



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Crisis preparedness in food, animals and plants
Unit G.3 Official controls

Minutes

"Expert group on Veterinary Imports Controls Legislation"

Thursday, 18th November 2021, **14H00 – 17H30 Brussels time**

Skype for Business

Chair: Bruno Saimour, Unit G3

1	Guidance on IOC	<p>COM introduced the new guidance on IOCs aimed at MS competent authorities (in particular BCPs) on the practical and operational aspects of the procedure for IOCs as laid down in Regulation (EU) 2019/1873, highlighting specifically the differences with the procedure for re-enforced checks previously in place. MSs clarified that consignments under IOC may be tested in the framework of the national monitoring plans, as the system allows to differentiate between test results required under the IOC and results of testing for other reasons (random, suspicion, ...). In addition, it is possible to reject a consignment under IOC for other reasons without counting it in the sequence of planned controls. COM also clarified practical aspects related to an IOC request based on the results of a market control.</p> <p>The IOC guidance was recently circulated to all MSs who were invited to provide their comments in writing.</p>
2	Current IOC issues	<p>COM gave detailed explanations of specific issues and cases encountered in the operational management of IOCs in TRACES NT.</p> <p>These issues included the scenarios where MS should record favourable results instead of requesting exemptions from IOC (e.g. specific cases of label checks). MS were also informed about the preference for English language in free text boxes of the IOC platform in TRACES NT, where the information needs to be understood by all EU users. Detailed explanation was given on the way to manage STEC results in the IOC module, in order to reconcile management rules which can be different at national level and at European level. COM also gave a brief overview on the IOC nomenclature code groups pre-defined in TRACES NT.</p>
3	EU coordinated control activities in the area of agri-food fraud	<p>COM updated MS on the recent EU coordinated control activities in the area of agri-food fraud (coordinated control plan assessing the authenticity of some herbs and spices), including the ongoing ones (enforcement action on illegal additives and fillers in plastic and melamine table and kitchenware) and those still-to-be-planned/under consideration (e.g. plant protection products, dogs and cats, honey, fishery products).</p>
4	SANTE F4 topics	<p>COM (Directorate F) gave a detailed summary on the use of the template that facilitates the assessment of information accompanying Member States' notifications of intended designations for new border control posts (BCP) or changes in infrastructure or organisation of a BCP, or an inspection centre within that post against the minimum and detailed rules on minimum requirements for border control posts. The assessment table is currently under revision. COM informed MS that the number of notifications has been high for the past two years. This high number is mainly due to Brexit preparedness,</p>

		<p>but also results from internal audits and upgrading of facilities.</p> <p>It is also worth noting that, due to the COVID pandemic, the assessment table template has been used to facilitate remote audits within the import sector.</p> <p>COM responded to few questions on the planned import control audits in 2022, and on the use of the revised template for notification of new BCPs or change in infrastructure and operation of existing BCPs, which was sent to MS prior to the meeting.</p>
5	Composite products-questions/answers	<p>COM answered a few specific questions on the import requirements for composite products and reminded MS that a lot of information is available on the following web page:</p> <p>https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/international-affairs/import-conditions/eu-import-conditions-composite-products_en</p>
6	Brexit point	<p>COM gave MS an update on Brexit issues which have required attention since the end of the transition period in terms of exporting and importing SPS goods to and from Great Britain, and about the implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol.</p> <p>Information was given on the very recent update of the UK Border Operating Model which plans a progressive approach for import certification and border controls in the UK(GB).</p> <p>COM reminded MS that, for the purpose of harmonised approach on GB imports at EU borders, a number of Q&A documents were circulated to the UK, to the MS and to stakeholders (last document No 18).</p>