

K-50050-3/8/2017
Government of India
Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
Department of Animal Husbandry Dairying and Fisheries

To,
Animal Quarantine and Certification Services
Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Bangalore

Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated, 3rd March, 2017

Subject : Guidelines for Release of re-imported consignment by the Indian exporters by the AQCS.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the subject mentioned above and to say that the Indian exporters have brought to the notice of this Department that the consignments which are rejected by the various importing countries are not cleared by the AQCS for further processing and taking action. The AQCS shall are citing reasons that the consignments are not accompanied with Sanitary Import Permit and Health Certificate. It should be noted that for re-import of the Indian consignments sailed to other countries are rejected by the importer for various reasons and the Indian products need to be bring back for further processing. The matter has been examined in the Department and a Guidelines have been prepared for handling of such consignments. A copy of a guidelines is enclosed.

2. All the Quarantine Officers are directed to follow the Guidelines and facilitate the release of such consignments without any kind of hindrance.

Yours sincerely,


(S.K. Dutta)

Assistant Commissioner (AH)

Guidelines for release of re-imported consignments exported from India

The import of livestock and livestock products are regulated as per the notification issued by the Department vide S.O 2666(E) dated 17th October, 2014 under Section 3A of the Livestock Importation ACT, 1898. As per the existing import policy in place by the Department in the said notification all the livestock products are imported requires Sanitary Import Permit (SIP) and/or No objection Certificate (NOC) from the Animal Quarantine Certification Services (AQCS).

2. India is largest exporters of Fisheries Products, buffalo meat and pet food to various countries. It has been brought to the notice of the Department that the livestock products that are exported by India when rejected by the importing countries for various reasons are not allowed to re-import because there is lack of clarity as how these consignments will be handled by the AQCS. Since the livestock products require Sanitary Import Permit and Health Certificate, the AQCS sometime demands health certificate and SIPs. The fact is that these consignments neither require SIP nor the importing country can issue any health certificate. As a result the Indian exporters are suffering huge losses.

3. The Indian exporters who are bringing back the exported consignments have brought to the notice of the Department that the shrimp, Fisheries products, meat, pet food etc. consignments are rejected by the importing country are mainly due to the following reasons:

- I) Defective labeling by the exporters
- II) Detection of higher levels of antimicrobials / pesticides or heavy metals in the consignments.
- III) Detection of bacterial count mainly due to high level of pathogenic micro organisms.
- IV) Other defect in the exported consignments which is detected by the importing country.

4. The matter has been deliberated in the Department in the Technical Expert Committee; the committee has suggested the following methods may be adopted by the AQCS to handle such re-imported consignments:

- a) If the consignments are rejected due to the defective labeling and in that case there are three possibilities:
 - i. i) the consignments may not be opened in the importing country and the consignments are sent back from the port itself without allowing the consignments to enter in the importing country's territory and in that case the consignments should be allowed for re-labelling, correction and sending back. The Quarantine Officer should allow them with a declaration that the consignments will be sent back after re-labelling.
 - ii. ii) If the consignments are opened in the Importing country and in that case a certificate from the buyer to be obtained that the product has not been come into contact with the importing country 's environment and no further reprocessing, re-labelling, re-packaging has been done. The buyer shall issue this certificate with a counter signature of Quarantine Officer or competent authority in the importing country. The AQCS shall release these consignments based on such documents.
 - iii. iii) If the consignments are rejected without any valid reasons, then the exporter should clarify the reasons for rejection.
- b) If the consignments are rejected by the importing country due to detection of high residue levels of pesticides/antimicrobials/heavy metal which is detected by the importing country at the level not acceptable by the importing country but the level meets the standards of Codex and FSSAI standards. In this case, if the importer intends to re-import these consignments for

further reprocessing and exporting to other countries then the consignment should be released in consultation with EIA/EIC. If the consignment is intended to be used in the domestic market then it may be released to FSSAI for their decision.

- c) If the consignments are of Animal origin materials and to be used for animal feeding, the Quarantine Officer shall test the consignments again and if the consignments are still found contaminated and the bacterial count is found above the prescribed limits, and if the consignments can be further treated to mitigate risk by any means and can be used for domestic consumption, in that case the consignments shall be released.
- d) If the consignments are not fulfilling the criteria as stated at para (e), the consignments should be destroyed through incineration for which the cost of destruction shall be borne by the importer.
- e) The AQCS shall take action on the above mentioned lines with a period of seven days and the consignments should not be hold more than seven days in any case.

5. The fish imported by the seafood exporters for re-export/value addition/ domestic manufacturing for re-export but are catches from the High Seas should be cleared with the methods mentioned below:

- a) No SIP should be insisted consignor wise when the product is coming from the same country.
- b) The product meant for domestic consumption and raw fish may be released without insisting for the Health Certificate if not produced by the importers based on the microbiological testing and testing by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)
- c) The fish produce imported as raw materials for value addition and re-export, the AQCS will carry out random inspection and samples shall be collected for microbiological testing.

6. The CIFT Cochin may also be included in the list of designated laboratories for testing of fisheries products.

7. Risk Based NoC system to be implemented for the import of fisheries items and based on the data maintained by the AQCS categorizing importers with good reputation/country/products. In such cases risk based sampling methodology to be adopted for checking the consignments randomly. However, the priority would be disease free import to stop ingress of diseases.
