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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

Washington, DC
20250

Dr. Vinets Veldre
Director General
Food and Veterinary Service
Republikas laukums 2
Riga, LV-1981
Republic of Latvia

Dear Dr. Veldre:

Thank you very much for the information you provided concerning the classical swine fever (CSF) status of the Republic of Latvia. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Regionalization Evaluation Service (RES) received this information in January 2005, and is in the process of reviewing it.

APHIS requires 11-factor information such as that which you have provided for CSF in order to conduct foreign animal disease evaluations in compliance with our regulations in Title 9, of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, Section 92.2 (9 CFR 92.2) (See Enclosure 1). In order to facilitate our evaluation, we request that you also provide the specific information outlined in Enclosure 2. We are routinely requesting this information from the new European Union (EU) Member States as we conduct CSF evaluations.

Currently, we are unsure about which specific commodities Latvia intends to export to the U.S. It is important to note that, in order to export live swine or swine products, your country must be evaluated for swine vesicular disease (SVD) and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in addition to CSF. However, our records do not show that Latvia has requested the U.S. to conduct an evaluation of Latvia for either SVD or FMD.

Therefore, in conjunction with the CSF evaluation, APHIS recommends that you request an evaluation of the FMD and SVD status of your country. In this regard, APHIS is willing to conduct these additional evaluations provided that you send us: (1) a written request for Latvia to be considered free of SVD and FMD, and (2) 11-factor information for both SVD and FMD as described in Enclosure 1, preferably also including the specific information listed in Enclosure 3. Please address initial correspondence to my office at the Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building, 1400 Independence Avenue S.W., Room 317-E, Washington, DC, 20250.

Please keep in mind that an initial data review is only one of the steps in the evaluation process. Once the information on each disease under consideration is complete, APHIS will request authorization to conduct one or more site visits to verify and/or complement the information provided. The scheduling of the site visit(s) depends in large part on the timeliness and completeness of the additional information that you provide. Information provided for the document review and obtained during the site visit will be used to conduct a risk assessment. Ultimately, the evaluation process will require changes to



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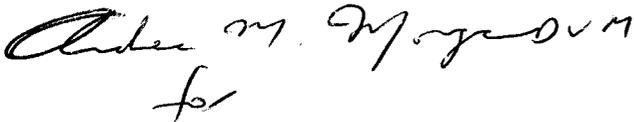
our regulations, which cannot be implemented until after the public has had an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed changes. The APHIS regulatory process is lengthy.

Prior to the accession of the new Member States to the EU, APHIS could work directly with Latvian veterinary officials. However, the European Commission (EC) has requested that APHIS communicate with Member States through EC representatives. Since Latvia is now a Member State of the EU, APHIS intends to honor this request and to work through the EC to proceed with this evaluation.

Your primary contact for this project is Dr. Kelly Rhodes, USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services, National Center for Import and Export, RES, Unit 38, 4700 River Road, Riverdale, Maryland 20737. She can be reached by telephone at 301-734-4356; by fax at 301-734-3222; or by e-mail at Kelly.Rhodes@aphis.usda.gov. Please feel free to contact Dr. Rhodes if you have any questions or concerns.

We look forward to working with you during this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Clifford", with a small "for" written below it.

John R. Clifford
Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services

Enclosures

Enclosure 1 – Request for 11-factor information (please provide in English)

Approved OMB No. 0579-0040

CLARIFICATION OF INFORMATION REQUESTED
FOR RECOGNITION OF A REGION

Instructions: Please provide detailed answers (English translation required) to these questions.

1. The authority, organization, and infrastructure of the veterinary services organization in the region.
 - a. What veterinary force is available in the region for carrying out regulatory programs for livestock diseases?
 - b. Are all officers veterinarians?
 - c. What are the required procedures for specimen collection?
 - d. What diagnostic procedures and techniques are routinely followed for each disease agent of concern?
 - e. What laws, regulations, and policies are in effect (copies should be provided, English translation required)? For example, is waste feeding permitted and, if so, what restrictions apply (such as cooking the waste to specific temperatures and duration)?
 - f. What security measures are in place at ports of entry to control importation of materials that might carry disease agents of concern?

2. Disease status, i.e., is the restricted disease agent known to exist in the region? If yes, at what prevalence? If no, when was the most recent diagnosis?
 - a. For each relevant hazard, is the pest or disease agent known to exist in the region? If yes, at what prevalence? If no, when was the most recent diagnosis or detection?
 - b. What breeds or species were affected?
 - c. How many cases were diagnosed and reported?
 - d. Is reporting the pest or disease agent required in the region?
 - e. If the pest or disease agent was present and subsequently eradicated, what methods were used for eradication?
 - f. What geographic and environmental characteristics of the exporting region may influence the prevalence of the pest or disease agent?

