



**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Trader Notice - Identification Checks on Equines prior to Application for Export Certification

Document Control

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1. Objective


The objective of this Trader Notice is to ensure all equines being certified for export to the EU or the UK, by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) are subject to an identification check by exporters prior to application for a health certificate. It also refers to requirements regarding an equine's fitness to travel. These requirements are in addition to the health certification process, further details of which can be found at this link: [gov.ie - Export of Horses](https://gov.ie/Export-of-Horses)

2. Background

- 1) The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine in moving towards implementing a new and improved Equine Traceability System requires that all equines being exported undergo identity checks to ensure they are properly identified and registered on the Animal Identification and Movement Database (AIM).

3. Equine Checks

- 1) Equine checks comprise four elements:
 1. Microchip scanning and paper passport check
 2. Checks on the database
 3. Veterinary checks on fitness to travel
 4. Health certification checks see: [gov.ie - Export of Horses](https://gov.ie/Export-of-Horses)
- 2) Where irregularities are detected by the Department a compliance notice may issue with the remedial action required detailed in the schedule. Any equine found to be incorrectly identified can be restricted by the Department and have their passport seized.
- 3) Exporters should carry out an initial check on the Equine Chip Checker website [Equine Chip Checker \(agriculture.gov.ie\)](https://agriculture.gov.ie/Equine-Chip-Checker) to ensure that the equines, habitually resident in Ireland (see point 5. (2)), that are proposed for export are registered on the AIM database and that the Fit for Human Consumption status is mirrored on both the database and the passport prior to applying to the Department for certification. Any enquiries from exporters on how to regularise discrepancies or update passports can be directed to horseld@agriculture.gov.ie
- 4) Where consignments include equines originating from an establishment in Northern Ireland, Exporters must carry out a check on the UK chip checker website [National Equine Microchip & UELN Lookup | Equine Register Ltd](https://national-equine-microchip-lookup.uk/Equine-Register-Ltd) to ensure that the equines proposed for export are registered on the UK database and that the Fit for Human Consumption status is mirrored on both the database and the passport prior to applying to the Department for certification. If any anomalies arise between the equines and the chip checker the Exporter must contact the relevant UK authorities through the contact option on the webpage. See screenshot here as an example of the UK chip checker:


EQUINE REGISTER
 CHIPCHECKER RESULTS

Sport Horse Breeding of Great Britain

[Help articles](#)

Microchip Number(s):
No microchip

Passport Issuing Organisation: [i](#)
Sport Horse Breeding of Great Britain
[Show contact details](#)

Gender: Female	Colour: Dark Bay	
Species i Horse/Pony	Approx Age: 21	Food Chain Status: i Excluded

- 5) Exporters must complete the document “DAFM Notification” attached and include it in the email sent to the Department as part of the export notification request. The UELN and microchip for each equine must be listed on the document and a screenshot of the chip checker result for each equine (both Irish and UK chip checker as applicable) must be attached to the document.
- 6) Exporters must upload and attach the document “DAFM Notification” to the Traces certificate at point 1.7 “Accompanying Documents” under the option “Other”. The purpose of this document is to alert other Competent Authorities as to the Fit for Human Consumption indicator which is reflected on the Chip Checker.
- 7) Exporters must include in the email a copy of the front page of the passport, the marking chart and a copy of the page where an equine is marked as not fit for human consumption, where applicable, as part of their application to the Department for certification. The pages must include the Universal Equine Life Number (UELN) and microchip numbers. The UELN must be entered on the Traces certificate.
- 8) Requests for certification to export equines for slaughter must be requested a mandatory minimum three working days in advance of the proposed export date and the full passport for each equine must be provided to the RVO at the same time as the request for certification. Certification for export will not be provided unless both these elements are complied with.
- 9) The provision of out of hours certification is subject to resource availability.

