

Saskatchewan Import Protocol for Fur Farm Animals

Introduction

The import and export of fur farm animals and their products is a shared responsibility between the Saskatchewan Ministries of Agriculture and Environment. In 2017 the *fur* farming requirements were updated resulting in *The Fur Farming Regulations, 2017¹* (Regulations) which clarifies the roles and responsibilities for export (Section 14). In regards to imports (Section 13), a joint import protocol is required to ensure protection of the environment and wildlife while still enabling commercial fur farms to improve and expand.

This import protocol is based on the most current information available and will be accessible on the Saskatchewan Government internet site. Because of the nature of diseases and parasites, the protocol may be changed at any time or a complete ban on the import of fur farm animal species may be imposed without notice.

For the above reason, producers are encouraged to contact the Livestock Branch of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture as below to check any requirements for import and obtain forms before purchasing animals or proceeding with import.

Animal Health Program Officer
Livestock Branch, Ministry of Agriculture
Room 202 - 3085 Albert St.
Regina, SK, Canada, S4S 0B1
Bus: 306-787-6469
Fax: 306-787-1315

Importation of Fur Farm Animals into Saskatchewan

Part A: General Criteria

- 1) An import permit application must be received by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture not less than 45 days prior to the proposed date of importation and prior to initiating any other procedures required under this protocol.
- 2) The application for an import permit is submitted to the Animal Health Program Officer, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, at the contact information set out above, and the permit is issued by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment as per Section 31 of *The Wildlife Act, 1998²*.

- 3) The requirements described here may be in addition to federal requirements for importing of fur farm animals from other countries.
- 4) The importer must have a valid Saskatchewan fur farm licence issued by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, and be in full compliance with legislation, fur farm licence policies, terms or conditions, and import permit terms or conditions.
- 5) The importer must have a suitable location in which the imported fur farm animals can be isolated for 30 days after importation. Isolation requirements include the following:
 - a. Imported fur farm animals must be separated from other fur farm animal housing by 12.2 metres (40 feet) as a minimum but shorter distances may be accepted by written approval of a game farm investigator (appointed as inspectors under *The Animal Products Act*);
 - b. Imported fur farm animals must be secured to prevent escapes (including a locked door);
 - c. Fur farm animal housing and animal welfare must meet the requirements for fur farm animal species as set out in the Regulations and detailed in references 4, 5 and 6 at the end of this Protocol (for current pen sizes please contact your game farm investigator);
 - d. The imported fur farm animal housing must be clearly identified as an isolation area using a sign that reads as follows: "Isolation area - no unauthorized contact"; and
 - e. The importer must have an established biosecurity protocol approved by the Ministry of Agriculture to prevent disease transfer from imported fur farm animals to other fur farm animals on the premises. The biosecurity protocol is to include the designated person(s) to care for the isolated animals including whether the person(s) will also look after resident fur farm animals, the measures to be taken to prevent cross contamination between isolated and resident fur farm animals including disinfection procedures, and method(s) of waste disposal.
- 6) Removal of the fur farm animals from isolation will be based on an inspection visit by the game farm investigator. With written permission from the game farm investigator the fur farm animals can be released from isolation.
- 7) Fur farm animals eligible for importation are only those listed below, unless approval by the minister has been given under section 9 of the Regulations to add another native species:
 - a. Bobcat having the scientific name *Lynx rufus*;
 - b. Coyote having the scientific name *Canis latrans*;
 - c. Fisher having the scientific name *Martes pennanti*;
 - d. Fox having the scientific name *Vulpes vulpes*;

- e. Lynx having the scientific name *Lynx canadensis*;
 - f. Mink having the scientific name *Neovision vison*;
 - g. Timber wolf having the scientific name *Canis lupus*; and
 - h. Wolverine having the scientific name *Gulo gulo*.
- 8) The exporter must be legally in possession of the fur farm animals in the jurisdiction in which the fur farm animals originate.
- 9) The fur farm animal (s) must be examined for general health and identification by a veterinarian licensed in the exporting jurisdiction at the exporter's premises, within the 30 days immediately prior to date of entry into Saskatchewan. Identification can be done by description of and photographs of natural markings if sufficiently unique; or as necessary, by microchip, tattoo, ear notch, ear tag, etc. using humane methods.
- 10) The following information and documentation is required prior to the issuance of an import permit:
- a. Genus and species of fur farm animals to be imported;
 - b. Numbers, ages, sex, and identification of each fur farm animal;
 - c. Veterinarian certificate (s) including confirmation of required treatments, test results or vaccinations as set out in Part B: Specific Criteria;
 - d. Separate signed statements, are required from the following persons associated with the fur farm of origin:
 - 1. Exporter of the fur farm animal;
 - 2. A licensed veterinarian familiar with the fur farm and its health history.

