



Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Foot and mouth disease cases in Germany – Information on import restrictions and arrangements

Situation

Following confirmation on 10th January 2025 by the German Chief Veterinary Officer of a detection of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in a herd of farmed water buffalo, Germany has now lost its FMD free status.

FMD is a highly contagious viral disease of cattle, sheep, pigs and other cloven-hoofed animals. It causes very significant economic losses, due to production losses in the affected animals and due to the loss of access to foreign markets for animals, meat and milk for affected countries. **FMD does not infect humans and does not pose a food safety risk.**

Defra are in contact with German counterparts and are working closely with the Devolved Governments to prevent an incursion from imported goods.

What is the impact on the import of live animals and meat products from Germany into Great Britain?

Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) has [suspended the import](#) of the following commodities to Great Britain from Germany, following an outbreak of FMD that was confirmed on 10 January 2025:

- live (including non-domestic) ungulates (ruminants and porcine animals, including wild game) and their germplasm
- fresh meat from ungulates
- meat products from ungulates that have not been subject to specific treatment D1 or higher (including wild game)
- milk, colostrum and their products, unless subjected to treatment as defined in Article 4 of Regulation 2010/605
- animal by-products, unless treated to effectively mitigate the risk of FMD

These restrictions are set out in the relevant lists published here: [EU and EFTA countries approved to export animals and animal products to Great Britain](#).

Common questions and answers

These are the most common questions we've received from importing businesses and agents. We will update this list regularly.

- **Are consignments accompanied by EHCs that were signed before or on the day of the confirmation of the outbreak (10th January) in Germany still allowed into GB?**

Currently all consignments containing POAO covered by the Foot and Mouth restrictions are being detained.

- **What animals are included / are considered FMD susceptible?**

Live (including non-domestic) ungulates (ruminants and porcine, including wild game) and their germplasm.

- **Are restrictions only on fresh meat that is not processed?**

The restrictions have been placed on all fresh meat, live animals and processed meat that does not meet the processing requirements.

- **Are there restrictions on meat that has been processed? What's the definition of processed?**

Meat products from ungulates that have not been subject to specific treatment D1 or higher milk, colostrum and their products unless subjected to treatment (as per column C).

- **Is it only meat from the Bavarian region that is affected?**

The loss of disease freedom covers the whole of Germany and therefore the restrictions apply to the country as a whole.

- **What do we do about meat that's already on the shelves?**

These products do not need to be removed.

- **Can products that have been restricted and held at the border be returned to Germany?**

Yes, goods that have been held at the border as a consequence of the outbreak of FMD in Germany can be returned to Germany on a voluntary basis subject to agreement by the veterinary authorities in the EU.

- **What are the rules around transits of EU/ROW commodities through Germany to GB?**

If the import conditions set out in the EHC allow it then it will be possible for the goods to transit Germany and be imported into GB. However, any EU required transit certification must also allow such a movement.

- **Do the restrictions resulting from FMD outbreak in Germany affect only medium and higher risk categories for POAO, or are products currently categorised as low risk affected too?**

The restrictions have been placed on all products irrespective of the risk profile that are covered by the published guidance. The risk profiles won't be changed as a result of this outbreak.

Where the low risk product needs to be treated to a certain level to conform to the requirements as set out in the Foot and Mouth notice, evidence of this treatment must be provided.

- **Can German Official Veterinarians still sign Export Health Certificates (EHCs) to import SPS products to GB?**

Germany has now lost its FMD-free status. As such, GB EHCs for export of products of animal origin from FMD-susceptible animals (including pigs) from Germany can no longer be certified.

- **Is meat or product from pigs or any other FMD-susceptible species sourced outside of Germany but slaughtered in Germany under this restriction?**

Regardless of the origin of the pigs, the export would be from Germany and as such would require an EHC signed by an OV in Germany. As a consequence of Germany losing FMD freedom this certificate could no longer be signed.

- **What about consignments with EHCs already signed?**

EHCs already signed were done so in good faith before the presence of FMD in Germany was confirmed. However, this product currently is risky because the investigations in Germany relating to the emergence of disease and possible distribution is not complete. Where possible we have asked for these consignments to be held at BCPs for now.

We urge traders not to put this product into the GB supply chain – much of it will be safe but for that which originated close to the outbreak in a timeframe where FMD infection or contamination is possible we will want to trace it and remove it.

- **What about mixed loads?**

Non- Foot and Mouth impacted consignments

Where a vehicle or trailer contains multiple consignments, and one or more of

those consignments have been detained, it is permitted to release those consignments that have not been detained.

Foot and Mouth impacted consignments

Where a vehicle or a trailer has been detained at a BCP containing German origin animal origin products subject to Foot and Mouth restrictions and otherwise compliant non-German origin animal origin products, it is permitted to split the load and sometimes the consignment and release the non-German origin animal origin consignments in certain circumstances. These circumstances include:

- Where fresh meat consignments are wrapped and packaged in such a way as to minimise the likelihood of cross contamination. For example, where the POAO is sealed and in end consumer packaging or when boxed and there is no evidence of cross contamination between the boxes.
- Where the frozen consignments are well packaged in boxes and the meat within is not in direct contact with the German origin POAO.
- Splitting of the consignment is not possible where the POAO subject to Foot and Mouth restrictions is in direct contact or close non barrier contact with the non-impacted consignment, Or, where splitting the consignments would result in direct contact or the potential for direct or very close non barrier contact. For example, where there are hanging carcasses within a vehicle trailer of mixed origin all the carcasses in the consignments (and all consignments in the load) would be detained.
- Given the range of circumstances in which goods can be presented to the BCP, BCP inspectors should apply professional judgement when deciding if there is a strong likelihood of cross contamination within a consignment, before rejecting non-German POAO products.

Useful links:

[Press notice on gov.uk](#)

[Topical Issues – Guidance for imports on gov.uk](#)

[Preliminary outbreak assessment](#)

[Guidance for imports of non-harmonised Animal by-products](#)

[Guidance for imports of Research & diagnostic samples \(ABP\)](#)