

Germplasm Gazette July 2026: Issue number 13

News on trade in ruminant reproductive material.

Welcome to a new edition of the Gazette. Since the March 2026 edition in there has been significant activity in the Department. A task force was established in response to the war in the Middle East and its effects on agriculture industries. It has been very busy assisting government efforts to maintain supplies of essential inputs such as fertiliser and diesel. Disease preparedness continues with regular updates of Lumpy Skin Disease Plan, and surveillance and management of foot and mouth disease outbreaks in Greece and Cyprus. H5N1 bird flu has finally made it to Australia and any spread from migratory birds into local animal populations is being monitored closely by DAFF and state government agriculture departments. Please find summaries of Repro Hub, Imports branch (ABIB) and Biosecurity branch (LZA) activities related to germplasm since February this year below.

IETS returns 2025.

Data is being collected for the [2025 annual report](#) of the International Embryo Technology Society (IETS) Data Retrieval Committee database. This report tracks the main activities and trends in commercial embryo transfer and is important in highlighting the global importance of embryo transfer technology.

Could you please put in your 2025 data (and prior data if available) by the end of **September 2026**. The link to submit is: <https://data-retrieval.iets.org/> at the IETS Data Retrieval Committee Database. This data is anonymously aggregated at country level and reported on by calendar year. For further information, please contact iets@aff.gov.au

Embryo Transfer Veterinarian Ongoing Approval due for renewal (reminder).

Accredited Embryo Transfer Veterinarians (ETVs) on the most common recertification schedule will have received an email advising of the need to submit documentation for reapproval. For those who are yet to complete renewal the deadline is 31 August 2026. Documents need to be submitted via the AVA My Learning platform. Recertification is required every three years. The Embryo Transfer Veterinarians Technical Management Committee (ETV TMC) has also recently reconvened to support this approval process. For further information, see: [Department of Agriculture ETV Approval Program for Collection and Processing of Embryo for Export - Australian Veterinary Association](#)

ReproHub Update

China: The ReproHub is pleased to report that three consignments of bovine germplasm have been exported to China since trade resumed in April 2025, with a total of 28,996 straws of bovine semen exported successfully to that market.

Semen diluents: The Hub wishes to remind centres that ruminant semen processed for export should comply with Article 4.7.7. clause 1. d of the WOAHP Terrestrial Animal Health Code in relation to semen diluents:

“Whenever milk, egg yolk or any other animal protein is used in preparing the semen diluent, the product should be free from pathogenic agents or sterilised; milk heat-treated at 92°C for 3-5 minutes, eggs from SPF flocks when available. When egg yolk is used, it should be separated from eggs using aseptic techniques. Alternatively, commercial egg yolk prepared for human consumption or egg yolk treated by, for example, pasteurisation or irradiation to reduce bacterial contamination, may be used, other additives should also be sterilised before use.”



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

As per prior advice, the use of eggs store bought or sourced from hens raised privately does not meet this requirement. Semen used to create export eligible embryos should also be prepared as above.

This requirement is especially important to maintain market access in light of the recent detection of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Australia. Should you have any questions on this matter, please contact the Repro Hub at genetics@aff.gov.au

Horse, Livestock and Bird (HLB) Imports team update

Staff movements: HLB temporarily farewelled **Grace Packer** on 26 May as she commenced maternity leave. Grace gave birth to a healthy baby boy the following day. (congratulations, Grace!).

We are pleased to welcome **Michelle Campana** to the team. Michelle is an experienced clinical and emergency veterinarian from WA and has joined us after working in the animal feed and bioremediation agents imports team.

Conditions changes.

Inconsistencies in residency and country freedom clauses – We recently received advice from our policy section that all agreed health certificates for bovine semen should require donors to be resident in a DAFF-approved country for at least 90 days prior to collection, in line with WOAH guidelines. Some import permits and health certificates already have this requirement in place, but others will need to be updated. While our policy team prepares to renegotiate these certificates, we are requesting that exporters provide confirmation that donors were resident in a DAFF-approved country for at least 90 days prior to collection, where this is not already stated on the health certificate.

Importers can contact us for more information before sending a shipment, or we will notify them if additional information is required upon receipt of their health certificates.

Ovine/caprine germplasm – Norfolk Island – Import conditions for ovine and caprine reproductive material to Norfolk Island are being updated to include additional Q fever (*Coxiella burnetii*) testing protocols and import conditions for in vivo-derived and in vitro-produced embryos. These updates will expand the options available to strengthen the genetic diversity of the island's sheep and goat populations.

