



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA Briefing Note 21/26

Lamb consignments refused entry to the EU due to wool contamination

Date issued: 09 July 2026

Purpose

1. To inform Official Veterinarians (OVs) in Great Britain (GB) that consignments of lamb are being refused entry into the EU due to wool contamination, and to remind OVs of their certification responsibilities to help reduce further refusals.

Background

2. EU Border Control Posts (BCPs) have reported consignments of lamb carcasses being refused entry due to visible wool contamination. These consignments were accompanied by Export Health Certificates (EHCs) signed by OVs in Great Britain.
3. Such refusals can cause disruption to trade, including financial losses for exporters and additional administrative work related to returned consignments.
4. There is zero tolerance for visible wool contamination on carcasses intended for export to the EU. Certification should not be issued where compliance cannot be confidently verified
5. If entry is refused, consequences may include:
 - re-dispatch, reprocessing, or destruction of consignments
 - commercial losses for GB exporters
 - additional administrative and logistical burdens for certifying OVs and competent authorities
 - reduced trading partner confidence in OV certification

6. Maintaining high standards in certification is important to support continued market access for GB exports. OV's play a key role in ensuring that only compliant consignments are certified. Careful assessment and professional judgement will help to safeguard trade.

Actions

7. OV's are reminded that, when signing an EHC, they are certifying that the consignment meets the import requirements of the destination country. OV's must:
 - review inspection practices when certifying lamb consignments
 - ensure that carcasses are free from visible contamination, including wool, dirt, and faecal material
 - refuse certification where carcasses do not meet required standards

Further Information

- Any queries relating to this briefing note should be sent to: exports@apha.gov.uk
- CITC Telephone: 03000 200 301

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