Electronic Sanitary Certification for Animal Products: Opportunities and Challenges

WTO SPS Electronic Certification Advisory Committee (ECAC)

10 May 2023

Ellie Avery
Agro-Food Trade and Markets
Trade and Agriculture Directorate
Key issues

Why is SPS electronic certification growing faster for plant than for animal products?
What can be done to address this?
SPS e-certification has accelerated

- Many countries established time-limited SPS exceptions including acceptance of e-documentation during COVID (see Annex A of the paper)
- Exchange of e-Phytos have grown with the establishment of the e-Phyto solution

Since 2017, 3.7 million certificates have been exchanged in total
As of May 2023, 130 countries are connected to the ePhyto Hub, and 76 countries are exchanging more than 188 000 ePhyto certificates per month

Source: IPPC's www.aphytexchange.org
Certification process for animal products

1. Certificate is generated
2. Transmitted to importing authority
3. Quarantine / Border Control
4. Animal Health Authorities
5. Food Safety Authorities
## Differences between phyto- and sanitary-certification systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Products of animal origin</th>
<th>Products of plant origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two distinct authorities (veterinary/animal health and public health) regulate</td>
<td>A single plant protection authority (normally within the Ministry of Agriculture) regulates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pests/diseases of animals present risks to human health and safety</td>
<td>Plant pests may have significant implications for the human population but generally do not infect/cause disease in humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOAH and Codex have produced standard certificates for various commodities</td>
<td>There is one IPPC standard phyto certificate for export and one for re-export</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOAH lists 117 diseases/pests and specific measures to manage individual risks</td>
<td>IPPC defines regulated pests and recommends risk management measures generically</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International standards relevant to e-certification

- **IPPC**
  - IPPC ePhyto Solution (2018)

- **Codex Alimentarius Commission**
  - Revised guidelines on certification (CXG 38-2001) adopted in 2021 – Annex II

- **WOAH**
  - Will update Chapter 5.2 of the Terrestrial and Aquatic Codes to align with Codex
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Organisation</th>
<th>Sending e-sanitary certificates?</th>
<th>Receiving e-sanitary certificates?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Testing phase</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Testing phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>Testing phase</td>
<td>Testing phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Different channels exist to send e-certs

- Harmonisation: with SPS standards and also with standards for digital business and trade
- E-certification systems are based on data models
  - UN/CEFACT Reference Data Model ‘e-CERT’
  - World Customs Organization (WCO) Data Model
- Interoperability of UN/CEFACT and the WCO system/Single Window environment
Challenges for implementing e-sanitary certification

- Technology and infrastructure
- People and culture
- Coordination and cooperation (G-G, G-B, B-B)
- Legal framework enables the use of digital technology
- Long term financial support
- International standards
- Experience with trade – both government and business
Actions for national governments

- Consider adopting or increasing the use of e-sanitary certification
- Simply certification requirements - recognising equivalence
- Update national SPS legislation to allow the use of e-cert and promote cooperation between SPS Authorities
- Encourage greater private sector participation in the development of e-cert
- Exchange information and experience on e-cert with trading partners (i.e. OECD organized workshop Feb 2022)
- Contribute to studies analysing the trade impacts of e-cert
Actions for international and regional organisations

• Consider a pilot study to investigate the feasibility of using the ePhyto solution to exchange e-sanitary

• Continue efforts to raise awareness and promote sharing of information on experiences with e-sanitary

• Consider the development of more targeted mechanisms to promote education and awareness i.e. via detailed case studies and best practices

• ISSBs harmonise approaches to implement e-certification
Recently published research
Contact us

Access all of the OECD’s research and analysis on trade at:

www.oecd.org/trade
www.oecd.org/agriculture

You can reach us via e-mail by sending your message to:

tad.contact@oecd.org

We invite you to connect with us on Twitter by following:

@OECDtrade / @OECDagriculture