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# INTERNATIONAL LIVESTOCK EXPORT/IMPORT GUIDE

New Mexico is home to the largest and most efficient livestock import and export facilities in North America. To better understand the local regulations and requirements, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture has developed this guide to assist with the export of cattle to Mexico.

To ensure a smooth process in the buying, selling and transport of livestock into Mexico, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) provides export procedures.

The protocol for U.S. exporters is detailed on the APHIS web page.

## EXPORTER RESPONSIBILITIES

Exporters must understand and act on quarantine and inspection requirements at the U.S./Mexico border.

New Mexico has two international livestock export/import facilities; Santa Teresa and Columbus Ports of Entry. Contacts and directions are available at [nmda.nmsu.edu](http://nmda.nmsu.edu).

Exporters must contact a local veterinarian with USDA accreditation to issue health certificates for any/all livestock being exported into Mexico.

Health certificates for cattle may be issued electronically by the USDA Accredited Veterinarian and endorsed by the APHIS Veterinary Medical Officer through the online Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS). The APHIS embossed seal is not required. A printed paper copy of the completed health certificate must accompany each shipment.

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Exporter's local veterinarian with USDA accreditation must seal all cattle trailers at "Point of Origin."
- It is the responsibility of the USDA accredited veterinarian and the exporter's shipping agent to advise the USDA Veterinary Services (VS) port veterinarian of the date of arrival of the animals. The protocol requires that the VS port veterinarian, in the presence of a "Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación, (SAGARPA) approved Mexican veterinarian, breaks the seals on the trucks to unload the animals. SAGARPA has indicated that if necessary, a state or accredited veterinarian can also break the seals in the presence of the SAGARPA-approved veterinarian.
- Exporter must verify that the Mexican buyer is registered and organized as a valid rancher/buyer through the Mexican "Sistema Nacional de Individual del Ganado" (SINIIGA) program. Buyers must be registered as Importers through Mexican Customs via the "Padron de Importadores" system, a national registry of importers and exporters. To be able to import or export most products into or from Mexico, the Mexican company that will be the importer or exporter of record must be registered to do so. They must have a legal invoice for what they wish to import.
- Broker should provide any other pertinent forms/documents needed for exportation of livestock (e.g., "NAFTA Certificate of Origin form, which must be issued by the Exporter).

## IMPORTER RESPONSIBILITIES

The importer in Mexico (or the importer moving animals/genetics through Mexico) should contact the “Dirección General de Inspección Fitozoosanitaria” (DGIF) at least 30 days prior to the importation of the livestock, in order to coordinate livestock inspections and to obtain an import permit. DGIF is the organization of the federal Mexican veterinarians that will be conducting the inspections at the New Mexico Export/Import Facilities in Santa Teresa or Columbus.

Make sure that you get confirmation that “Sistema Nacional de Identificación Individual del Ganado” (SINIIGA) has been contacted and arrangements have been made to have your livestock tagged by these federal veterinarians from the state of entry into Mexico.

The buyer is required to be registered and organized as a valid rancher/buyer through the Mexican SINIIGA program. Buyers must be registered as Importers through Mexican Customs via “Padron de Importadores.”



*Once the buyer has selected the animals and the selling price has been determined, the following steps will help ensure a smooth transaction:*

1. It is a common practice for the buyer to provide a down payment to the seller to cover the costs of testing the animals for export.
2. Determine with the seller how and when the final payment will be made. Payments can be cash, wire transfer, check (written on a U.S. bank) that can be confirmed, or a letter of credit.
3. Determine if the animals are to be sold F.O.B. ranch or if the sale price will include delivery to the port of export. If the buyer is responsible for delivery of the animals to the border, the seller may help locate transportation.
4. Provide your name, address and telephone number, as well as the port where the animals will enter Mexico. Establish how you will be notified when the livestock are ready to be delivered. You may communicate with the seller or deal with a broker at the border. Make sure you have telephone numbers for the person or firm that will ship the animals.



## IMPORTER RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED

5. The seller and his or her veterinarian will prepare an export health certificate for the animals. The export healthy certificate will be officially endorsed by the USDA. Remember, this expense is the responsibility of the exporter.  
*\* Testing and securing the export health certificate usually takes about two weeks.*
6. Visit [nmda.nmsu.edu](http://nmda.nmsu.edu) for a list of accredited veterinarians in your area.
7. Contact the New Mexico Livestock Board for import permits if animals do not have USDA approved health certificates.
8. The animals should have some type of identification number. This can be a brand, tattoo or ear tag. The animals should be identified accordingly on the health certificates. Numbered ear tags that can be read at a distance are usually best.
9. The seller will provide an invoice to the buyer. The invoice should include seller name and address, buyer name and address, number and sex of animals purchased and the price. This invoice and the export health certificate will accompany the livestock to the border.
10. It is a standard practice to provide full payment for your livestock before the animals leave the United States.
11. When the seller secures the export health certificates and prepared the invoice, the animals are ready for delivery. Work with the seller or firm shipping the animals to set a delivery date. Contact the appropriate export facility and confirm date of delivery.
12. Please note that the Export/Import Facilities in Santa Teresa and Columbus are not open on the weekends.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

Juan Sanchez, NMDA, 575-646-4929  
Santa Teresa- UGRCH, 575-589-1620  
Columbus Stockyards- 575-531-3004

For more information, visit [nmda.nmsu.edu](http://nmda.nmsu.edu).