

## Germplasm Gazette February 2026: Issue number 12

### News on trade in ruminant reproductive material.

#### ReproHub Update

##### Staff movements.

After more than 10 years working in live animal export **Amandeep Walia** has moved to work at the Post Entry Quarantine facility. Amandeep played an integral role in establishing the Repro Hub in 2014 and has been the lead auditor for repro audits since then. This has included attending many importing country audits and responding to technical questions from trading partners. We would like to acknowledge and thank Amandeep for her contribution to the Repro Hub over an extended period.

**Janice Lau** will be taking on an auditor role in the Repro Hub. Janice has been with the Melbourne team in since 2023 where she has gained experience in export of multiple commodities. Janice has recently been training in repro audits with support from Amandeep and Zhi Tan. Going forward most audits within Victoria will be conducted by Zhi Tan or Janice Lau. Audits in other states are generally conducted by local staff with support from the Repro Hub.

**Raven Ma** is currently acting in the Team Leader role and managing repro export NOIs and inspections for imports and exports. Raven moved to the team after working in the Travellers pathway at Melbourne Airport. She has a Masters in Agricultural Science (Major in Animal Science) providing useful technical skills in her current role. Recently she has been working closely with the TRACE team and the Export Services team on linking new user accounts to TRACE.

**Marlon Ackerman** is a new Biosecurity Officer in the team. Marlon is currently training in other commodities and will move on to repro in the future.

##### Operations

New agreed certificate **small ruminant semen & embryos to the USA**. Testing is now required for Akabane and Aino viruses as the USA does not consider the bluetongue transmission free zone to adequately apply to these diseases.

**EU certificate** templates were published in November 2025 for germplasm from all ruminant species.

Dispensation from **Republic of South Africa** was obtained for alternative testing options for Johnes vaccinated sheep. This applies to a specific consignment/import permit and would need to be requested for future consignments.



## Horse, Livestock and Bird Imports team update

The team is delighted to welcome **Dr Emma McGrath** back in February 2026 following her maternity leave. Emma has a strong background in reproductive material imports and is well-known to many of our regular importers. Her expertise and experience will be invaluable as she re-joins the team.

In the second half of 2025, **lumpy skin disease (LSD)** outbreaks were reported across Europe, including Italy, France, and Spain, and prompting Switzerland to commence vaccinating for LSD. The department updated import conditions and permits for bovine semen and embryos from these countries with restriction dates for affected material to manage the associated biosecurity risk.

The team published updated import conditions for **bovine semen and in vitro embryos from Canada**, following extended negotiations with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The veterinary certificates for bovine semen and in vitro embryos from Canada have been amended to include updated seasonal freedom dates for Bluetongue virus (BTV) and Epizootic haemorrhagic disease of deer (EHD). These options were amendments of, and in addition to, existing seasonal freedom and testing methods for BTV and EHD. Conditions relating to storage requirements for bovine embryos have also been amended.

There was continued interest in and growing success for **Norfolk Island's ruminant artificial breeding programs**. The team was excited to hear that calves and lambs were born on the island following successful artificial breeding programs using Australian bovine and ovine genetics moved to Norfolk from the mainland.

In December 2025 **the import conditions for bovine reproductive material to Norfolk Island** were updated to include alternative Q fever (*Coxiella burnetii*) testing protocols and the option to import in-vitro produced bovine embryos. These updates further expand the options available to strengthen the genetic diversity of the island's cattle population.

For any questions or assistance with ruminant germplasm import conditions or consignments, please contact the Horse, Livestock and Bird Imports team via [reproimports@aff.gov.au](mailto:reproimports@aff.gov.au). We look forward to supporting you throughout 2026.

## Livestock and Zoo Animals team update.

Andrea Preusche has left the Department. Corrie Croton, Stephen Jagoe and Helen Walker manage policy advice relating to imports and exports of ruminant germplasm. Below is a summary of negotiations for various health certificates undertaken by the team, and their current status.

## Health Certificates agreed

### Exports

**India:** Bovine semen and embryos- delivered September 2025, implementation being held up due to trade issues with another commodity.



**United States:** small ruminant semen and embryos: delivered and accepted January 2026. New certificate becomes operational on 13 March 2026. Testing is required for Aino and Akabane viruses.

