1. The importation of animals into a herd/flock is a personal decision of the purchaser which carries a financial risk for them in the event of animals testing positive for an exotic disease. It is critically important that the purchaser of imported animals ensures that:
   1. All required pre-movement tests and treatments (including vaccinations) have been carried out in accordance with EU Regulations.
   2. A valid Intra-EU Health Certificate accompanies the consignment en route to Ireland and the animals are delivered to the place of destination indicated in this document.
   3. Local Regional Veterinary Office is contacted in advance in order that post-import checks can be carried out without delay.
   4. Post-import isolation recommendations are implemented.

2. Should imported animals test positive for an exotic disease DAFM may introduce control/eradication measures such as:
   - slaughter or destruction of animals
   - official quarantine
3. The risks involved with regard to the introduction of an exotic disease through animal importation into Ireland are personal risks to be borne by the purchaser.
4. If DAFM decides to offer some assistance, it will take into account risk mitigation measures taken by the purchaser.

The purchaser may incur a financial loss in the event of imported animals testing positive for an exotic disease. The decision of DAFM to offer assistance to the purchaser is discretionary.

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- Seek advice on import requirements by contacting your local Regional Veterinary Office.
- Ask questions with regard to the provenance and health status of the animals prior to purchase.
- Obtain written evidence of the pedigree status if relevant and any health measures that the vendor claims to have taken.
- Check that the vendor has consulted the competent authority in their country regarding export requirements.
- Check own on-farm isolation facilities before purchase.
- Ensure necessary or recommended pre-purchase tests and exams are carried out and results received before animals are moved from vendor’s holding.
- Isolate animals upon arrival for a minimum of 4 weeks.
- Implement biosecurity measures on farm to minimise potential disease spread from imported livestock to other animals.
- Inform local RVO upon arrival of animals to organise post-import tests.
- Observe animals closely for any signs of disease and seek veterinary attention where required.

7. Assess the financial risk:...
8. Summary checklist:.......

- Exercise caution

The purchaser may incur a financial loss in the event of imported animals testing positive for an exotic disease. The decision of DAFM to offer assistance to the purchaser is discretionary.

An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

BIOSECURITY ADVICE FOR FARMERS IMPORTING LIVESTOCK

Prevent disease entry into your herd or flock

If you suspect the presence of an exotic disease on your holding contact your PVP or local Regional Veterinary Office without delay.

Inside normal office hours contact your local Regional Veterinary Office by phone (details can be found at http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/contact) or lo call 0761 064 400. Alternatively ring DAFM HQ (01) 607 2000.

Outside normal office hours ring the national disease emergency hotline number 1850 200 456.
1. **Don’t make quick decisions.....**

**THE IMPORTATION OF LIVESTOCK CARRIES THE GREATEST RISK FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF EXOTIC DISEASE INTO IRELAND**

Animals can carry diseases without exhibiting any clinical signs, so it is essential to plan your purchase carefully to avoid importing disease:

1. **Is the import necessary?** Can the required genetic gain or breed be sourced locally or obtained through more biosecure means e.g. artificial insemination?
2. **How many animals do you intend to buy?** Plan to purchase as few animals as is necessary in order to keep disease risks to a minimum.
3. **Do you intend to purchase pregnant animals?** Pregnant animals are a higher risk as diseases such as Bluetongue, Johne’s disease and BVD can be transmitted to the foetus.
4. **Are the animals that you intend to purchase isolated from other livestock?** e.g. vaccination records from their PVP.
5. **Can the vendor provide any additional guarantees for the animals?** e.g. pregnancy examination results
6. **Has the vendor consulted with their local competent authority regarding health certification requirements for export?**

**CONSULT YOUR LOCAL REGIONAL VETERINARY OFFICE FOR ADVICE CONCERNING IMPORT RECOMMENDATIONS PRIOR TO THE PURCHASE OF ANIMALS. PLEASE NOTE THERE ARE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS TO THOSE DESCRIBED IN THIS DOCUMENT FOR LIVESTOCK IMPORTS FROM OUTSIDE THE EU, WHERE PERMITTED.**

2. **Before you confirm...**

**INCREASED FREQUENCY OF ANIMAL MOVEMENTS RESULTS IN INCREASED RISK OF ANIMAL DISEASE SPREAD**

Ask questions about the origin of the animals and any disease precautions that the vendor may take such as:

1. Were the animals bred on the vendor’s farm or did they source the animals from elsewhere?
2. Does the vendor operate an accredited herd health programme?
3. Is there any recent history of disease on the farm and can the vendor provide evidence of any health measures that are applied on their holding? e.g. vaccination records from their PVP.
4. Can the vendor provide any additional guarantees for the animals? e.g. pregnancy examination results
5. Are the animals that you intend to purchase isolated from other animals on the farm? e.g. animals returning from shows.
6. Has the vendor consulted with their local competent authority regarding health certification requirements for export?
7. Have you checked in consultation with your local RVO and PVP what pre-purchase tests and examinations are recommended? e.g. PCR (polymerase chain reaction) blood test for Bluetongue.

**ALL ANIMALS IMPORTED INTO IRELAND FROM OTHER EU MEMBER STATES MUST BE ACCOMPANYED BY A VALID INTRA EU HEALTH CERTIFICATE**

3. **During transport.....**

**MINIMISE STRESS**

1. All livestock transporters and their vehicles must comply with the requirements of Council Regulation (EC) No.1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.
2. Consult with the transporter about the planned route as it may involve the requirement for additional treatments prior to or during transport e.g. insecticide treatment of the vehicle.
3. Information on the transport of animals can be found in the animal health and welfare section of the DAFM website at http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/animaltransport.

4. **Upon arrival.......**

**ISOLATE IMPORTED ANIMALS**

1. Unload livestock directly into the area reserved for isolation.
2. House all imported animals upon arrival for 4 weeks in isolation from other animals. This helps to minimise vector borne disease spread e.g. Bluetongue.
3. Ensure that animal welfare requirements are met at all stages.
4. Do not allow isolated animals to share airspace or drinking water with other livestock.
5. Wear protective clothing when working with isolated livestock and change clothing and disinfect footwear before moving to other areas of the farm.
6. Plan your working day to work with isolated animals after other livestock.
7. Equipment that is used for isolated animals should not be moved or used on other areas of the farm.
8. Feed, bedding and slurry from isolated animals should not come into contact with other livestock.

**NOTIFY YOUR LOCAL REGIONAL VETERINARY OFFICE IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL AS POST IMPORT TESTS SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT WITHOUT DELAY**

5. **Disease control measures.........**

**POST IMPORT TESTS**

The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) may carry out animal identity checks post importation and certain risk based tests to help prevent the introduction of an exotic disease or as part of a disease control programme. For example, all ruminants originating from or travelling through a Bluetongue restricted zone will be tested for Bluetongue virus as soon as possible upon arrival into Ireland. Imported livestock should be closely observed for any clinical changes or illness and veterinary attention should be sought in any such cases.