Bovine embryos – Netherlands – Following lengthy engagement with the Netherlands, HLB is working with ABB to finalise updates to the import conditions for bovine in vivo embryos from the Netherlands. The updates will include changes to the vesicular stomatitis requirements and the addition of epizootic haemorrhagic disease (EHD) and infectious bovine rhinotracheitis/infectious pustular vulvovaginitis (IBR/IPV) requirements. These reflect a changing animal disease status of the country.

Ovine/caprine semen – Spain – HLB is also currently working with ABB to review Spanish ovine and caprine semen health certificates.

Other reminders

Pre-export compliance checks – A friendly reminder that importers are encouraged to send pre-export consignment paperwork for pre-export checks **prior** to shipping, to help avoid potential clearance delays at the border. Documentation assessment time for *all* reproductive material is considerable and can vary depending on the volume and complexity of paperwork. For this reason, **we request submission of pre-export consignment paperwork for all**



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

reproductive material consignments as early as possible. For further information, please see: [Importing livestock and equine reproductive material - DAFF](#)

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. We look forward to continuing to work with you throughout 2026.

Livestock and Zoo Animals team update.

Agreed Health Certificates.

New Zealand: an agreed protocol for bovine embryos exported to New Zealand was finalised on 5 May 2026. Exporters must use the new certificate from 5 July 2026. For this certificate a centre veterinarian declaration for bovine herpesvirus 5 must be completed when semen imported into Australia is used to create embryos. The agreed certificate allows the export of in vitro produced embryos to be exported to New Zealand.

Health certificates in negotiation

New Zealand bovine semen: EBL conditions yet to be finalised. New Zealand requested information on the EBL status of herds in Australia. DAFF is seeking equivalence of status with New Zealand which would reduce requirements for testing.

Norfolk Island: export of small ruminant semen and embryos agreed health certificates to be approved soon.

Chile: export of bovine semen- conditions to be updated by March 2026 and implemented after 6 months. A draft certificate has been provided to RG TAG for review. Chile has included additional requirements for EBL and EHDV.

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

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

Switzerland: an agreed certificate for the import of bovine IVD embryos has been delayed due to the LSD vaccination in Switzerland.

Hungary: an agreed certificate for the import of bovine semen is being developed and should be finalised after a DAFF review of the FMD status of Hungary.

Netherlands: an agreed certificate for the import of bovine embryos is being developed and should be finalised if the Netherlands agrees to the inclusion of additional animal health statements.

Ireland: a draft certificate for the import of bovine semen has been sent to Ireland after requested changes arising from updated EU regulations.

Japan: draft bovine semen certificate for export was sent in March 2026.

Disease outbreaks.

Foot and Mouth Disease.

Hungary: the disease event is resolved and Hungary was declared free without vaccination by WOA H on 10 September 2025. Imports are not yet permitted pending a DAFF assessment of Hungary's FMD status. Germplasm collected from 7 March 2025 is not eligible for export to Australia.

Slovakia: resolved and declared free without vaccination by WOA H from 31 October 2025. Imports are not yet permitted pending a DAFF assessment of Slovakia's FMD status. Germplasm collected from 21 March 2025 is not eligible for export to Australia.

Republic of Cyprus (EU): an outbreak declared on 20 February 2026 is continuing. The cause of the outbreak is likely due to the movement of infected feed from Northern Cyprus (non-EU).



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

Greece: an outbreak was declared on 15 March 2026 on the Greek island of Lesbos and is ongoing. The island is very close to Türkiye which has had an ongoing FMD outbreak.

Lumpy skin disease.

Italy: the outbreak commenced in Sardinia on 23 June 2025 and cases ceased 5 November 2025 after an intense control program. New cases emerged in April 2026 and are ongoing. Transmission by insect vectors is likely contributing to new cases and there is concern for spread of LSD to the Italian mainland.

France: ongoing: WOAHA notified 30 June 2025; last declared cases occurred on 2 January 2026. A vaccination program will be in place at least until the end of 2026.

Spain: ongoing: WOAHA notified 4 October 2025; the most recent cases occurred on 3 March 2026.

Switzerland: no cases of LSD have occurred but the vaccination program means Switzerland is no longer considered LSD free.

Germplasm collected from 19 July 2025 is not eligible for export to Australia.

Outbreaks of disease of interest.

Sheep and goat pox in Greece, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania.

Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) in Croatia, Albania, Hungary, Romania and Greece.

As the vector breeding season has commenced many countries in Europe are reporting outbreaks of **Bluetongue** virus. Outbreaks have been occurring in the last 2-3 years causing severe disease and losses in cattle and small ruminants.

If you have any questions regarding this edition of the Germplasm Gazette or wish to provide contributions for future editions please contact Stephen Jagoe stephen.jagoe@aff.gov.au