**Brazil:** MERCOSUR update for bovine semen protocol: delivered August 2025.

**Argentina:** MERCOSUR update for bovine semen protocol: delivered August 2025.

**Vanuatu:** Sheep semen permit protocol: delivered December 2025.

**Norfolk Island:** agreed certificate for bovine semen and embryos delivered November 2025 to replace permit-based trade.

### **Imports**

**Canada:** bovine semen delivered January 2026 – see HLB report.

**Canada:** bovine IVP embryos delivered February 2026- see HLB report.

**Spain:** health protocols for sheep embryos delivered September 2025.

### **Health certificates in negotiation**

**New Zealand** bovine semen: EBL conditions to be finalised.

**New Zealand** bovine embryos: bovine herpesvirus 5 conditions for semen used to be finalised.

**New Zealand** small ruminant semen and embryos: with NZ for review.

**Fiji** bovine semen and embryos to be delivered.

**Bangladesh:** bovine semen and embryos; protocols agreed and delivered but a new request for attestations regarding genetic conditions has delayed implementation.

**Switzerland:** bovine IVD embryos to be delivered.

**Japan:** draft bovine semen certificate delivered February 2026.

### **New Health certificates in development**

**Philippines:** export of bovine semen and embryos, no progress low priority market.

**Chile:** export of bovine semen- conditions to be updated by March 2026 and implemented after 6 months.

**Norfolk Island:** export of small ruminant semen and embryos- agreed health certificates to replace permit-based trade.

**Netherlands:** import of caprine semen.

### **Disease outbreaks**

#### **Foot and Mouth Disease**

**Germany:** resolved and declared free without vaccination from 14 April 2025 and imports now permitted. Period of restriction commenced 14 November 2024.

**Hungary:** resolved and declared free without vaccination on 10 September 2025. Imports not yet permitted. Period of restriction commenced 7 March 2025.

**Slovakia:** resolved and declared free without vaccination from 31 October 2025. Imports not yet permitted. Period of restriction commenced 21 March 2025.



### **Lumpy skin disease**

**Italy:** ongoing, limited to Sardinia. Period of restriction commenced 6 March 2025, with WOAHP notification occurring on 23 June 2025. Last recorded case 5 November 2025. Vaccinated cattle movements have recommenced between Sardinia and mainland Italy.

**France:** ongoing: WOAHP notified 30 June 2025; last declared cases occurred on 2 January 2026.

**Spain:** ongoing: WOAHP notified 4 October 2025; last declared cases occurred on 7 January 2026.

**Switzerland:** no cases of LSD but vaccination program implemented in the surveillance zone adjacent France on 19 July 2025. Switzerland no longer considered LSD free, and germplasm trade has ceased from this date.

### **Outbreaks of disease of interest.**

**Foot and mouth disease:** Republic of Cyprus (EU) declared an outbreak 20 February 2026, likely due to the movement of infected feed from Northern Cyprus (non-EU).

**Sheep and goat pox** in Greece, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania. **Peste des petits ruminants** (PPR) in Croatia, Albania, Hungary, Romania and Greece.

Europe-wide outbreaks with new **Bluetongue** virus strains have been occurring in the last 2-3 years causing severe disease and losses in cattle and small ruminants.

### **IETS returns 2024**

World embryo production and collection from farm animals increased slightly in 2024 to 2.47m (+2.4%). In-vitro produced embryos now account for 87% of all bovine embryos with 2.03 produced in 2024. This continues the trend that has been occurring for the last 10 years. Sheep embryo production decreased by 11%, but IVP production increased by over 100% compared to 2023. Embryo production from goats declined 29%.

In Australia, IVD bovine embryo production decreased by 38%. In total 58,366 embryos were produced, of which 1,549 were exported. Ovine IVD embryo production decreased by 46.7% compared to 2023. Australia was the second highest producer of caprine IVD embryos in 2024. (From 2024 Statistics of embryo production and transfer in domestic farm animals: IETS January 2026)

### **Embryo Transfer Veterinarian Ongoing Approval due for renewal**

Accredited Embryo Transfer Veterinarians (ETVs) on the most common recertification schedule will shortly receive an email advising of the need to submit documentation for recertification. For them, this process needs to be completed by 31 August 2026. Documents will need to be submitted via the AVA My Learning platform. Recertification is required every three years