4. Microchip scanning

- 1) Exporters who are assembling animals must ensure all equines are scanned for microchips. Where an exporter is initiating the application for export certification but is not physically assembling the equines they must require that the equines are scanned for microchips in line with the instructions below.
- 2) When an equine is being scanned for a microchip, it is important to:
 1. Scan the neck, both sides, as far back as the shoulder,
 2. Do not stop scanning after finding one microchip, ensure there are no other microchips.
- 3) It is not allowed to insert more than one microchip in an equine unless the original microchip has ceased to function. Equines should only have one working microchip at a time. Under Article 12 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/963 veterinarians shall ensure that measures are taken to detect possible signs or marks indicative of the previous identification of the equine animal by injectable transponders. Those measures shall include at least the following:
 1. a check of the equine animal for any injectable transponder previously implanted, or any clinical signs indicating a previously implanted transponder or,
 2. a previously applied mark has been surgically removed or altered.
- 4) If an equine is found to have more than one microchip inserted, **all must be recorded on the passport and on the AIM database** (as applicable – see 5. 2)). Using the Equine Chip Checker website [Equine Chip Checker \(agriculture.gov.ie\)](https://equine-chip-checker.agriculture.gov.ie) enter one microchip number to see if another is recorded against the first. If only one is recorded, or if only one is visible on the passport (first number stickered over for e.g.), this equine is not properly identified, it will not be permitted to be exported.
- 5) The exporter, if not the operator, should advise the operator that they must take steps to regularise the equine's identification, through registering all microchips on the AIM database and on the passport through contact with the appropriate Passport Issuing Organisation (PIO) see link here for a list of the PIOs: [gov - Equine Passports and Microchips \(www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie/gov-uk/equine-passports-and-microchips). Once that has been done, the exporter can reapply to export the equine.
- 6) Equines originating from an establishment in Northern Ireland should be checked against the UK Chip Checker database at this link [National Equine Microchip & UELN Lookup | Equine Register Ltd](https://national-equine-microchip-ueln-lookup.equine-register.co.uk)

5. AIM database checks

- 1) If a record is not returned relating to the UELN or microchip number, this indicates that the equine has not been registered to the database. This instance should only occur where an equine has a non-Irish passport.
- 2) Any imported equine that is habitually resident in an equine establishment more than 30 days must be recorded on the AIM database (as per article 64 of Commission delegated regulation 2019/2035) except in the following three cases:
 1. for equines participating in competitions, races, shows, training and hauling for a period not exceeding 90 days.
 2. for male equine animals for breeding kept during the breeding season.
 3. for female equine animals for breeding kept for a period not exceeding 90 days.

If one of the listed exceptions applies, it must be evidenced by supporting documentation, e.g., copy of an import or intra EU certificate or a DOCOM. A copy must be included in the email sent to the Department as part of the export notification request. This applies also to equines originating from an establishment in Northern Ireland.

- 3) The recording of an equine on the AIM database is done through the appropriate PIO. Equines, that originally came from Northern Ireland, if now habitually resident in the South, must be recorded on the AIM database. The recording of an equine on the AIM database does not equate to a change of ownership. Irish born equines, registered with a foreign PIO, that has jurisdiction to issue passports in the South, must also be lodged to AIM.
- 4) If an equine does not fall under one of the three exceptions listed in 5. 2) above it cannot be exported until its identity has been regularised. The exporter, if not the operator, should advise the operator to notify the presence of this equine to the database as soon as possible by lodging the passport with an appropriate PIO. Depending on the breed of the equine, this involves contacting the appropriate PIO, completing a form and submitting the form with the equines passport to the PIO concerned and paying a fee.
- 5) Equines originating from an establishment in Northern Ireland should be checked against the UK Chip Checker database at this link [National Equine Microchip & UELN Lookup | Equine Register Ltd](#)

