

Importation of Animals Act⁽¹⁾

1990 No 54, 16 March

⁽¹⁾Act amended by Article 95 of Act No 60/2013. The amendment enters into force on 1 July 2015 as stipulated by Article 94 of the same Act, cf. Article of Act No 23/2014.

Entry into force 31 May 1990. Amended by Act No 40/1996 (entry into force 21 May 1996), Act No 82/1998 (entry into force 1 October 1998), Act No 44/1999 (entry into force 1 July 1999), Act No 175/2000 (entry into force 29 December 2000), Act No 142/2001 (entry into force 31 December 2001), Act No 153/2002 (entry into force 30 December 2002), Act No 164/2002 (entry into force 1 January 2003), Provisional Act No 103/2003 (entry into force 1 July 2003), Act No 116/2003 (entry into force 12 November 2003), Act No 76/2005 (entry into force 1 January 2006), Act No 128/2005 (entry into force 30 December 2005), Act No 141/2007 (entry into force 1 January 2008), Act No 167/2007 (entry into force 1 January 2008), Act No 118/2009 (entry into force 29 December 2009), Act No 126/2011 (entry into force 30 September 2011) and Act No 60/2013 (entry into force 1 July 2015).

Any reference in this Act to “the Minister” or “the Ministry” not accompanied by express mention of or reference to a specific field of responsibility shall be understood as being a reference to the **Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture** or to the **Ministry of Industries and Innovation** as responsible for the implementation of this Act.

■ **Article 1** For the purpose of this Act, the following definitions shall apply:

Livestock [means poultry, goats, horses, rabbits, fur-bearing animals, cattle, sheep and pigs. In the event of a dispute arising regarding the scope of the term ‘livestock’, [the Minister]⁽¹⁾ shall make a ruling.]⁽²⁾

...⁽³⁾

Animal means any living terrestrial animals, including vertebrates, invertebrates, and aquatic animals living fully or partially in fresh water.

Isolation station [means a quarantine facility for fur-bearing animals, domestic pets, birds and fish[, as well as for pigs and porcine genetic material].]⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

[*Aquaculture animals* means live fish, crustaceans or molluscs coming from a farm, at any development stage, including animals from the wild intended for a farm.]⁽⁴⁾

Genetic material means any substance storing information that determines the genetic characteristics of animals, such as an embryo (fertilised egg or early-stage foetus), eggs or semen.

[*Advisory Board* means a committee which develops policy on breeding, research, and educational and developmental work in a specific agricultural sector pursuant to the Agricultural Act No 70/1998.]⁽³⁾

[*Domestic pets* means animals belonging to the following species and groups: dogs, cats, rabbits, ornamental fish, aquatic animals, rodents and cage birds.]⁽²⁾

Quarantine Veterinary Officer [means a professionally qualified public official responsible for surveillance at a quarantine station where animals have been imported in accordance with this Act.]⁽³⁾

Quarantine station means premises where animals and genetic materials are kept while being tested for infectious diseases.

Supervisory Veterinary Officer means any veterinarian who has been appointed to carry out surveillance in connection with importation pursuant to this Act.

⁽¹⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141. ⁽²⁾Act No 141/2007, Article 1. ⁽³⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 1. ⁽⁴⁾Act No 116/2003, Article 5.

■ **Article 2** The importation into Iceland of animals of any kind, domestic or wild, or their genetic material, is prohibited. [International trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora is governed by the Act on the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.]⁽¹⁾

□ [The importation ban of the first paragraph shall not extend to the importation of live fish, crustaceans or molluscs coming from a farm, at any development stage, including eggs and gametes, and including animals from the wild intended for a farm, provided that the importation complies with the requirements of Regulations issued by [the Minister]⁽²⁾ after receiving the comments of [the Food and Veterinary Authority],⁽³⁾ the Fish Disease Prevention Committee, the Institute of Freshwater Fisheries and the Genetic Resource Council in Agriculture. Importers shall provide a written confirmation by [the Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽³⁾ that the conditions laid down in this provisions are fulfilled.

