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Proactive Disclosure

Changes to the *Health of Animals Regulations* - Aquatic Animal Diseases

Regulatory Changes

What are the regulatory changes?

Effective December 22, 2010, the *Health of Animals Regulations* were amended to include aquatic animals. Aquatic animal diseases were added to the *Reportable Diseases Regulations* on January 5, 2011.

The amendments to both regulations strengthen Canada's ability to protect aquatic animals from infectious diseases. The changes also allow the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to meet international obligations and to fulfill its mandate to protect the aquatic animal resource base.

The regulations mean that

- [aquatic animal diseases of concern](#), internationally and in Canada, are reportable; and,
- [aquatic animal imports](#), which could be affected by these diseases, require a CFIA import permit.

Do these regulatory changes affect all aquatic animals?

These regulatory changes affect species of finfish, molluscs and crustaceans that are listed as [susceptible to diseases of concern](#) (internationally and to Canada).

This list of animals subject to the regulations can be found in Schedule III of the *Health of Animals Regulations*.

What are reportable diseases?

Reportable diseases are diseases that are of significant importance to animal health and to the Canadian economy.

Reportable diseases occur in limited areas within Canada and must be controlled to prevent them from spreading to other areas.

Anyone who owns or works with aquatic animals and knows of or suspects a reportable disease is required by law to notify the CFIA.

The reportable diseases that are of concern to Canada are listed in the *Reportable Diseases Regulations*.

What is an immediately notifiable disease?

Immediately notifiable diseases are serious diseases of concern to animal health and to the Canadian economy.

Immediately notifiable diseases are listed in the *Health of Animals Regulations*. The

Regulations require notification by laboratories of all listed diseases and enables controls to prevent the introduction and spread of those diseases.

Immediately notifiable diseases are not known to exist in Canada.

Imports and Exports of Aquatic Animals

How will these changes affect importers of aquatic animals?

Importers of any of the aquatic animals listed in Schedule III of the *Health of Animals Regulations* require an import permit for live aquatic animals, germplasm, carcasses and offal of those animals.

The import requirements for salmonids are currently included in Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (DFO) *Fish Health Protection Regulations*.

DFO is working to amend the *Fish Health Protection Regulations* as soon as possible to transfer the responsibility for the international movement of salmonid species to the CFIA. At that time, the CFIA will assume this responsibility under the authority of the *Health of Animals Regulations*.

The control and issuance of permits for inter-provincial (domestic) salmonid movements will remain under the *Fish Health Protection Regulations* until domestic movement controls are in place.

Will the pet fish or aquarium industry require import permits?

All aquatic animals in Schedule III of the *Health of Animals Regulations* need an import permit.

However, the CFIA recognizes that pet fish in home aquariums represent a low risk for the spread of diseases. An exemption from requiring an import permit has been made for approximately fifteen species of aquatic animals listed in Schedule III. This exemption only applies if they are imported as personal pets and owners meet the criteria outlined in the *Health of Animals Regulations*.

Do fish and seafood purchased for food from local fisherman in the United States require an import permit?

The regulation exempts instances when a small amount of finfish, crustaceans and molluscs are imported for personal use (for example, for food or taxidermy) because they represent a low risk for introducing disease. As such, there should be no effect on bringing these types of items across the border.

Will the changes have any effect on exporting aquatic animals?

These regulatory changes do not affect the CFIA's services to exporters.

Currently, the CFIA is responsible for export certification for aquatic animal health for all species except salmonids. The CFIA is negotiating a new aquatic animal health certification process for salmonids, which currently resides with DFO.

Do the regulatory changes affect the transport of live aquatic animals within Canada?

These regulatory changes do not affect the transport of live aquatic animals within Canada. When domestic controls are implemented, consultation will take place.

#43 - <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/aqua/queste.shtml>