The statements required from the above must:

- verify that, to the best knowledge of the person signing, the animals on the fur farm are free from contagious or infectious diseases in general and from the specific concerns/conditions described within the "Saskatchewan Import Protocol for Fur Farm Animals";
 - confirm that the statement has been completed accurately, honestly, and without omission.
- 11) Information on the transporter must be provided including:
- Identity of the designated transporter of the animals including name, contact information, vehicle make, and licence plate number;
 - Information on expected time in transport; watering/feeding; and the size, construction and secure (i.e., locked) containment of transport cages that meet National Farm Animal Care Council's applicable Codes of Practice^{5,6} to ensure safe and humane transport of the fur farm animals;

12) The Importer will require the transporter to:

- Have Public Safety, Animal Care, and Escape Recovery plans/policies in place during transport;
- Use cage(s) that have been cleaned and disinfected prior to being used for transport of the fur farm animals;
- Keep the animals described on the import permit separate from other animals during transport to prevent exposure to diseases and parasites; and
- Meet National Farm Animal Care Council's applicable Codes of Practice^{5,6} and when shipped by air, the International Air Transport Association standards outlined in the federal *Air Transportation Regulations*.

13) On arrival at the importer's premises the Transporter must sign a statement verifying information regarding transport criteria as described in 12). The statement must be returned to the Animal Health Officer by the importer using the contact information set out at the start of this protocol.

14) When individuals are required to provide or verify information and/or treatments, Saskatchewan Government officials in charge of issuing permits can request any documentation the Ministry requires to ensure this Protocol is complied with prior to a permit being issued.

15) In the event of an escape, every effort should be made to capture the escaped fur farm animal and the full details must be reported to a Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment wildlife (conservation) officer by calling 1-800-667-7561 and a Ministry of Agriculture Game Farm Investigator by calling 306-961-0762.

16) The importer must immediately report to a Ministry of Agriculture Game Farm Investigator (306-961-0762) the death of any imported fur farm animal that dies within 30 days of import. The importer, upon the request of the investigator, must have an examination, and complete necropsy if requested, done by a licenced veterinarian or a veterinary diagnostic laboratory to determine cause of death (costs of necropsy will be the importer's responsibility).

17) Contravention of any of the terms or conditions of this protocol is a contravention of Section 13(3) of the Regulations.

18) Contravention of this protocol may result in the licensed fur farm operator not being issued import permits in the future and may result in suspension or cancelation of his/her fur farm licence.

19) Contravention of the issued permit is an offence under *The Wildlife Act, 1998*. This may result in prosecution, or an order to remove all imported fur farm animals or germplasm from the province, or forfeit to the Crown at the expense of the owner.

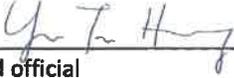
20) No right of compensation exists against the Government of Saskatchewan or its employees for any act done or any failure to act pursuant to this protocol.

Part B: Specific Criteria

- 1) The following is a list of diseases and parasites of concern to Saskatchewan and mitigation strategies required before an import permit will be issued:
 - a. For all fur farm animal species: Ectoparasites and Endoparasites
 - There are various endo- and ectoparasites in all regions that can affect fur farm animals. They can increase the stress on the animal during transportation and relocation. Some parasites can affect other animals in Saskatchewan and/or have public health implications. Examples are as follows:
 - Tapeworms such as *Taenia spp* (for example *T. krabbei*, *T. hydatigena*, and *T. multiceps* which can cause Coenuriasis in humans), *Echinococcus spp* (Echinococcosis in humans), and *Diphyllobothrium*; nematodes such as *Uncinaria stenocephala* (visceral larval migrans in humans); *Trichuris spp.*, *Physaloptera spp.*, and *Toxascaris leonina*; flukes such as *Alaria sp*⁷; and potential zoonoses such as *Capillaria aerophilia* (pulmonary Capillariasis in humans); *Diectophyma renale* (Diectophymiasis in humans); *Ancylostoma sps* (cutaneous larva migrans in humans); *Toxocara canis* (visceral larval migrans in humans); and various mites such as *Sarcoptes*, *Cheyletiella* (Acariasis in humans – usually transient)⁸.
 - To mitigate the risk of transmission of parasites, all fur far animal importers must either:
 - Obtain written confirmation from a licenced veterinarian that the premises of origin has a standard operating protocol that successfully prevents or treats infection of the parasites listed above; or
 - Provide record that treatment (s) effective against the parasites listed above have been given within 15 to 30 days prior to shipment and the animals managed to prevent reinfection until the animals are shipped.
 - b. As required by Ministry of Environment for all fur farm animal species: Rabies
 - A veterinary certificate or rabies certificate demonstrating the animal is current on its rabies vaccination is required as a condition of import.
 - c. For mink: Aleutian Disease (AD)⁹
 - The Ministry of Agriculture must be supplied with a certificate signed by a licensed, official or accredited veterinarian from the place of origin of the mink certifying that:

