

How to apply for a health certificate to export SPS goods

A guide to submitting applications on EHC Online

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What is a health certificate?

A health certificate is an official document that confirms your export meets the health requirements of the destination country. You will be required to apply for a health certificate if you're exporting or moving live animals or animal products from Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) to (or transiting through) countries in the European Union/European Economic Area. Your health certificate will need to be completed and signed by an OV (Official Veterinarian) or Food Competent Certifying Officer (FCCO), recognised by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) as having the correct qualifications to certify the product in question.

You'll need a health certificate for each:

- type of animal or animal product you're exporting from GB
- product type - if you're exporting a consignment which includes a mix of product

This guidance may not apply to you if you are:

- Moving goods from Northern Ireland - Check the inspection process on the [DAERA website](#).
- Exporting composite products - [Composite food products](#) are for human consumption only

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Who is responsible?

The government body who are responsible for the health certificates is the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The Animal Plant Health Agency is an Executive Agency of DEFRA and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy. They are responsible for giving authorisation and advice for inspectors. APHA's Centre for International Trade manages the EHC Online system and provides support to exporters and certifiers in the application and certification process.



You will need to choose an [Official Veterinarian \(OV\)](#) or local authority (LA) inspector and:

- name the OV practice or local authority in your application
- check they can inspect your consignment and sign your health certificate in the days before your export

An official veterinarian is someone who's been authorised by APHA to perform statutory duties (work that is required by law). Use this guidance to [find a professional to certify your export health certificate](#).



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How do I get a health certificate?

Before you apply you will need a:

- Government Gateway account – an email address is required.
- A Defra account - Company House Number required

You should also:

- [Search for your animal or product](#)
- A download and read the EHC and guidance notes, these explain what you'll need to do to export your consignment

A. Government Gateway webpage

Sign in using Government Gateway

Government Gateway user ID

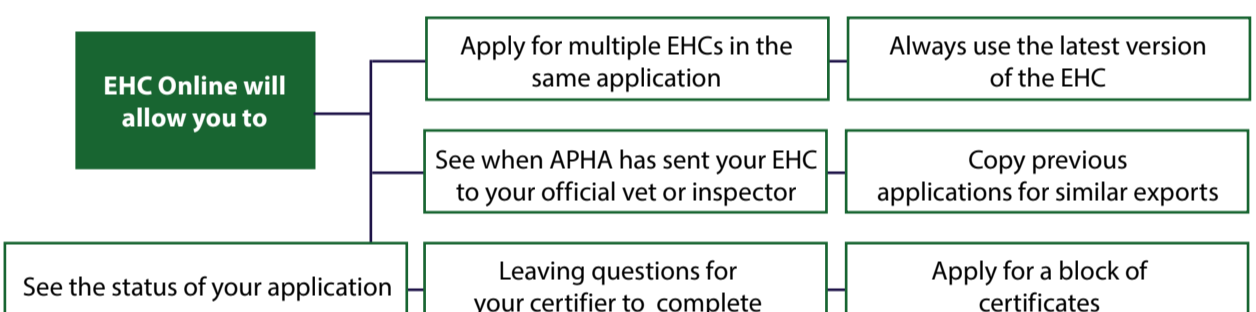
This could be up to 12 characters.

60 01 64 31 86 55

Password

Sign in

Make sure you contact the official vet (OV) or inspector who will certify your EHC before you submit any applications.



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What information is needed?

Below is an example of the information required for an EHC Online application:

- **Type of good** Check the sub category of the EHC you've selected
- **Unique Reference** Create a unique reference number
- **Destination & PoE** Confirm the destination and point of entry EU location (if relevant)
- **Certifier** Choose a certifier from a drop down menu who will inspect the goods.
- **Information for APHA** Include certifying region, exporter details, product origin, export date
- **Description of goods** Include information about what you're importing such as number, gross and net weight, Commodity Code.
- **Consigner & exporter details** Name, full address, contact details
- **Consignee & Importer details** Name, full address, contact details
- **Place of destination** Full address of the goods import destination
- **Port of entry or BCP details** BCP location which consignment must be inspected at, usually the same place as the first port of entry into the EU
- **Transport Details** Include information such as flight number or ship name, shipment container number or haulier

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Approving the application

Once you have submitted your application you will receive this message:

Your export application has been received

Your reference number is:

1721148002598

After APHA approves your application APHA will send your health certificate to your OV or inspector, or let them know it is ready to download and print if they are registered to use the EHC online service:

- seven working days before your export date
- within one working day of receiving it, if you plan to export in the next seven working days

If you've applied online, you'll be able to see when APHA has sent your certificate to your OV or inspector. [Contact APHA](#) if your OV or inspector does not receive the health certificate.

Once you've applied to APHA for a health certificate, you need to arrange for your nominated OV or inspector to complete, sign and give the health certificate to you. The health certificate must travel with your consignment to the export destination. The goods must not be split up during transit.

The inspector will carry out examination, inspection, testing, sampling and treatment on the consignment in accordance with:

- with APHA instructions and
- the requirements of the export health certificate, notes for guidance and checklists issued.

Declarations must be signed, dated and travel with your consignment to the export destination. The goods must not be split up during transit.

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Pre-Certificates

In a small number of cases the destination countries will require a pre-certificate for the health certificate. If you require a pre-certificate, the functionality is available within [EHC Online](#) for the relevant certificates. More information about this process will be on [GOV.UK](#) in due course.