Ref: CTO 2018 027 [G]
Equine Semen: Frozen Semen Collected Under Previous Requirements

CTO direction as to equivalent measures in relation to frozen equine semen

Pursuant to section 27(1)(d)(iii) of the Biosecurity Act 1993 I, Lucy Johnston, Manager Animal Imports, Ministry for Primary Industries (under delegated authority), give the following directions for frozen equine semen collected under previous requirements prior to 1 July 2018 in relation to the *Import Health Standard: Semen and Embryos from Horses (Equidae), HORSSEMB.SPE:*

1) For residency requirements:

Under the IHS HORSSEMB.SPE semen donors must be resident for at least 28 consecutive days at the semen collection centre prior to collection of the semen for export. During this time semen donors must not be used for natural mating and must be isolated from animals not of equivalent health status.

Semen donors under the previous equine semen standards HORSEMIC.AUS, HORSEMIC.CAN, HORSEMIC.USA, and EQUISEMIC.EU were required to be in the semen collection centre for no less than 21 days prior to testing taking place. Allowing frozen semen from donors that have been resident for at least 21 days prior to collection as opposed to 28 days does not significantly increase the risk and semen is eligible for import.

2) For equine arteritis virus (EVA) requirements:

Under the IHS HORSSEMB.SPE, donors must meet the *Code* recommendations for managing EVA in equine semen as follows:

1) Donors were kept in an establishment where no equid has shown any clinical sign of EVA for the 28 days immediately prior to semen collection and showed no clinical sign of EVA on the day of semen collection; and
   a) Were subjected between 6 and 9 months of age to a test for EVA as prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL, with either (delete as applicable)
      i) A negative result, or
      ii) A positive result, followed at least 14 days later by a second test that showed a stable or decreasing titre;

      and were subsequently vaccinated against EVA and regularly vaccinated according to the recommendations of the manufacturer; or
   b) Were isolated and not earlier than seven days after commencing isolation, were subjected to a test for EVA as prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL on a blood sample with negative results, vaccinated for EVA, kept for 21 days following vaccination separated from other equids and regularly revaccinated according to the recommendations of the manufacturer; or

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c) Were subjected to a test for EVA as prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL on a blood sample with negative results within 14 days prior to semen collection, and had been separated from other equids not of equivalent health status for 14 days prior to blood sampling until the end of semen collection; or
d) Have been subjected to a test for EVA as prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL on a blood sample with positive results and then either
    i) Were subsequently test mated to two mares within 6 months prior to semen collection, which were subjected to two tests for EVA as prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL with negative results on blood samples collected at the time of test mating and again 28 days after test mating; or
    ii) Were subjected to a test for EVA as prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL with negative results, carried out on semen collected within 6 months prior to collection of the semen to be exported; or
    iii) Were subjected to a test for EVA is prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL with negative results, carried out on semen collected within six months after the blood sample was collected then immediately vaccinated, and revaccinated regularly; or
e) For frozen semen, were subjected with negative results to either
    i) A test for EVA as prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL carried out on a blood sample taken not earlier than 14 days and not later than 12 months after the collection of the semen for export; or
    ii) A test for EVA as prescribed in MPI-STD-TVTL carried out on an aliquot of the semen collected immediately prior to processing or on an aliquot of semen collected within 14 to 30 days after the first collection of the semen to be exported.

Semen donors under the previous equine semen standards HORSEMIC.AUS, HORSEMIC.CAN, HORSEMIC.USA, and EQUISEMIC.EU were required to meet one of the following testing options, which are equivalent to the current requirements:

1) The donor stallions were subjected to a virus neutralisation (VN) test for EVA not less than 21 days after entering the semen collection centre which demonstrated a negative result; or
2) The donor stallions were vaccinated against EVA under official veterinary control and have been re-vaccinated at regular intervals (at least annually).(N.B. Approved programmes for initial vaccination are as follows:
    a. vaccination on the day a blood sample was taken which was subjected to the VN test with a negative result
    b. vaccination during a period of isolation of not more than 15 days, commencing on the day a blood sample was taken which was subjected to the VN test with a negative result, and
    c. vaccination when the animal was at an age of 180 to 270 days during a period of isolation, during which two blood samples taken at least 10 days apart were subjected to the VN test and demonstrated a negative, stable or declining antibody titre.); or
3) The donor stallions are seropositive to EVA, there is no evidence of them shedding equine arteritis virus in semen or being treated with gonadotropin-releasing hormone antagonist, and they were tested during the one year prior to export in order to determine that they are not semen carriers. (N.B. A declaration must be provided, by the veterinarian who deals with the stallion, that there is no evidence of the stallion ever shedding EAV in semen or being treated with gonadotropin-releasing hormone antagonist (see sample below). Approved methods for determining semen carriers are as follows:
    a. test mating to two mares which were subjected to VN tests with negative results on two blood samples, one collected at the time of test mating and the other 28 days after mating, or
    b. virus isolation on cell culture carried out on the sperm rich fraction of two separate semen samples with negative results.)

Frozen semen from donors tested for EVA under the old requirements is considered to provide equivalent risk management and is eligible for import.

3) For contagious equine metritis (CEM) requirements:

Under the IHS HORSSEMB.SPE donors must meet the OIE *Code* recommendations for managing CEM in horses as follows:

1) Donors were from a country imposing control measures for CEM as described in the Manual, or otherwise approved by MPI, and

a. Have had no direct or indirect contact with CEM during the two months prior to collection; and
    i. Showed no clinical sign of CEM on the day of each collection; and
    ii. Have been subjected to a test* listed in MPI-STD-TVTL with negative results twice with a 4-7 day interval during the 30 days prior to the collection period; and
    iii. Have been protected against any possibility of contagion since the beginning of the tests; and
    iv. Have not been treated with antibiotics for at least 7 days before commencing the testing and throughout the sample collection period; or
b. have previously shown signs of CEM or have been in direct or indirect contact with CEM during the two months prior to collection; and
    i. Were treated for CEM; and
    ii. After treatment, were subjected to an effective method of testing* listed in MPI-STD-TVTL, with three swabs taken at 7-day intervals with negative results followed by testing of the first three mares mated or inseminated by the stallion with negative results; and
    iii. Have been protected against any possibility of contagion since the beginning of the tests. (*Swabbing sites are the prepuce, the urethral sinus and the fossa glandis (including its diverticulum))

Semen donors under the previous equine semen standards HORSEMIC.AUS, HORSEMIC.CAN, HORSEMIC.USA, and EQUISEMIC.EU were required to meet one of the following testing options:

1) During the breeding season in which the semen for export is collected, the donor stallion has been tested for *Taylorella equigenitalis* by swabbing and culture on two occasions, with a negative result for *Taylorella equigenitalis* in each case. The swabs must be taken at 5-7 day intervals. (N.B. The sites for swabbing are from the prepuce, the urethral sinus, and the fossa glandis (including its diverticulum).)
2) If testing occurred prior to the collection of semen for export, since the date of first swabbing for *Taylorella equigenitalis* testing until the time of collection for export, the donor stallion has not been naturally mated, except to mares of equivalent health status.

Frozen semen from donors tested for CEM under the old requirements is considered to provide equivalent risk management and is eligible for import.

The reason for this direction is that the biosecurity risks associated with this commodity have been assessed and are managed effectively.

This direction takes effect from the date of signing and continues in effect until amended or revoked.