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Technical Requirements for Imported Bovine Semen

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SP2 - Prevent or Resolve Barriers to Trade that Hinder U.S. Food and Agricultural Exports
FAIRS Subject Report
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Report Highlights:
This report contains an unofficial translation of Morocco's "Code of Procedures" for imported bovine semen. According to industry professionals, Morocco's technical requirements for imported semen unfairly disadvantage imported bovine semen and specifically the United States. In particular, industry has identified that (1) imported semen technical requirements are more rigorous than imported live cattle and domestic semen requirements, (2) a multiple top-100 requirement for dairy disadvantages the United States vis-à-vis countries with smaller cattle populations, and (3) conformity standards unjustifiably restrict the technical process of sorted semen. At its current herd size, Morocco is considered to be a $35 million market for bovine semen, while imports currently represent less than $2 million, with the United States only the fourth largest foreign supplier.

Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries Direction

No. 51 DDFP Rabat, February 6, 2013

CODE OF PROCEDURE FOR THE IMPORTATION OF FROZEN SEMEN OF PURE BREED BOVINE

February 2013

Preamble

Artificial insemination is one of the basic tools recommended for improving the genetic potential of the herd.

With the start of the Green Morocco Plan (PMV), artificial insemination has undergone a remarkable development in view of the demand of breeders for the increase of animal production (milk and meat) in accordance with the objectives set by the program contracts concluded between the Government and your professional organizations of the milk and red meat sectors. These objectives target production of 5 billion liters of milk and 500 thousand tons of red meat by 2020. As such, artificial insemination has been used as a fundamental tool to improve productivity to achieve these objectives.

The boom in bovine herd insemination, formerly limited to the milk sector, and its expansion into the red meat sector has led to increased demand for imported high quality frozen semen of imported origin in addition to domestic production.

Therefore, it is necessary to proceed with the revision of the procedure code number 2566DE / DPA / SAG of April 27, 1999 for the import of frozen semen.

This revision is dictated by the following considerations:

- Need to preserve the national genetic potential and to guide the choice of exploited breeds in Morocco in accordance with the fixed production objectives
- Update the zootechnical and genetic standards of semen-producing bulls in regards of the enormous progress recorded in this field
- Offer breeders semen of qualities required to improve the level of genetic potential of their livestock
- Injecting on the national cattle herd semen of high genetic value obtained according to the new technology in terms of genetic evaluation of breeding animals (genomic evaluation) and whose effects will be significantly positive on the productivity improvement of the cattle herd as a whole
- Revision of semen import conditions by private operators for better monitoring and semen traceability
- Copy of the commercial register or the status of the company
- A request for semen import
- Provisional list of breeders or associations or cooperatives benefiting from the said semen. The final list of beneficiaries must be sent to the Production Development Department by e-mail (email: DDFP09@gmail.com) or by fax: fax 05 37 69 00 15) at the end of the sale of semen lots.

II- IMPORT STANDARDS FOR FROZEN SEMEN

A- ZOOTECHNICAL STANDARDS

1- FROZEN SEMEN OF DAIRY BREEDS CATTLE:

Frozen semen from cattle breeders must meet the conditions and standards set out below:

1. Breeds: Semen must come from breeding cattle belonging to pure breeds with colored hides: Black-Pied, Red-Pied, Spotted, Brown, Tan, and Gray breeds (such as black or red Holstein-Friesian or Holstein breeds or Red-Pied breeds or Brune, Jersey, Tarentaise, Norman)

Other dairy breeds may be introduced on a trial basis with prior authorization issued by the Production Line Development Department.

2- Qualification of semen-producing bulls:

The semen-producing bulls must be:

a- Registered in the herd-books of the breed in question and issued by parents and grandparents of the pedigree, certified by pedigree issued by the competent authority of the country of origin.
b- Officially tested for progeny for dairy genetic value or genomic evaluation for milk, fat and useful matter, and for conformation and functional traits with definitive positive index, for all aforementioned characters.
c- The bulls producing the semen must be classified among the TOP 100 according to the ranking of the inter-bull in the country of origin for milk and the useful materials (fat and/or protein) and an index of improvement for the characteristics of morphology (balance) and milk yield (fertility, ease of calving, milking speed). Their genetic evaluations must be published for the current year, on the catalog of bulls, edited by the competent authority of the country of origin and indicated on the pedigree of each semen-producing bull.

The father and mother of the semen-producing bull must have genetic evaluations with definitive positive indexes for the quantities of milk and fat and/or useful material.

Zootechnical documents to be produced during the import of semen are:

- Copy of the pedigree of the bull producing the semen
- Copy of the current year index catalog of the bull producing the semen, or a certificate issued by the artificial insemination center or the bulls are subject to genetic testing and/or genomic selection.
- Certificate of descent by blood group issued by the competent authority of the country of origin.
- Spermogram certificate issued by semen producing centers attesting to the biological quality of said semen.
- Certificate certifying that the bulls producing the semen are free from genetic defects: CVM, Blad, Bulldog, Mule-foot.

2- FROZEN SEMEN OF CATTLE OF MEAT BREEDS:

Frozen semen from bovine breeders of meat or mixed breeds must come from artificial insemination centers leading breeding programs in question duly approved by the competent authorities of the country of origin, and must meet the conditions and standards defined below:

1.1 Breeds: Frozen semen accepted for import with suspension of customs duties and taxes are exclusively White, Light Brown, Dark Brown, Tan, Spotted, Black, and Gray breeds (eg Brangus, Belgian Blue White, Angus, Herford, Santa Gertrudis, Charolais, Piedmontese, Limousin, Blonde d'Aquitaine, Aubrac, Gascon, Salers, Brahman ...).

