



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directorate Animal Health, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Private Bag X138, Pretoria 0001

Tel: 012 319 7456 Fax: 012 329 7218 E-mail: mpho.maja@daff.gov.za

To all Private Veterinarians

THE EXPORTATION OF ZEBRAS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Colleagues,

The Directorate Animal Health has been made aware of consignments of zebras being exported to various countries.

South Africa is endemic for African Horse Sickness (AHS). AHS is a controlled disease with an effective surveillance programme only in the AHS controlled area of the Western Cape. In the rest of the country AHS is a notifiable disease but there is no active surveillance programme that would allow for certain areas to be declared free of the disease.

Many countries demand certification for freedom of AHS which is not possible or ethical to certify outside the AHS controlled area. This is of particular concern during the AHS high risk summer season but also during the low risk season since some areas report cases virtually all year round.

The reason for concern is that should we inadvertently export AHS virus from South Africa to a free country, it would have very serious consequences for our reputation as a trade partner, our equid trade as well as potential liability for the certifying veterinarian.

In order to prevent unintended export of the AHSV, DAFF strongly recommends that exports of equids including zebras from the AHS infected zone (outside the Western Cape Province AHS free and surveillance zones) be limited to the low vector season from July to October.

In addition it is strongly recommended that such equids be tested negative for AHS infection prior to export according to the OIE guidelines. There are 2 options that can be used for this purpose. It is recommended that animals be held in isolation in a vector-protected establishment:-


a) for a period of at least 40 days and serological tests to detect antibodies against AHSV were carried out with no significant increase in antibody titre on blood samples collected on two occasions, with an interval of not less than 21 days, the first sample being collected at least 7 days after introduction into the vector-protected establishment; or

b) for a period of at least 14 days and an agent identification (PCR) test was carried out with a negative result on a blood sample collected not less than 14 days after introduction into the vector-protected establishment (Preferred option).

*In addition the animals must be protected from *Culicoides* at all times during transportation (including transportation to and at the place of shipment).*

Your understanding in protecting our reputation while safeguarding trade partners' disease status is appreciated. You are welcome to contact this office for additional information and especially if the conditions on the veterinary import permit do not coincide with the recommendations above.

Kind regards


DR MPHO MAJA
DIRECTOR ANIMAL HEALTH
DATE: 2017-03-31