□ Having received the scientific opinion of the Institute of Freshwater Fisheries, [the Minister]⁽²⁾ may limit or prohibit the importation of live salmonids, at any development stage, including eggs and gametes, where there is clear evidence that other protection and conservation measures mandated by law or administrative provisions are insufficient to prevent genetic mixing of such salmonids with local natural populations, a situation likely to threaten biological diversity and endanger the natural populations.]⁽⁴⁾

□ By way of exception from the ban of the first paragraph, [the Minister]⁽²⁾ may, on the recommendation of the Chief Veterinary Officer, authorise the importation of animals and genetic material, [subject, however, to Article 4a]⁽⁵⁾ [and Article 13, third paragraph],⁽⁶⁾ provided that the instructions contained in this Act and in any Regulation issued pursuant to it are strictly followed.

□ Any animals imported without authorisation shall be immediately put down and their carcasses destroyed so as to prevent any risk. Eggs, semen and embryos shall likewise be destroyed, as shall any animals artificially inseminated or used as surrogate mothers and any offspring born after such illegal importation.

⁽¹⁾Act No 164/2002, Article 16. ⁽²⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141. ⁽³⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70. ⁽⁴⁾Act No 116/2003, Article 6. ⁽⁵⁾Act No 141/2007, Article 2. ⁽⁶⁾Act No 118/2009, Article 1.

■ **Article 3** A recommendation by the Chief Veterinary Officer to authorise the import animals or genetic material shall be accompanied by a substantiated opinion of the health situation in the relevant country or region, as well as a certificate issued by the relevant health authorities attesting that no animal diseases of particular concern for Iceland have been detected in that country or region.

□ ...⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 2.

■ **Article 4** Prior to authorising the importation of livestock or its genetic material, the Minister shall seek the opinion of the [Advisory Board]⁽¹⁾ for the relevant agricultural sector, [which shall]⁽¹⁾ evaluate whether Icelandic livestock farming is in need of or could benefit from such importation. [The Advisory Board]⁽¹⁾ shall issue recommendations on the breed and species to be imported, the methods to be employed and the country from which the importation should take place.

□ The Commission⁽²⁾ may propose another form for the importation than that planned by the applicant where it considers this a safer alternative and a prerequisite for recommending the approval of the application.

⁽¹⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 3. ⁽²⁾This should presumably be 'Advisory Board'.

■ **[Article 4a]** By way of exception from the prohibition of Article 2, first paragraph, the Chief Veterinary Officer may authorise the importation of pets and genetic material thereof not belonging to new species or new breeds of species already present in Iceland, cf. Article 5, provided that the instructions contained in this Act and in any Regulation issued pursuant to it are followed.

□ An evaluation shall take place of the risks associated with the importation, and the importer may be required to provide information about the health of the pet, including a certificate of health and a certificate of origin, confirming that the pet or genetic material has undergone the necessary vaccinations, tests and treatments prior to being imported.

□ A character assessment may be required for dogs for which a permit to import is requested; similarly, a character assessment may be required for dogs the genetic material of which is the subject of a request for an importation permit. No exemptions shall be granted for the importation of dogs, wolf–dog hybrids or other types of pet that may pose a danger.]⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾Act No 141/2007, Article 3.

■ **Article 5** Prior to authorising the importation of new animal species or foreign breeds of species already existing in Iceland, [the Minister]⁽¹⁾ shall seek the opinions of [[the Environment Agency of Iceland, the Icelandic Institute of Natural History],⁽²⁾ [the Genetic Resource Council in Agriculture]⁽³⁾ and the committee of experts appointed pursuant to the Nature Conservation Act].⁽⁴⁾

□ [An application for a permit to import new animal species shall be accompanied by a risk evaluation obtained by the applicant. The risk evaluation shall include an assessment of the risk of the species in question being released into the environment and of the potential impact of this on the ecosystem.

□ After consulting with [the minister responsible for the protection of the environment],⁽¹⁾ the Minister may issue a Regulation containing more detailed provisions on the performance of risk evaluations.]⁽⁵⁾

⁽¹⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141. ⁽²⁾Act No 164/2002, Article 17. ⁽³⁾Act No 116/2003, Article 7. ⁽⁴⁾Act No 44/1999, Article 79. ⁽⁵⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 31.