- The farm from which the mink originated routinely tests each year at least 10% of its breeding mink for AD and that there have been no cases of AD in the 12 months prior to importation; and
 - The mink to be imported were sampled for AD with negative results within 7 to 45 days prior to entry and the mink chosen for import were kept separate from other mink since tested for AD.
 - The owner and transporter must certify that the mink were not exposed to other mink or animals that could spread AD during shipment.
 - Upon entry into the province of Saskatchewan, all mink must be quarantined for at least 30 days at a site approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and only released by written approval from the Ministry after further blood testing by a Saskatchewan licensed veterinarian indicates that they are still free from AD.
 - Imported Mink are not to be killed, pelted or moved away from the quarantine site without the permission of the Ministry of Agriculture.
 - All cases of illness or death of imported mink on the importing fur farm that occur within 12 months of importation must be reported to the Ministry of Agriculture.
- d. For fox: Hereditary hyperplastic gingivitis¹⁰
- a. The Ministry of Agriculture must be supplied with signed statements from the fur farm of origin and the fur farm's veterinarian verifying the freedom of the fur farm from clinical signs of hereditary hyperplastic gingivitis in the last year. For Germplasm (embryos and semen):
 - a. Only Part A 1 to 4; 7; 8; and 11 to 16 apply to germplasm.
 - b. In addition to the above requirements, the following information and certification must be provided to the Ministry of Agriculture:
 - The name of the premises from which the semen and embryos were collected and certification that it is a facility that is approved by the CFIA and collected according to CFIA standards or an equivalent standard;
 - The identification of each of the donor fur farm animals;
 - A copy of the CFIA collection permit as applicable (if collected in Canada);
 - The number of vials or embryos proposed to be imported from each fur farm animal;
 - An export certificate provided by the exporter stating that the semen/embryo was collected from a fur farm animal of the species allowed in Saskatchewan; and
 - The name and location of the facility in Saskatchewan proposed to store the embryos and semen if different from the importer's farm.

Protocols for importing fur farm animals (live, germplasm) are not valid unless they have been signed by the ministers of both Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture or their authorized officials.

Signature: 
Minister or designated official
Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment

Date: 27/06/2019
DD/MM/YY

Signature: 
Minister or designated official
Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

Date: 09/07/19
DD/MM/YY

References:

- 1) *The Fur Farming Regulations, 2017* at <http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/freelaw/documents/English/Regulations/Regulations/A20-2R18.pdf>
- 2) *The Wildlife Act, 1988* at <http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/W13-12.pdf>
- 3) *Large Canid (Canidae) Care Manual, 2012: Association of Zoos and Aquariums* at <https://www.aza.org/assets/2332/large-canid-care-manual-2012r.pdf>
- 4) *Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation 4th edition, 2012*, published by the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council.
- 5) *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farmed Mink (2013)*, published by the National Farm Animal Care Council at <http://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/mink>.
- 6) *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farmed Fox (Vulpes vulpes) (2013)*, published by the National Farm Animal Care Council at <http://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/farmed-fox-code>.
- 7) Intestinal parasites of gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) in northern and western Canada: *Canadian Journal of Zoology*, 2016, 94(9): 643-650, at <https://doi.org/10.1139/cjz-2016-0017>
- 8) Overview of Zoonoses: Merck Veterinary Manual at <http://www.merckvetmanual.com/public-health/zoonoses/overview-of-zoonoses>
- 9) Import Regulations for Mink: Aleutian Disease at http://www.faa.gov.nl.ca/agrifoods/animals/health/pdf/ds_05_003.pdf
- 10) Hereditary hyperplastic gingivitis in North American farmed silver fox (*Vulpes vulpes*): *Canadian Veterinary Journal*, 2015, 56:408-411 at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4357916/>