

## **What can I do if there is no EHC available?**

You may have checked the database and found that there is no EHC (export health certificate) available for your product to go to the country you want to export to. All is not lost, as there are several options available to you – although it can be difficult and time consuming to find the correct option to pursue.

However, it is vital to ensure you have the correct information, in writing, before you ship, to avoid unnecessary delays/costs at the destination or even risk your shipment being destroyed.

The first step is to go to your importer/agent and ask them to contact the relevant authority to ask what documentation they require, and ideally request a specimen. This needs to come from an official body eg animal health department, customs, Government agency etc rather than from a freight forwarder or the importing agent.

There are a number of possibilities.

### **1. You do not require an EHC signed by an official veterinarian**

Particularly for low risk goods, they may accept manufacturer declarations or other assurances.

### **2. You require an export certificate from the local council environmental health officer**

EHOs can sign some documents in certain cases. There is normally no prescribed format or wording. We have found some councils are unable/unwilling to issue these.

### **3. The product is prohibited**

In certain cases, the product is simply banned eg beef to USA. In this situation, you simply cannot export to that country

### **4. An EHC is required but does not exist**

It may be that no one has tried to export before, so there has not been a need. Although there are over 1500 EHC's they do not cover every situation. We can request a new EHC be drafted but as this requires close liaison between DEFRA's policy team in London and the importing country's veterinary authorities to agree a wording and potentially carry out an inspection of premises, this can be a slow process.

It is helpful if the importing country can provide a draft wording of what they require, or if they have officially indicated they will accept the wording of an already established EHC. We often find that geographical regions have very similar worded EHCs so for example if you wanted to export dairy products to Barbados and they didn't have an EHC, but Jamaica, for example, did have one in use, then it may be possible for DEFRA to modify that EHC quite easily – but of course this requires the agreement of all parties.

**In summary – it may still be possible to export, but ensure you get correct information and allow plenty of time.**