on the National Center for Import and Export web site at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/NCIE/fac\\_imp.html](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/NCIE/fac_imp.html).



APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture  
An Equal Opportunity Employer

However, you may wish to continue to pursue USDA recognition of Lithuania as FMD-free to facilitate both milk exports and exports of other products. If that is your intent, the next step in the process is a site visit. As indicated in our July 2001 reply, a site visit that involves verifying the information provided is an integral part of our review process. Therefore, APHIS is requesting an invitation from the Republic of Lithuania to conduct a site visit at a mutually convenient time. The information we are requesting in this letter can be provided either prior to or during the proposed site visit.

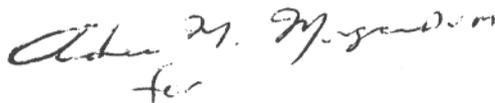
To complete our evaluation, a risk assessment will be conducted based on the results of the site visit and all the other information you provided and will provide in the future. In the event of a favorable evaluation, we will initiate the appropriate regulatory changes. Please be advised that the regulatory process is lengthy and can require 2 years or more to complete.

We look forward to receiving additional information on your intended exports as well as the opportunity to visit Lithuania to evaluate its FMD status. To facilitate our communications, we request that you identify a single contact with whom we can communicate routinely throughout our evaluation and regulatory process.

Your primary contact from this office is Dr. Hatim Gubara, Regionalization Evaluation Services, National Center for Import & Export, Veterinary Services, APHIS, USDA, 4700 River Road, Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; phone number: (301) 734-4356; facsimile number: (301) 734-3222; email: Hatim.Gubara@aphis.usda.gov.

If you have any questions or need clarification, please feel free to contact Dr. Gubara directly.

Sincerely,



W. Ron DeHaven  
Deputy Administrator  
Veterinary Services

Enclosure

## **Specific comments on the 11 factors**

### ***1. Authority, organization, and infrastructure of the Veterinary Services***

What is the approximate number of veterinarians, animal health technicians, and support staff employed at the different levels in the State Food and Veterinary Services (i.e., headquarters, different departments and entities under central administration, regional offices, city and county offices, and each of the 34 district offices)?

Your submission describes prohibition of swill feeding. However, the copy of the veterinary law you provided does not mention this prohibition. Please provide a copy of the law mandating prohibition of swill feeding. How is compliance monitored and enforced?

Your FMD contingency plan mentions valuation of destroyed animals. What laws do you have in place for compensation and indemnity of destroyed or confiscated animals?

Please provide a copy (in English) of the brochure, "A Guide to Farmers in an Infected Area."

### ***2. Disease status of the region***

We are particularly interested in identifying risk pathways that may lead to the introduction of FMD into the United States. To this end, please provide detailed information on export procedures, including storage or quarantine conditions and times, transport procedures, and projections of the amounts of each commodity you intend to export.

### ***3. Disease status of each adjacent region***

You indicated that the Republic of Belarus and the Kaliningrad region are free of FMD. Currently, neither is recognized as free by the United States nor are they on the OIE list of FMD-free regions. Can you clarify their status and describe what level of harmony and collaboration exists between Lithuania and the two regions? What are your procedures for recognizing countries as free of disease?

### ***4. Disease control program of the region (if the disease agent exists or recently existed in the region)***

Please provide updated information on the number of disease investigations you conducted during 2001 and 2002. What were the results of the investigations, if any? What procedures were followed in conducting the investigations?

**5. *Vaccination status of the region***

We are unclear on your past vaccination activities. Your original submission stated that vaccination against FMD was prohibited since 1984 and cattle vaccination was canceled in 1985. However, your latest submission mentioned a May 1995 date for ending cattle vaccination. If that were the case, was vaccination continued despite the earlier prohibition? If so, what was the rationale for continuing vaccination activities?

**6. *The degree to which the region is separated from adjacent regions of higher risk through physical or other barriers***

We have no questions under this factor.

**7. *The extent to which movement of animals and animal products is controlled from regions of higher risk, and the level of biosecurity regarding such movement***

On page 22 of your import requirement document, we noticed that FMD was not listed as one of the diseases for roe deer. Is there a specific reason for not considering this to be a susceptible species?

What import restrictions are applicable to FMD-susceptible materials (meat and meat products) in passenger baggage? Please provide details of the enforcement process.

Please update, for 2001 and 2002, the table you presented in your latest information on the imports of meat and meat products from different countries.

Please provide a copy (in English) of your obligatory animal health certificate.

**8. *Livestock demographics and marketing practices in the region***

What is the number and distribution --by species and type-- of all susceptible herds and flocks, both backyard and commercial, in different regions of the country?

What are the patterns of animal movement within the country? What are the major market centers, and where are they located?

What relevant production, processing, and marketing patterns exist for milk and dairy products in Lithuania?

**9. *The type and extent of disease surveillance in the region***

Please provide updates for 2001 and 2002 on collection and testing of serum samples. What sampling and statistical approaches were used for collecting these samples?

**10. *Diagnostic laboratory capabilities***

What are the diagnostic capabilities of laboratories located in the 10 counties? How many of these are approved for FMD diagnosis? What kind of diagnostic tests are being conducted in each? What personnel are available in each of the laboratories, and what are their levels of expertise?

**11. *Emergency response capability***

We have no questions under this factor.

---