

**DECOL**

**DAERA EXPORT HEALTH CERTIFICATION ON LINE**

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**FREQUENTLY ASKED**

**QUESTIONS:**

**EXPORTING ANIMALS**

**AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS**

**FROM NORTHERN IRELAND**

**Exporters Frequently Asked Questions**

**General queries - Your Application**

* **How do I submit an Online Export Health Certificate (EHC) Application using DAERA Export Certification Online (DECOL)?**

You can find guidance on the information required to prepare an EHC application on the [DAERA Website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/exporting-animals-and-animal-products-northern-ireland).

For guidance on submitting your online Export Application, please read the [Export Application Process](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/decol-exporter-access-and-online-application-guide-may-2019.pdf).

* **I cannot find a relevant Export Health Certificate (EHC) form to accompany my application. What should I do?**

If you can’t find an EHC application for your specific consignment on the [Defra Form Finder](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-an-export-health-certificate), one may be available using the relevant commodity specific webpage on the [DAERA website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/exporting-animals-and-animal-products-northern-ireland).

If you still cannot locate an appropriate EHC, it is likely there is no EHC in place for the specific consignment - an export certificate for that trade will have to be negotiated.

To progress this you should contact the Trade team in Ballykelly via email at [TradeAdminPost@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:TradeAdminPost@daera-ni.gov.uk) who will be happy to help you.

Alternatively, you can submit detail of your request using the “No” route on DAERA’s online application system ([DECOL](https://selfservice.daera-ni.gov.uk/Daera/Forms/#/export)).

* **I wish to export an animal or animal product from Northern Ireland but Defra Form Finder tells me to email APHA in Carlisle to request an Export Health Certificate. What should I do?**

For some EHCs on Form Finder, the associated guidance may advise you to:

*‘Email all documents in Section A to LiveAnimalExports.Carlisle@apha.gov.uk. Send one email for each application.’*

Changes are being made to the Defra Form Finder webpages to provide specific guidance to exporters from GB and exporters from NI. This is a work in progress, targeting the most frequently used certificates first.

Until this work is complete, where a page instructs you to send to APHA in Carlisle, **please disregard this and apply using the Northern Ireland** [**DECOL**](https://selfservice.daera-ni.gov.uk/Daera/Forms/#/export) **process.**

* **I have made a mistake – can I correct it before my application is complete?**

In the event of an application containing incorrect information, **you should let us know as soon as possible** by contacting the relevant processing office. The processing office location can be found in your DECOL confirmation email. You can find contact details [on the DAERA Website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/contacts/daera-direct-regional-offices).

**Please note**: in certain circumstances we **may** require you to submit a new application using the YES flow. However, once the EHC has been issued by the certifying officer to the exporter, any further changes, such as a change of consignee after date of export and issue, will require the applicant to apply for a **replacement EHC via the Replacement Flow on the DECOL system.**

* **Can I see current or previous applications through the online system?**

At present, it is not possible to view applications currently underway but you can contact the [Processing Office](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/contacts/daera-direct-regional-offices) at any time to find out the status of your application.

Please remember to have your Application Reference Number (i.e. 19/3/xxxxxx) to hand when you contact us.

* **I have downloaded a pdf EHC from Form Finder but I can’t enter details of my consignment**.

Please ensure you open the downloaded pdf form with Internet Explorer or other suitable application, to enable editing and input of data.

You must use Adobe Reader to fill in your certificate application and any supporting forms if they are in PDF format (Adobe Reader is a program that allows you to read and edit a PDF).

You can [download the latest version of Adobe Reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader/?loc=uk) for free - it only takes a few minutes.

You should review the minimum system requirements available at the above link to ensure your equipment meets the software compatibility to allow full use of Adobe.

* **I have downloaded a pdf EHC from the DAERA website, rather than Defra Form Finder, should I upload this with my application?**

Yes. A pdf EHC is essential for processing your application you should upload pdf EHCs found using the DAERA website in the same way you would submit an EHC from Defra Form Finder. The guidance for submitting an application applies equally in such cases.

* **I have to enter the Date of Export when making my application – what date should I use?**

For DECOL applications, the Date of Export entered should be the date of dispatch from the premises in Northern Ireland.

