

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Department of Food and Health

(20.9.2004)

IMPORT OF DOGS, CATS AND FERRETS TO FINLAND AS OF 3 JULY 2004*Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council*

These requirements concern only pets which accompany their owner or person responsible for them on behalf of the owner and which are not intended to be sold or transferred to another owner.

Transitional period until 1 October 2004

Until 1 October 2004, the entry of dogs, cats and ferrets complying with existing national rules will also be allowed. Existing rules: <http://www.mmm.fi/el/julk/lemtuoen.html>

Import of dogs, cats and ferrets from EU countries (including the new Member States: Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic) and Norway to Finland**1. Identification**

The animal must be identified by a microchip or clearly readable tattoo. If the microchip does not comply with ISO Standard 11784 or Annex A to ISO Standard 11785, the importer must provide the means necessary for reading the microchip. As of 3 July 2011 only a microchip will be approved as identification. The animal must be identified before the rabies vaccination.

2. Vaccination against rabies

The animal must have been vaccinated against rabies with an inactivated vaccine of at least one antigenic unit per dose (WHO standard). The rabies vaccination and revaccination, if necessary, must have been carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturing laboratory. Unvaccinated young animals may not be imported to Finland.

The rabies vaccines currently applied in Finland are valid for two years if vaccination is carried out when the animal is over one year old.

3. Echinococcus treatment

Dogs and cats must be given not more than 30 days before it arrives to Finland an appropriate dosage of medicine containing praziquantel against tapeworm causing echinococcosis approved for the species concerned. The medication against echinococcosis is entered to the pet passport by veterinarian.

Medication against echinococcosis is not required if the animal is imported directly from Sweden, Norway (other parts than Spitsbergen), the United Kingdom or Ireland, or if the animal is brought back to Finland within 24 hours from leaving the country. Medication against echinococcosis is also not required for animals which are less than three months old.

4. Pet passport

The animal must be accompanied by a pet passport carrying the identification information on the animal and an entry by the veterinarian concerning a valid rabies vaccination and echinococcus treatment (parts I–IV and VII).

Pet passports will be available in Finland in June (week 25). In Finland pet passports can be obtained from veterinarians. A uniform model for the pet passport will be applied in the whole EU, and the vaccination cards used at present do not replace the new pet passport. Each Member State draws up an own version of the pet passport in accordance with a model given by Commission Decision.

Transitional period for the pet passport

If an animal has a valid vaccination certification on rabies vaccination issued prior to 1 October 2004 which attests compliance with conditions mentioned above (also contains the identification data), this certificate may be used as long as it is valid and no pet passport needs to be acquired yet. In that case the animal must be accompanied by a separate certificate on the echinococcus treatment, if needed. However, if the certificate on the rabies vaccination is issued on 1 October 2004 or later, the vaccination must be entered into the pet passport.

Import of dogs, cats and ferrets from third countries to Finland

A. Import from low-risk countries

The requirements set down in this section concern the following countries:

I. Andorra	II. Antigua and Barbuda	Mauritius
Iceland	Aruba	Mayotte
Liechtenstein	Ascension Island	Montserrat
Monaco	Australia	Netherlands Antilles
San Marino	Bahrain	New Caledonia
Switzerland	Barbados	New Zealand
Vatican City	Bermuda	Saint Helena
	Canada	Saint Kitts and Nevis
	Cayman Islands	Saint Pierre et Miquelon
	Croatia	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
	Falkland Islands	Singapore
	Fiji	United States
	French Polynesia	Vanuatu
	Jamaica	Wallis and Futuna
	Japan	

In order for the requirements for import set down in this section to apply, the animal must be transported from the countries listed above directly to Finland or so that the animal stays only in one or several of these countries between the country of origin and Finland. In transports by air or sea transiting another third country is also allowed provided that the animal stays on the premises of an international airport or closed in a vessel.

If the number of animals imported from category II countries is more than five, the conditions of so-called commercial imports apply. Further information on this is available at the Department of Food and Health of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Import of unvaccinated dogs and cats which are under three months old from the countries listed above may be allowed by Commission Decision, provided that this is allowed by the rabies status of

the country concerned. So far such decisions have not been made for any country, and import of unvaccinated young animals is not permitted.

1. Identification

The animal must be identified by a microchip or clearly readable tattoo. If the microchip does not comply with ISO Standard 11784 or Annex A to ISO Standard 11785, the importer must provide the means necessary for reading the microchip. As of 3 July 2011 only a microchip will be approved as identification. The animal must be identified before the rabies vaccination. The information on the identification of the animal must also be entered to the vaccination certificates.

2. Vaccination against rabies

The animal must have been vaccinated against rabies with an inactivated vaccine of at least one antigenic unit per dose (WHO standard). The rabies vaccination and revaccination, if necessary, must have been carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturing laboratory.

The rabies vaccines currently applied in Finland are valid for two years if vaccination is carried out when the animal is over one year old.

3. Echinococcus treatment

Dogs and cats must be accompanied by a certificate issued by a veterinarian showing that the animal has been given not more than 30 days before it arrives to Finland an appropriate dosage of medicine containing praziquantel against tapeworm causing echinococcosis approved for the species concerned.