■ **Article 6** [The Ministry]⁽¹⁾ [shall monitor and assume responsibility for]⁽²⁾ the importation of livestock where authorisation for such importation is granted pursuant to this Act. [It shall similarly monitor]⁽²⁾ the reproduction of imported breeds; however, [the Minister]⁽¹⁾ may delegate responsibility for such breeding to individual [agricultural associations]⁽²⁾ or breeding societies, provided that the Chief Veterinary Officer and the relevant [Advisory Board]⁽²⁾ recommend this. In such cases, the entity concerned shall demonstrate that it is capable of meeting all requirements as regards infection prevention and the facilities to be provided, and of financing all aspects of the reproduction. Such delegation of responsibilities shall always be limited to one permit to import and subject to a specific time limit.

⁽¹⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141. ⁽²⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 4.

■ **Article 7** [Quarantine and isolation stations shall be operated to serve the needs of importation of animals and genetic material. After receiving the proposals of [the Food and Veterinary Authority],⁽²⁾ [the Minister]⁽¹⁾ shall issue a Regulation stipulating the requirements for the equipment of quarantine and isolation stations. The Minister may charge individuals, companies or associations with the operation of the stations.]⁽³⁾

□ ...⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141. ⁽²⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70. ⁽³⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 5. ⁽⁴⁾Act No 128/2005, Article 1.

■ **Article 8** Where an animal or a genetic material is chosen for importation, each individual animal to be imported, males from which semen is to be collected, and parents which have provided fertilised eggs shall undergo a health inspection by an Official Veterinarian, and all certificates and other essential information must be provided before importation takes place. Embryos, eggs or semen may only be imported from recognised breeding stations where the

health of the parents or parent has been monitored for a sufficient period of time in the opinion of [the Food and Veterinary Authority].⁽¹⁾ [The Minister]⁽²⁾ shall, on the proposal of [the Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽¹⁾, issue rules regarding the requirements for all types of information and any certificates which need to be submitted before such importation can be authorised.

⁽¹⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70. ⁽²⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141.

■ **Article 9** [All imported animals and genetic materials, with the exception of aquaculture animals as defined in Article 2, second paragraph, shall be isolated at a quarantine station for as long as deemed necessary by [the Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽¹⁾ and shall be subject to constant surveillance by the facility's Quarantine Veterinary Officer.]⁽²⁾

□ [The Quarantine Veterinary Officer of a quarantine station can be either the relevant District Veterinary Officer or a veterinarian hired specifically for this task by [the Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽¹⁾. [The Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽¹⁾ shall provide the Quarantine Veterinary Officer with terms of reference containing provisions on the Officer's duties with regard to asepsis in relation to any work carried out at the quarantine station.]⁽³⁾

□ [The Minister],⁽⁴⁾ having received the proposal of [the Food and Veterinary Authority],⁽¹⁾ shall issue a Regulation⁽⁵⁾ on all matters relating to the operation of quarantine and isolation stations, and to safety measures regarding potential risk of contagion, including strict provisions with regard to the movement of persons and the handling of manure, waste of any kind and products from the stations. The personnel of such stations shall be provided with special terms of reference, and the Quarantine Veterinary Officer shall be responsible for compliance with safety regulations.

⁽¹⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70. ⁽²⁾Act No 116/2003, Article 8. ⁽³⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 6. ⁽⁴⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141. ⁽⁵⁾Regulation No 432/2003.

■ **Article 10** Imported animals and animals raised from imported genetic material may never be removed from a quarantine station.

□ When it is considered certain that importation has introduced no genetic defects or infectious diseases posing a risk to Icelandic animals, and after a certain period of time has elapsed since the last importation of animals or genetic material, as further stipulated in a Regulation, [the Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽¹⁾ may authorise the transfer from a quarantine station of animals or genetic materials, other than as specified in the first paragraph.

⁽¹⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70.

■ **Article 11** Pure-breeding of imported breeds and crossing with domestic livestock shall be controlled by the relevant [Advisory Board operating pursuant to the Agricultural Act No 70/1998].⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 7.