* **Some supporting information / documentation is not available at the time of making my application - can I upload this at a later stage?**

In addition to your EHC, you should upload all the available supporting documentation and information essential for DAERA processing when you make your application.

However, we recognise that in certain circumstances, some key information and documentation will not be available.

Once you submit your application, an email confirmation will issue from DECOL.

This email includes a web link, through which you can upload documents essential for DAERA processing of the application. In addition, you can provide further information using a comment box.

**NOTE: the ability to provide us with further information using this facility expires on the date of export specified in your initial application.**

**Essential documents include:**

* pet and animal owner / exporter declarations;
* dairy exporter declarations.

Other production related information, such as lab reports, incoming veterinary health certificates, or traceability documentation may also be required.

Where available, these supporting documents should **always** be uploaded on initial application, or provided as soon as possible thereafter.

* **There is not enough space on the EHC application to record full details of my export – what can I do?**

On occasion, there may not be enough space to enter all the relevant details – for example, in the ‘Identification of Products’ section.

To assist, DAERA has developed template schedules on which you can record the consignment details.

When filling in your EHC you should insert “***see attached schedule***” at the relevant part of the EHC application.

A dairy specific template and a generic template for all other commodity groups are available. You can the templates, along with guidance on when and how to use them, on [DAERA’s website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/schedule-submitting-export-health-certificate-ehc-application).

If your application requires you to use a schedule, please download the relevant version from the DAERA Website. You should complete and upload it to DECOL along with your EHC pdf application.

* **The EHC application requests entry of the Identification Mark. What should I enter?**

In the cases where an Identification Mark is requested, please insert ‘UK’ and ‘Approval number’ and ‘EC’.

For example: **UK NI 111 M EC or UK 1234 EC**

**Please note:**  Identification Mark requirements will change from 31 October 2019 in the event of a No Deal EU Exit.

You can keep up to date on this on the [Food Standards Agency Website](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/brexit-changes-to-health-and-identification-marks).

* **How quickly will my application be processed, where the certificate is issued by an Authorised Veterinary Inspector (AVI)?**

We aim to process applications which will be certified by an Authorised Veterinary Inspector (AVI) within 3 days of receipt. Once complete, all export paperwork will be issued to your nominated AVI.

We will not begin processing your application until all required information is provided. You should visit the commodity page for your export to ensure your application contains all relevant information, before submission.

For other exports we aim to process your application in line with current timeframes.

* **What administrative checks are carried out on my application?**

We carry out basic administrative checks on your application, however, **it remains the responsibility of the exporter to ensure all details submitted are correct when making an application – this includes importer names and addresses, etc.**

DAERA checks are limited to confirming that the EHC title matches the commodity type and destination address. For example, where the destination address is Hong Kong, we will check to make sure the EHC is for the export of that commodity and is for Hong Kong.

We will also check that all required fields have been completed (where possible). For example, we understand that details such as the final weight of your consignment may not be available at the time of application - these will be completed when the product has been certified.

We will **not** check the spelling or accuracy of the information recorded.

It is the responsibility of the exporter to ensure that, when making an application, they submit the current version of the EHC template.

The current versions are always available on [Form Finder](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-an-export-health-certificate) or the [DAERA Website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/exporting-animals-and-animal-products-northern-ireland).

If we identify any issues following these checks, or require further information, we will contact you using the email address provided in your application, quoting your unique application reference number.

In certain circumstances, we may require you to complete a new application.

**YOU CAN AVOID DELAYS IN PROCESSING YOUR APPLICATION BY:**

* Always submitting the current version of the EHC application by using [Form Finder](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-an-export-health-certificate) or [DAERA Website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/exporting-animals-and-animal-products-northern-ireland);
* Completing **all** fillable fields in your EHC application, where possible;
* Submitting **all** supporting documentation **at the same time** as your EHC application, where possible;
* Entering ‘**To Follow**’ on the EHC application when information is **not** available at the time of application;
* Using the web link provided in your confirmation email to provide any **outstanding** supporting documentation / additional information;
* Checking that all details within the EHC application are correct including the spelling.
* **When should I submit my EHC application?**

You should submit your application as soon as you know it is happening. We require your application at least 3 working days in advance of the date of export.