3. The status of adjacent regions with respect to the agent.
 - a. For each relevant hazard, is the pest or disease agent known to exist, or has it existed previously, in any region adjacent to the region proposing the trade? If yes, at what prevalence? If no, when was the most recent diagnosis?
 - b. Are there any relevant factors about the adjacent regions that should be taken into account (e.g., size, distance from adjacent border to affected herds or animals)?
4. The extent of an active disease-control program, if any, if the agent is known to exist in the region.
 - a. What is the extent of an active disease-control program, if any, if the pest or disease agent is known to exist in the region, or recently existed in the region?
 - b. What epidemiological investigations are done to trace the source of infection?
 - c. Are infected or exposed animals or premises quarantined? If so, for how long?
 - d. Are affected premises monitored, and if so, how?
 - e. What tests are performed prior to releasing the quarantine?
 - f. What procedures are used to clean up affected premises?
 - g. What treatment regimes are followed?
 - h. What breeding practices are followed?
 - i. If depopulation is used, how are carcasses disposed of (are they salvaged at abattoirs)?
 - j. Is indemnity paid on destroyed animals?
 - k. Have premises, thought to have been cleaned up, later been found to still be affected?
5. The vaccination status of the region. When was the last vaccination? What is the extent of vaccination if it is currently used, and what vaccine is being used?
 - a. Is the ownership and use of vaccine allowed?
 - b. When was the last vaccination?
 - c. What is the extent of vaccination if it is currently used?
 - d. What types of vaccine (live, modified live, killed) are used?
 - e. Who may vaccinate (herd owners, veterinarians, etc.)?
 - f. Are records kept on the use of vaccine?
 - g. Who produces the vaccine?
 - h. Is the administration of serum permitted? If so, by whom and under what conditions?
6. The degree to which the region is separated from adjacent regions of higher risk through physical or other barriers.

- a. To what degree is the region separated from regions of higher risk through physical or other barriers?

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 movements.
 - a. From what countries or regions does the requesting region import products that could potentially carry pest or disease agents of concern?
 - b. To what extent is the movement of such products controlled from regions of higher risk, and what is the level of biosecurity regarding such movements?
 - c. What test procedures are used?
 - d. Are animals that may carry the disease agents quarantined? If so, for how long and where?
 - e. Are import permits and health certificates required?
 - f. What other procedures are used?

8. Livestock demographics and marketing practices in the region.
 - a. How many herds, flocks, etc., of each relevant species are in the region?
 - b. How are they distributed (e.g., herd density, etc.)?
 - c. Where are the major livestock marketing centers?
 - d. What are the patterns of livestock movement within the region?
 - e. How are the animals transported and handled during market transactions?

9. The type and extent of disease surveillance in the region, e.g., is it passive and/or active, and what is the quantity and quality of sampling and testing?
 - a. Are serum surveys conducted, and if so, how frequently, what sample sizes are used, and what has been found?
 - b. Is reporting of sick animals mandatory, and if so, what is the procedure (by whom and to whom) and what penalties are involved for failure to report?
 - c. Are laboratory tests run on suspicious animals? If so, what procedures and to what extent (e.g., what proportion of suspicious cases are evaluated using each of the specific laboratory procedures)?
 - d. Are quarantines imposed on premises with suspicious cases, pending final diagnosis?
 - e. What other procedures are followed regarding suspicious cases?

10. Diagnostic laboratory capabilities.
 - a. What diagnostic laboratory capabilities are there?

- b. Are there laboratories approved for agent isolation, identification, and typing (if yes, indicate the names and addresses of each)?
- c. If not, where specifically is such isolation, identification, and typing done?
- d. What security measures are in place in laboratories within the region to prevent escape of biological agents?
- e. What kind of training have the diagnostic personnel had regarding the specific disease agents of concern?

11. Policies and infrastructure for animal disease control in the region, i.e., emergency response capacity.

- a. What policies and infrastructure exist for emergency response to outbreak situations?

Enclosure 2 – Specific classical swine fever (CSF) information needs (please provide in English)

1. A comparison table listing the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia that transpose the following European Commission directives and decisions:
 - a. Council Directive 90/425/EEC
 - b. Council Directive 91/496/EEC
 - c. Council Directive 97/12/EC
 - d. Commission Decision 2002/199/EC
 - e. Commission Decision 2004/212/EC
2. Information regarding the size of the Latvian budget for veterinary services in 2004, including the total value of budgetary resources, the source of these resources (e.g., national budget, regional/district budgets, user fees), and the major categories of expenditures.
3. A description of any natural barriers to wild boar movement into Latvia from neighboring countries.
4. A list of trading partners and the volume and type of commodities traded from 2000-2004, focusing on live swine and swine products.
5. A description of the extent of current implementation of ANIMO or TRACES.
6. A description of any required procedures for cleaning and disinfection of transit vehicles, particularly live-haul trucks, from neighboring countries.
7. The geographic location and herd size of the swine operations most likely to be involved in export to the United States.
8. The estimated number of wild boar in each administrative unit (previously defined by Latvia as a district).
9. CSF surveillance results in domestic swine and wild boar by district for 2000-2004.

Enclosure 3 – Specific swine vesicular disease (SVD) and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) information needs (please provide in English)

SVD information:

1. A comparison table that lists the European Commission decisions, directives, and regulations regarding SVD and the corresponding Latvian laws and regulations, along with any noted differences.
2. SVD monitoring results in domestic swine and wild boar by district for 2000-2004.
3. A copy of the contingency plan for SVD.

FMD information:

1. The number of beef cattle and dairy cattle in each district, and the geographic location of farms most likely to be involved in export to the United States.
2. FMD monitoring results in all susceptible domestic and wild animals for 2000-2004, broken down by animal species and district.
3. A list of trading partners and the volume and type of commodities traded from 2000-2004, focusing on ruminants and ruminant products.