■ **Article 12** Icelandic animals to be crossed with imported breeds or used as surrogate mothers in connection with the importation of embryos shall be selected by those consultants of [the Farmers' Association of Iceland]⁽¹⁾ responsible for the agricultural sector in question, and [the Food and Veterinary Authority or its representative]⁽²⁾ shall verify that they are neither suspected of nor confirmed as having infectious diseases. No systematic breeding of an Icelandic animal breed with an imported one may take place until it has been determined how the two breeds combine and that single hybrid breeding with the Icelandic breed does not result in serious birth difficulties or temperamental defects.

□ Every effort shall be made to ensure that valuable qualities of Icelandic animal breeds are not lost when they are crossed with imported breeds. A Regulation may provide that the imported breed may only be used for single hybrid breeding if considered appropriate by the consultant of [the Farmers' Association of Iceland]⁽¹⁾ and/or the relevant [Advisory Board]⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾Act No 40/1996, Article 2. ⁽²⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70. ⁽³⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 8.

■ **Article 13** Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 9 of this Act, [the Minister]⁽¹⁾ may authorise the importation of fur-bearing animals kept in cages, fertilised poultry eggs from recognised breeding farms, [fish and their genetic material, and pigs and their genetic material, from recognised breeding farms or artificial insemination facilities]⁽²⁾ to an isolation station subject to the surveillance of a Supervisory Veterinary Officer. However, such authorisations shall only be granted on the recommendation of the Chief Veterinary Officer. Animals may only be moved from a isolation station to farms fulfilling the conditions stipulated by the Chief Veterinary Officer to prevent the risk of transmission of infectious diseases and recognised by the relevant [Advisory Board]⁽³⁾. Animals may not be removed from an isolation station until they have remained isolated for a period of time long enough to ensure, in the opinion of the Chief Veterinary Officer, that they are free of infectious diseases.

□ [Imported genetic material from pigs may not be removed from an isolation station, [except as provided in the third paragraph.]⁽⁴⁾ However, pigs raised from imported genetic material in an isolation station may be removed from the station subject to the authorisation of the Chief Veterinary Officer and the fulfilment of any conditions pursuant to the first paragraph.]⁽⁵⁾

□ [The Food and Veterinary Authority (the Chief Veterinary Officer) may issue authorisations for the importation of deep-frozen pig semen, subject to the fulfilment of the conditions set out in Article 8. Further conditions may be stipulated relating to tests to be carried out on the semen during the quarantine period and to the sanitary conditions and facilities of the farm where the semen is to be used. Where it emerges that these conditions are not fulfilled or the Food and Veterinary Authority (the Chief Veterinary Officer) considers that the semen carries a risk of transmitting an infectious disease for other reasons, the authorisation shall be withdrawn and the semen destroyed.]⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141. ⁽²⁾Act No 153/2002, Article 1. ⁽³⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 9. ⁽⁴⁾Act No 118/2009, Article 2. ⁽⁵⁾Act No 141/2007, Article 4.

■ **Article 14** [The Minister]⁽¹⁾ may, on the recommendation of the Chief Veterinary Officer and by way of exception from the provisions of Article 10 of this Act, authorise the removal from a quarantine station of non-ungulate domestic animals. Such removal may not take place until the animals have remained isolated for a period of time long enough to ensure, in the opinion of the Chief Veterinary Officer, that they are free of infectious diseases. Authorisations of this kind may be made subject to the condition that the health of the animals be monitored by a veterinarian at the owners' cost for as long as the Chief Veterinary Officer considers necessary.

⁽¹⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141.

■ **Article 15** In the event of a serious infectious disease surfacing at a quarantine or isolation station, every effort deemed necessary shall be made to prevent it from spreading, including putting down animals, where necessary, and halting the distribution of genetic material from the facility. The operator concerned shall bear the cost of such measures and must fully abide by the instructions of the [Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽¹⁾.

□ Owners are under an obligation to obey all instructions given by [the Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽¹⁾ to put down animals at their facilities and shall not be entitled to compensation for animals that need to be destroyed as a consequence of such measures.