Medication against echinococcosis is not required if the animal is brought back to Finland within 24 hours from leaving the country. Medication against echinococcosis is also not required for animals which are less than 12 weeks old and imported directly from Switzerland, Canada or the United States.

4. Veterinary certificate (or pet passport)

The animal must be accompanied by a certificate in accordance with Commission Decision 2004/203/EC issued by an official veterinarian or other veterinary surgeon authorised by the competent authority of the country of dispatch (third country) carrying the information on the animal's identification, rabies vaccination and echinococcus treatment. A certificate which is not issued by an official veterinarian must be endorsed by the competent authority of the country of dispatch. The entry concerning the medication against echinococcosis must be made by a veterinarian authorised to practice veterinary medicine in the country of dispatch. The certificate must be filled out in Finnish, Swedish or English.

The veterinary certificate must be accompanied by supporting documentation (or certified copy of it) including vaccination details. The original documents must also carry the information concerning the identification of the animal. A form for veterinary certificate is available at the Department of Food and Health of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

If a pet animal originally comes from an EU country and it is accompanied by a pet passport carrying the information required for import (parts I–IV and VII), the pet passport replaces the veterinary certificate.

B. Import from third countries not listed in section A

If the number of animals to be imported is more than five, the conditions of so-called commercial imports apply. Further information on this is available at the Department of Food and Health of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Young animals must also meet the following requirements.

1. Identification

The animal must be identified by a microchip or clearly readable tattoo. If the microchip does not comply with ISO Standard 11784 or Annex A to ISO Standard 11785, the importer must provide the means necessary for reading the microchip. As of 3 July 2011 only a microchip will be approved as identification. The animal must be identified before the rabies vaccination. The information on the identification of the animal must also be entered to the vaccination certificates and the result of the laboratory test.

2. Vaccination against rabies

The animal must have been vaccinated against rabies with an inactivated vaccine of at least one antigenic unit per dose (WHO standard). The rabies vaccination and revaccination, if necessary, must have been carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturing laboratory.

The rabies vaccines currently applied in Finland are valid for two years if vaccination is carried out when the animal is over one year old.

3. Rabies serological test

A rabies antibody titration must be carried out on the animal prior to import. An authorised veterinarian must take a blood sample for examination no less than 30 days after the rabies vaccination and at least three months before import. The antibody test must be carried out in a laboratory approved by the EU (in Finland the National Veterinary and Food Research Institute EELA). The neutralising antibody titre must be at least equal to 0.5 IU/ml. This antibody test need not be repeated on an animal which has been regularly revaccinated as required by the vaccine manufacturing laboratory.

If the animal originally comes from the EU territory and the rabies antibody titration has been carried out prior to export outside the EU, it is not necessary to wait for three months after taking the blood sample before the animal can be re-imported to the EU territory. However, the period between the vaccination and taking of the blood sample must be at least 30 days. The animal must be accompanied by a pet passport carrying an entry by the veterinarian concerning the antibody titration.

A list of the approved laboratories in other countries is available at the Department of Food and Health of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry or on the Internet at <http://forum.europa.eu.int/irc/sanco/vets/info/data/lab/lab.htm>

4. Echinococcus treatment

Dogs and cats must be accompanied by a certificate issued by a veterinarian showing that the animal has been given not more than 30 days before it arrives to Finland an appropriate dosage of medicine containing praziquantel against tapeworm causing echinococcosis approved for the species concerned.

Medication against echinococcosis is not required if the animal is brought back to Finland within 24 hours from leaving the country.

5. Veterinary certificate (or pet passport)

The animal must be accompanied by a certificate in accordance with Commission Decision 2004/203/EC issued by an official veterinarian or other veterinary surgeon authorised by the competent authority of the country of dispatch (third country) carrying the information on the animal's identification, rabies vaccination, rabies serological test and echinococcus treatment. A certificate which is not issued by an official veterinarian must be endorsed by the competent authority of the country of dispatch. The entry concerning the medication against echinococcosis must be made by a veterinarian authorised to practice veterinary medicine in the country of dispatch. The certificate must be filled out in Finnish, Swedish or English.

The veterinary certificate must be accompanied by supporting documentation (or certified copy of it) including vaccination details and the result of the laboratory test. The original documents must also carry the information concerning the identification of the animal. A form for veterinary certificate is available at the Department of Food and Health of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

If a pet animal originally comes from an EU country and it is accompanied by a pet passport carrying the information required for import (parts I–V and VII), the pet passport replaces the veterinary certificate.

If an animal imported from a third country does not meet the requirements described above, by an official decision of the authority the animal is

- a) returned to the country of origin, or
- b) isolated under official control at the cost of the importer for the time necessary for it to meet the requirements, or
- c) as a last resort, where its return or isolation in quarantine is not possible, put down.

If the document concerning the medication against echinococcosis is deficient so that the customs authority cannot allow the import of the animal based on it, the customs authority may order the animal to be sent to quarantine approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry at the cost of the importer. Where this is not possible, the customs authority may undertake other measures laid down in section 16 of the Act on Veterinary Border Inspection.

If an animal enters Finland without an accompanying person, the conditions of so-called commercial imports apply. Further information on this is available at the Department of Food and Health of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

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