Other meat breeds may be introduced on a trial basis provided that they are authorized in advance by the Directorate for the Development of Production Lines.

The semen-producing bulls must be:

a- Enrolled in the herd-books of the breed in question and issued by parents and grandparents registered in the pedigree books of the breed in question, certified by pedigree issued by the competent authorities of the country of origin
b- Parents and grandparents must be officially qualified as at least an improver or qualified breeder.

The qualifications must appear on the pedigree of each animal according to the results published by the authorized body of the country of origin.

c- The semen-producing bulls must be tested and come from a qualified father indexed on beef qualities and breeding qualities with a positive index for the following traits: ease of calving, muscle development; according to the system in force in the country of origin. The qualifications must appear on the pedigree of each animal according to the results published in the official catalogs of the current year, by the authorized body of the country of origin.
d- Issued from a mother who has undergone a qualification and has been selected as a "bull mother" in the selection scheme, and who has a qualification of at least improver or breeder.

The qualifications must appear on the pedigree of each animal according to the results published by the competent authority of the country of origin.

The zootechnical documents to produce when importing frozen semen are:

- The pedigree of the bull producing the semen and/or a copy of the certificate of qualification of the bull producing semen
- A certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of origin certifying that bulls producing imported semen are included in the breed program in question (breeding scheme) and are subject to genetic evaluation according to the system in force in country of origin.
- Certificate of descent by blood group issued by the competent authority of the country of origin
- Spermogram certificate issued by the semen-producing center certifying the biological quality of the semen.
- Certificate certifying that the bulls producing the semen are free from genetic defects: CVM, Blad, Bulldog, Mule-foot, etc.

B- THE SANITARY CLAUSES

Frozen semen of the bovine breeds to be imported must meet the sanitary conditions defined by the National Office for Food Safety (ONSSA).

Importers must, for this purpose, obtain information from this body before any importation of semen, conditions, and sanitary provisions in force by semen country of origin.

C- PACKAGING AND CONDITIONING

The packaging and conditioning of frozen semen doses must meet all the requirements required to preserve the biological quality of semen:

1- The semen doses must be packaged in so-called medium straws (0.5 ml) or small straws (0.25 ml)

2- The straws containing the frozen semen must be identified in a clear and indelible way allowing easy reading according to the standards of the international identification, which provide among other things:

o Name and reference of the bull producing the semen (identification number and breed)
o Number of ejaculation and year of semen collection
o Code of the artificial insemination center or station producing the semen

3- The straws must be stored in metal containers or tanks, sealed, immersed and stored in liquid nitrogen at a temperature of -196 degrees Celsius until their final delivery.

4- In metal containers or tanks, straws should be divided by bull or parent of origin.

II- CONTROL OF ZOOTECHNICAL CONFORMITY

Frozen semen of imported purebred breeding cattle must undergo zootechnical conformity control in one of the Regional Artificial Insemination Centers (CRIA) of Fouarrat or Ain Jemaa.

At each consignment of frozen semen lots of imported purebred breeding cattle, the Regional Directorate of ONSSA, (Control and Quality Department (DCQ), informs by the fastest channels, the Directorate of Development of Production Lines and the Regional Directorate of Agriculture, where the reception and conformity control of imported frozen semen will take place namely: the Regional Direction of Agriculture in Casablanca for CRIA Ain Jemaa-Casablanca and the Regional Direction of the Agriculture of Gharb Cherrarda Bni Hsen for CRIA Fouarat-Kenitra, stating:

• Country of origin,
• Place, date and time of landing,
• The transport means used (plane, truck...) and its identification (flight number, registration number ...)
• The number of doses imported.

Reception and zootechnical conformity control

A commission appointed by the Regional Directorate of Agriculture to which CRIA is responsible for the quarantine of semen is composed of a zootechnician engineer from the DRA of the area where the CRIA concerned is located, of the head of the semen production laboratory, and the head of CRIA or his representative, will proceed:

- Checking the tightness of the containers and checking the seal;

- Examination of accompanying zootechnical documents in accordance with the zootechnical standards prescribed in this Code of Procedure;
- The physical count of doses received and the comparison with the declared count.

A biological quality control of the semen should be done by CRIA on a sample taken by bull and by ejaculation.

IV - NOTICE OF CONFORMITY ZOOTECHNIQUE

At the end of the zootechnical conformity check, the commission referred to above, shall draw up a statement in accordance with the model annexed hereto; this report must be countersigned by the head of CRIA where the zootechnical conformity check of imported frozen semen lots takes place, and transmitted to the Department of Development of Production Sectors (DDFP) the same day by the fastest channels;

On the basis of the conclusions of the Commission for the Control of Zootechnical Conformity meetings of frozen semen lots of imported purebred breeding cattle, the Regional Director of Agriculture concerned issues the "certificate of zootechnical conformity" (model annexed) which will be forwarded to the veterinary service of the border inspection post at the place of landing, to issue the quarantine clearance following the fulfillment of the sanitary conditions required by ONSSA; a copy of the certificate of zootechnical conformity is to be sent to the Department of Development of Production Lines.

It should be noted that frozen semen lots of imported purebred breeding cattle would remain in bond until completion of customs clearance formalities.

Semen lots of imported purebred breeding cattle that do not meet the zootechnical standards defined by this Code of Procedure are considered "not in conformity" with the regulatory zootechnical standards and will be destroyed on the spot by a designated commission for this purpose in the presence of Veterinarian Inspector of the Semen Landing Border Station. A report will be drawn up by the said commission, a copy of which will be sent to the customs services of the landing station.

This Code of Procedure for the Importation of Frozen Semen of Pure-Breed Cattle cancels and replaces the Procedural Code n. 2566 DE / DPA / SAG of 27/04/1999 ... /