⁽¹⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70.

■ **Article 16** Deep-frozen semen or embryos may be stored outside quarantine stations subject to the authorisation and in accordance with the instructions of [the Food and Veterinary Authority].⁽¹⁾ The Quarantine Veterinary Officer shall maintain a detailed record of all animals brought to or born at the facility, as well as of semen and embryos collected there or removed therefrom, and of their use. The Quarantine Veterinary Officer shall abide by the

instructions of the relevant [Advisory Board] regarding the surveillance of animals and record-keeping.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70. ⁽²⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 9.

■ **[Article 17]**⁽¹⁾ Where a decision is made to close a quarantine station that has been in operation, and the relevant [Advisory Board]⁽²⁾ considers that no further use should be made of the genetic material stored at the facility, the material shall either be destroyed, so as to prevent any risk, or made the subject of other measures to ensure that it does not present a threat of contagion. Animals kept at such a station shall be put down unless their removal from isolation has been authorised pursuant to this Act.

⁽¹⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 10. ⁽²⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 9.

■ **[Article 18]**⁽¹⁾ An infringement of the provisions of this Act or any regulation issued pursuant to it shall be punishable by a fine, payable to the Treasury. In the event of a disease being introduced to a facility due to negligence, the negligent party shall be subject to dismissal, or to [imprisonment for up to two years]⁽²⁾ where the offence is serious.

□ Where live animals, embryos, eggs or other genetic materials of animal origin are imported to Iceland unlawfully, cf. Article 2, a fine shall be imposed on the owner, as well as on the captain of the vessel or aircraft used to transport the animals or the genetic material where the captain may be reasonably supposed to have known what was being transported.

⁽¹⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 10. ⁽²⁾Act No 82/1998, Article 196.

■ **[Article 19]**⁽¹⁾ Having received the proposals of [the Food and Veterinary Authority]⁽⁴⁾ and [the Farmers' Association of Iceland], [the Minister]⁽²⁾ shall issue a Regulation⁽³⁾ on the more detailed implementation of this Act.⁽⁵⁾

□ ...⁽⁶⁾

⁽¹⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 10. ⁽²⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 141. ⁽³⁾Regulation No 220/2013 (on measures for limiting the impact of certain diseases in aquaculture animals and wild aquatic animals). Regulation No 221/2013 (implementing Council Directive 2006/88/EC as regards surveillance and eradication programmes and disease-free status of states, zones and compartments). Regulation No 271/2013 (on electronic access to information on aquaculture production businesses and authorised processing establishments). Regulation No 272/2013 (on guidelines for risk-based animal health surveillance as provided for in Council Directive 2006/88/EC). Regulation No 273/2013 (on requirements for quarantine of aquaculture animals). Regulation No 390/2014 (on the incorporation of Commission Regulation (EC) No 119/2009 laying down a list of third countries or parts thereof, for imports into, or transit through, the Community of meat of wild leporidae, of certain wild land mammals and of farmed rabbits and the veterinary certification requirements). Regulation No 560/2014 (on the incorporation of Commission Regulation (EC) No 798/2008 laying down a list of third countries, territories, zones or compartments from which poultry and poultry products may be imported into and transit through the Community and the veterinary certification requirements), cf. No 840/2014. Regulation No 907/2014 (on the incorporation of Commission Regulation (EU) No 206/2010 laying down lists of third countries, territories or parts thereof authorised for the introduction into the European Union of certain animals and fresh meat and the veterinary certification requirements), cf. No 958/2014. ⁽⁴⁾Act No 167/2007, Article 70. ⁽⁵⁾Act No 40/1996, Article 2. ⁽⁶⁾Act No 76/2005, Article 29.

■ **[Article 20]**⁽¹⁾ This Act shall enter into force forthwith. ...

⁽¹⁾Act No 175/2000, Article 10.

Disclaimer: This is an English translation. The original Icelandic text, as published in the Law Gazette (Stjórnartíðindi), is the authoritative text. Should there be discrepancy between this translation and the authoritative text, the latter prevails.