* **Where can I find an Authorised Veterinary Inspector (AVI)?**

We plan to provide details on the DAERA website of all AVIs in the future. In the meantime, you should contact your local Vet to ascertain if they can act as your AVI. Alternatively you can contact your DAERA Direct Regional office for advice.

* **If the EHC is required to travel with the consignment and the weight is not known until day of dispatch can this be rectified?**

Final weight figures can be updated on the EHC by DAERA staff before final issue, usually on the day of export. **Limited changes** such as weight and name of product details will be made prior to issue. However, once the EHC is issued, any further changes will require the applicant to apply for a **replacement EHC via the DECOL system.**

* **What do we do in the event of changes to container/seal details/weight?**

You must notify DAERA, as soon as possible, using the contact details which will be provided in your application email confirmation. It is imperative that any changes are notified as early as possible to DAERA. For meat exports, seal numbers will be issued by DAERA on the day of export, and DAERA will update the EHC prior to issue.

However, once the EHC is issued, any further changes will require the applicant to apply for a **replacement EHC through** [**DECOL**](https://selfservice.daera-ni.gov.uk/Daera/Forms/#/export).

* **When applying in advance of the export we may not be able to attach a traceability certificate as the product may not been made yet.**

All available information should be provided on application to DECOL. If traceability information is not available at that time, it should be provided as soon as possible **before** exportation. Any delay in provision of this information may result in a delay in certification.

* **Who will be the Official Veterinarian (OV) for my export application?**

The OV for export applications will be a DAERA Veterinary Certifying Officer or your nominated AVI.

Where an AVI is certifying your EHC, please ensure you upload a completed [Nomination of Authorised Veterinary Inspector Form](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/nomination-authorised-veterinary-inspector-avi) at the time of online application.

* **If a change needs to be made to a certificate, who signs this off?**

The DAERA Veterinary Certifying Officer or the AVI. In some cases support staff (meat inspectors) are able to sign off changes to seal numbers on a certificate where a lorry is opened in transit to add further product or for inspection purposes.

* **Can more than one Export Certificate be requested?**

You should apply in advance for the EHCs that you reasonably expect to need.

* **What happens if an Export Certificate has been applied for but not used?**

If an application is made, and the consignment is not exported, you should notify us as soon as possible to allow **cancellation** of the certificate.

**Live animal and Pet Export Queries**

* **The Notes for guidance state I need an Owner / exporter declaration - where can I get one?**

A template and instructions on how to complete an owner / exporter declaration are available on the commodity specific pages, or accessed directly on the [DAERA Website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/owners-exporters-declaration-exports-northern-ireland).

If you need assistance in completing the declaration please contact [DAERA Direct Armagh](mailto:daeradirect.armagh@daera-ni.gov.uk) for pet exports or your local [DAERA Direct Regional Offices](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/contacts/daera-direct-regional-offices) for balai, zoo and exotic animals.

* **I am exporting my animal to a European Union Member State (EU MS) - do I use DECOL?**

No. At present, exports to EU MS are conducted via the EU TRACES system. Please visit the [DAERA export pages](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/exporting-animals-and-animal-products-northern-ireland) for guidance.

* **I am exporting cattle/sheep to Great Britain (GB). Should I use DECOL?**

No. Exports of cattle/sheep to GB will still be processed directly via your AVI on eAVI. Please contact your AVI to process such exports.

**Milk and milk product queries**

* **Are Dairy Supplementary Statements available in the Defra Form Finder?**

No. Dairy Supplementary Statements can only be found on the [DAERA Website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/milk-and-milk-product-exports).

* **The supplementary statement I have requested to accompany my EHC looks different, why is this?**

In an effort to reduce the burden on exporters, we have revised the format of previously available supplementary certificates to remove specific export details.

The new format allows for ease of association with the EHC. The EHC contains all the information that would have been recorded on the schedule.

You **must** use one of the six Dairy Supplementary statements available on the [DAERA Website](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/milk-and-milk-product-exports).

Please upload this with your Export Health Certificate (EHC) application - it will be DAERA stamped and issued along with your EHC.