

SENDING SAFE AID WITHOUT HARMFUL PESTS AND DISEASES

FACTSHEET 04

For agencies and development partners sending meat and animal products

Please help us to safeguard our vulnerable environment and communities by ensuring that any humanitarian aid that is sent does not inadvertently introduce harmful pests and diseases

Why is this important to us?

The movement of food and other humanitarian aid is a known pathway for the introduction of harmful pests and diseases. Unless appropriate and timely risk management is applied, these new pests and diseases may become established and continue to cause long-term damage to our economy, environment and communities long after we have recovered from the emergency situation.

The introduction of new pests and diseases can affect the quality and yield of agricultural produce which can jeopardise food security. Pest introductions can also damage the sanitary and phytosanitary status of a country, making it more difficult to trade with other countries and build back the economy.

During crisis situations, we are temporarily constrained in our ability to implement our normal sanitary activities on donated goods at the border. This is because our treatment and processing infrastructure may be damaged or inaccessible; water, electricity and other services may be cut and staff may be unable to travel to work or may be diverted to emergency tasks. Additionally, other government agencies and officials frequently require the immediate release goods to people in need without going through our normal process.

To ensure that our staff can focus effort on other priority activities such as food and shelter distribution, please help us by taking steps to mitigate the disease risk of donated goods **prior to export**. For meat products this may include sourcing product from disease free areas.

Quarantine considerations for meat and animal products

Meat and animal products can carry a range of diseases which can be spread to humans and animals if the infected products come into contact with a host in the new country. Feral and wild animals can also spread disease further and make management impossible if the new disease spreads into the wider environment.

There are a number of high-risk quarantine/notifiable diseases that can cause death of stock and humans and are of particular concern because they are easily spread, posing a higher risk of widespread outbreak. The introduction of any of these exotic diseases into a new country may destroy entire animal industries and endanger the food security of people relying on those animals for their livelihoods.

As a general rule, live animals, fresh meat and animal products pose the highest risk of harbouring and spreading animal diseases and zoonoses (animal diseases that also infect humans). Meat and animal products can often be made safer through processing (drying, cooking, curing) and appropriate packaging. It is also vital that meat and meat products are sourced from animals in countries free of major diseases of that animal type.

What can you do to help us?

Before sending any meat or animal products, please work with your department of agriculture or relevant quarantine authority to ensure that:

- The goods are permitted into the country receiving aid.
- Any import and health requirements of the receiving country are met.
- The appropriate documentation and clearances are sent with the aid shipment.

The above processes are performed by your department of agriculture or relevant quarantine authority as part of normal trade/export practices, please contact them if you have any queries on what to do.

Please consider sending only processed and packaged meat products from countries free of major animal diseases. As well as decreasing the disease risk, people affected by disaster may have limited access to cool storage and freezing facilities so may not be able to make full use of fresh meat products.

IMPORTANT! Some animal diseases can remain viable after slaughter, and cannot be fully destroyed by processing (e.g. African Swine Fever). If there are major animal diseases present in your country, please do not donate meat of animal species affected by those diseases.



For example, if your country has:

African Swine Fever (ASF)...	DO NOT SEND	Pork or pork products
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)...	DO NOT SEND	Beef or beef products
Classical Swine Fever (CSF)...	DO NOT SEND	Pork or pork products
Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)...	DO NOT SEND	Meat or meat products of cloven-hoofed animals, including cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats, deer and pigs

To help us mitigate the disease risk prior to export we suggest that:

- Whenever possible, consider sending processed, canned and/or dried meats and animal products (e.g. milk powder rather than fresh milk and canned tuna rather than fresh meat). These products are lower risk compared to fresh, frozen and vacuum-packed products and they are easier to store and distribute.
- The meat and animal products are sourced from a country that is free of major animal diseases relevant for the product being sent. If quarantine/notifiable diseases are present in your country, consider sending another product type or another form of aid e.g. medical supplies or water.
- Meat and animal products are sourced from producers implementing relevant standards for food safety and that relevant certifications and attestations are provided with the consignment.
- Wherever possible, meat and animal products are only sourced from authorised and approved establishments along the chain (e.g. authorised and audited slaughterhouses, meat processing plants, packing plants etc.).
- Consideration be given to the clear labelling of meat and animal products (including eggs and milk) including country of origin and animal disease status. For example: "DEEP FROZEN PORK MEAT FROM ASF-FREE COUNTRY"; "CANNED BEEF FROM FMD-FREE COUNTRY."

To ensure that the products sent are of greatest help, where possible please re-consider sending:

- Live animals, fresh meat, fresh eggs, fresh milk.
- Vacuum-packed meat or meat products.
- Entire (whole) frozen carcasses without ensuring they can be processed promptly at arrival.
- Products that require immediate processing or sustained cool storage.
- Any products about to reach their best-before date.

If packaging or packing is used, it should be new, clean and free of pests and other contaminants. Any freight containers that are used for storage or transport should also be cleaned and pest free (see [IPPC best practice guide on measures to minimise pest contamination](https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/89786/) for more information)¹.

¹ International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) recommendation on the safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/89786/>.



Canned, dried and otherwise preserved or processed meat products pose lower risk of transmitting animal diseases (Shutterstock).