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Turkey Implements new EU Equine Passport Regulation on Equidae ID

Report Categories:

Livestock and Products

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Approved By:

Elizabeth Leonardi, Agricultural Attaché

Prepared By:

Sinem Duyum, Agricultural Specialist

Report Highlights:

Within the scope of Turkey`s harmonization period to be an EU Member, Turkey has started to harmonize many EU laws into Turkish legislation. Turkey published a draft communique to harmonize with the EU Commission Decision 2005/267/EU on methods for the identification of equidae (horses) called the Equine Passport Regulation. It covers individual identification, the methods of it, the material to be used, technical specification of numeration system, animal and owner registration, as well as holdings where they are kept, database for registration/id, exchanging of data on animals and the holdings where they have been kept, traceability within the system, health registration, and control and audit of the identified animals and the holdings. While the legislation mentions the identification and application for identification of equidae to be imported from non-EU countries, the identification system of EU is totally accepted for equidae coming from EU countries.

Background:

Within the scope of Turkey's harmonization period to be member to EU, Turkey started to harmonize many EU legislation into Turkish legislation. Turkey published one more draft communique to harmonize with the EU Commission Decision 2005/267/EU on methods for the identification of equidae (Equine Passport Regulation). According to the Turkish legislation equidae means wild or domesticated soliped mammals of all species within the genus Equus of the family Equidae, and their crosses.

Up to now, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MinFAL) harmonized one EU legislation (2004/68/EU) regarding animal health rules on import and transit of certain equidae and it was published on the Official Gazette dated 9/20/2015 numbered 29481.

The other Turkish legislation for equidae are below and they do not specifically comply with EU legislation;

- Legislation on studbook, registration, import and export of pure-bred Arabic horses and English thoroughbreds. (Off. Gaz., 4/19/2011, 27910)
- The Law No. 6132 on Horse Racing (Off. Gaz., 7/10/1953, 8458)
- The Legislation on Horse Racing (Off. Gaz., 4/19/2011, 27910)
- The Legislation on Prevention and Struggling for Equine Infectious Anemia (Off. Gaz., 12/22/2011, 28150)

The import data of equidae (horses) into Turkey:

Breeding Horses				
	2014		2015	
Exporter	Unit (Head)	Value (\$)	Unit (Head)	Value (\$)
USA	41	2,356,954	3	47,25
EU	41	1,073,467	23	464,086
Japan	1	136,517	1	50,85
	83	3,566,938	27	464,086

Horses not for breeding				
	2014		2015	
Exporter	Unit (Head)	Value (\$)	Unit (Head)	Value (\$)
EU	245	499,882	149	225,813
USA	112	401,408	0	0
Others	24	37,927	12	14,949
	381	939,217	161	240,762

*TurkSTAT, 2015. * until November, 2015*

General Information:

This draft legislation harmonized with the EU Commission Decision 2005/267/EU on methods for the identification of equidae (Equine Passport Regulation) covers individual identification, the methods of

identification, the material to be used for identification, technical specification of numeration system, registration of the animals and their owners, as well as holdings in where they kept, installing database for the registration/identification, exchanging of data regarding identified animals and the holdings that they have been kept, providing traceability and controlling of the animals within the system, health registration of the animals, control and audit of the identified animals and the holdings. This covers all equidae, including horses, donkeys, and mules for the purpose of import or temporary admission for horse racings.

For the purpose of this legislation, the identification of equidae within country shall be comprised of the following elements:

- a single lifetime identification document which contains;
 - a narrative describing the equine animal and recording its marks,
 - a completed outline diagram depicting the marks recorded in the narrative,
 - a space for authorized entries describing modifications to the identification details,
 - a method of identity verification which ensures an unequivocal link between the identification document and the equine animal for which it was issued,
- a database recording the identification details relating to the equine animal for which the identification document was issued and to the keeper who submitted the application for the identification document and at the same time assigning the unique life number to the animal,
- a central database set up in accordance with the legislation.

In accordance with the legislation, an equine animal shall only be deemed to be identified where it is accompanied by an identification document issued in accordance with the provisions of the legislation. It covers the equidae born in Turkey, equidae imported into Turkey from non-EU countries and for certain movements and transport of equidae for slaughter with the exemptions.

Identification of equidae imported into Turkey from non-EU countries:

Equidae imported from non-EU countries should be registered into a database without changing original existing number in the destination holding in Turkey within 20 days of the completion of the quarantine period, after controls according to the related import legislation, and prior to leaving the holdings.

The identification documents which were issued in the non-EU countries;

- in the case of registered equidae, it is issued by *a body issuing pedigree certificates in a third country* (third countries means the countries except Turkey and EU member countries, even if they do not comply with Turkish Constitution, it is used in the harmonized legislation). It is required that the pedigree must be in compliance with the model given in the another legislation on artificial insemination, natural semination, transferring of ovum and embryo,
- In case of breeding/production equidae, *by a national branch of an international organization or association*, which manages horses for competition or racing with its headquarters in the third country of the international organization or association,
- in all other cases *by the competent authority of the third country of origin* of the equine animal.

The identification documents will be considered valid if the issuing bodies are announced/ published by the competent authority of the exporting country.

Applications for identification documents for equidae imported into the Turkey from non-EU countries:

The keeper of an equine animal applies to the issuing body in Turkey appropriate for the category of equine animal (registered, breeding/production equidae) for the issuing of an identification document or for the registration of the existing identification document into the database within 30 days of the date of completion of the customs procedure.

As the United States is the top exporter of horses for breeding to Turkey and often the second largest exporter of horses not for breeding, this regulation may cause additional steps for horse exporters from the United States. Additionally, it is an example of a new fully harmonized regulation to the EU which allows access by European countries to Turkey, but limits access by third countries. Equidae coming from EU for the purpose of import or racing will be considered an “intra- EU community movement” and the documents of the animals will be accepted.

The draft was published on November 10, 2015, and the Government of Turkey is accepting public and related institution’s comments to the draft until December 12, 2015. The Government of Turkey (GOT) has not notified the communique to the WTO at the issue day of this report.