

Ref: AE-US 09L

3 October 2014

Information sheet – Dogs and Cats to the United States of America (excluding Hawaii)

The importation of cats and dogs into the USA is regulated mainly by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the destination State.

New Zealand is considered to be “rabies-free” for the purposes of CDC’s dog importation regulations. Accordingly, dogs and cats that are imported from New Zealand are not required to be rabies vaccinated as long as they have spent the 6 months prior to arrival in the United States (or since birth, if less than 6 months old) in New Zealand. CDC’s animal importation regulations are available at: www.cdc.gov/animalimportation/

However, Individual states in the USA require vaccination of dogs and cats for rabies and health certificate requirements. Check with state and local health authorities at your final destination before you plan your pet’s export to the USA. State Regulations for Importing Animals are available at: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/importexport?urlile=wcm%3apath%3a%2Faphis_content_library%2Fsa_our_focus%2Fsa_animal_health%2Fsa_import_into_us%2Fsa_entry_requirements%2Fct_us%2Bstate_and_territory_animal_import_regulations

Notwithstanding the fact that no MPI Official veterinary certificates are required for dogs and cats being exported to the United States*, most airlines will not accept animals for shipment to this country unless they are accompanied by a veterinary certificate of health signed by a registered veterinarian stating that the animal is fit to travel. Such certificates must be written on headed veterinary practice note paper. Veterinarians signing any certificate must ensure that their name and qualifications are typed or printed beneath their signatures.

For Hawaii’s import requirements please see the OMAR for cats and dogs to Hawaii: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/exports/animals/omars/domaniec.haw.htm>

The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has amended the regulations to their Animal Welfare Act (AWA) to restrict the importation of certain live dogs.

This rule prohibits the importation of dogs, with limited exceptions, from any part of the world into the continental United States or Hawaii for purposes of resale, research, or veterinary treatment, unless the dogs are in good health, have received all necessary vaccinations, and are at least 6 months of age. The new rules come into effect from November 17, 2014. Information about this rule is available at this website link: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/08/18/2014-19515/animal-welfare-importation-of-live-dogs>

*Note: An Animal Welfare Export Certificate (AWEC) is required for all cats and dogs exported from New Zealand to the USA. Please see the MPI website for details:

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/animal-welfare/stds/awecs>