6. Marked out of the food chain

- 1) If the UELN or microchip number is registered on the AIM database and the equine in question has been marked as not fit for human consumption, this must be indicated on the paper passport. This is a requirement of article 29 of Commission Implementing Regulation 2021/963.
 - 2) If the paper passport has not been updated to reflect the up-to-date Fit for Human Consumption status, this equine is not properly identified. The equine cannot be exported, and its movement shall be restricted by DAFM issuing a compliance notice under SI 254 of 2023 until its identification has been regularised.
 - 3) The exporter, if not the operator, should advise the operator that they must take steps to record the equine's Fit for Human Consumption status on the passport mirroring the record on the AIM database through contact with the appropriate PIO. Once the passport has been updated the exporter can reapply to export the equine.
 - 4) If the passport indicates that the equine is marked not fit for human consumption, but this information is not reflected on the database, the database should be updated to reflect the correct status of the equine as other countries may rely on this data in the event of a duplicate passport being generated.
 - (a) In relation to **non-thoroughbred** equines the exporter may contact the relevant PIO, and a phone call or email may suffice to update the record.
 - (b) In relation to **thoroughbred** equines, Weatherbys require the submission of the passport, alternatively they will accept an email from a Department Veterinary Inspector, confirming the equine's passport status. The email should be sent to studbookireland@weatherbys.ie and the subject line should read "Urgent Update to Fit for Human Consumption Status". The equine may be exported once this email has been sent.
 - (c) In relation to equines registered by one of the following societies/agencies:
 - Irish Cob Society
 - Horse Passport Agency
 - Connemara Pony Breeders Society
- please email Horseid@agriculture.gov.ie to confirm the Fit for Human Consumption status of the equines in question.
- 5) Equines originating from an establishment in Northern Ireland should be checked against the UK Chip Checker database at this link [National Equine Microchip & UELN Lookup | Equine Register Ltd](#)

7. Checks on fitness to travel

- 1) Under Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005 veterinarians will only consider an equine fit for travel if they consider that the journey will pose no risk to its welfare.
- 2) The following equines shall not be considered fit for transport:
 - Equines that present injured e.g., fractures, wounds, bruising, lameness, swelling.
 - Equines that present with physiological weakness, due to disease, starvation, injury, fatigue.
 - Equines that present with clinical signs of underlying pathological process e.g., emaciation, diarrhoea, nervous signs, anorexia, etc.
 - Equines unable to move independently without pain and should not need to be forced to move.
 - Equines with open wounds.
 - Females >90% expected gestation or females that have just given birth.
 - Newborns with navel not dry.
- 3) Please see additional guidelines when assessing fitness to travel at this link:
[Fitness to travel](#)
- 4) Veterinarians carrying out pre-export checks may request equine rug removal from each individual equine to allow visible examination for general bodily condition, examination of skin for ecto-parasites e.g., ringworm / fungal infection (zoonotic), cuts, skin infections, etc.
- 5) They may also request that the equines be walked to examine fitness to travel.
- 6) All equines should be well handled and suitable in temperament for loading and transportation. Unhandled equines never collared or handled are completely unsuitable for loading and long-distance transportation in large consignments, and veterinarians may well consider rejecting such equines.
- 7) If well-handled stallions are being loaded, an empty cubicle of separation should be maintained between such intact males as they will attack each other whilst in proximity on the transporter.

8. Contact points

- 6) Any queries relating to this Trader Notice can be addressed to the email address Horseid@agriculture.gov.ie or by phoning the Horse Section on 01 5058881.

9. Legislation

- 1) SI 254 of 2023 European Union (Animal Identification and Tracing) Regulations 2023
[S.I. No. 254/2023 - European Union \(Animal Identification and Tracing\) Regulations 2023 \(irishstatutebook.ie\)](#)
- 2) Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council
[Regulation - 2016/429 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)
- 3) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2035
[Delegated regulation - 2019/2035 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)
- 4) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/963
[Implementing regulation - 2021/963 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)
- 5) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97
[Regulation - 1/2005 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)



10. DAFM Notification - Equine Exports to EU or UK - Notification to Regional Veterinary Office _____

Agent:		Place of Loading:				EPN:			
Date/Time of loading				Time of Sailing		Customer Number:			
Port of Departure				Ferry operator					
#	TRACES Cert Ref. No. CHEDA.GB Ref. No.	N U M	Name of Horse UEN Microchip Number	(DAFM use) 1.PVP cert 2.Op Dec	(DAFM use) 1. US PVP 2. US Official	(DAFM use) (US) 1. CEM 2. Markings			
1		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
		U							
		M					2.	2.	Markings:
2		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							M	2.	2.
3		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							U		
							M	2.	2.
4		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							U		
							M	2.	2.
5		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							U		
							M	2.	2.
6		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							U		
							M	2.	2.
7		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							U		
							M	2.	2.
8		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							U		
							M	2.	2.
9		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							U		
							M	2.	2.
10		N		1.	1.	CEM:			
							U		
							M	2.	2.

DAFM = Dept. of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine



**PLEASE INSERT BELOW SNAP SHOTS FROM THE CHIP CHECKER DATABASE FOR
EACH EQUINE LISTED OVERLEAF:**