

VS Guidance 14001.2

Procedures for Submitting Equine Serum Samples to the United States for Pre-Import Testing

1. Purpose and Background

This document outlines the procedures for submitting equine serum samples to the United States for pre-import testing. Pre-import test results are for informational purposes only and to help horse serum importers decide to import serum from a particular horse into the United States. Pre-import test results do not confer the horse or serum's eligibility to enter the United States.

This guidance document represents the Agency's position on this topic and is intended solely as guidance. It does not have the force and effect of law, does not create, or confer any rights for or on any person, and does not bind the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the public. Language suggesting that this guidance is mandatory (e.g., "shall," "must," "required," or "requirement") should not be construed as binding unless the terms quote from a statutory or regulatory requirement. The information this document contains may be made available to the public. While this document provides guidance for users outside APHIS, APHIS employees may not deviate from the directions provided herein without appropriate justification and supervisory concurrence.

2. Document Status

- A. Review date: 10/15/2026.
- B. This document replaces VS Guidance 14001.1, which is canceled.

3. Reason for Reissuance

VS is reissuing this document to update the status of the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) as an additional permittee, as well as methods for accessing and filling forms and user fees.

4. Authority and References

- A. Authorities (*Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR)):

- [7 CFR 371.4](#)
 - [9 CFR part 93](#)
 - [9 CFR part 122](#)
 - [9 CFR part 130](#)

- B. References

- [VS Form 16-3, Application for Permit to Import Controlled Material, Import or Transport Organisms or Vectors](#)
 - [VS Form 10-4, Specimen Submission](#)

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5. Audience

VS employees, other federal and state agencies, and members of the public.

6. Guidance

A. Permits

- 1) Veterinary Services (VS) will issue a permit to the importer or broker, with the NVSL as an additional permittee, to cover the importation of equine serum samples for up to one (1) year. A copy of the permit must accompany each shipment of serum samples.
- 2) To obtain a permit, the importer must submit a [VS Form 16-3, Application for Permit to Import Controlled Material, Import or Transport Organisms or Vectors](#). Importers can find instructions on filling out the form online [here](#). Please visit the [Animal Health Permit](#) website for instructions on applying for a permit renewal or to amend a permit.
- 3) There is a cost to process each application for a permit. Importers can find the current processing fees on the [VS Import Export fee page](#). Importers and brokers should pay fees using credit cards (MasterCard, Visa, or American Express) in U.S. currency unless they have established a user fee account. Please do not send cash.
- 4) Permits are typically issued for one (1) year and can be amended during that year (no change to total duration) and renewed close to expiration. Importers can submit renewals and amendment applications as outlined above. Renewal requests should note any changes from the original application and permit issued.

B. Sample Submission

- 1) A [VS Form 10-4, Specimen Submission](#), must accompany each shipment of serum samples. If all samples are not to receive the same tests, please list each sample identification separately in space 21 (additional data). The hyperlinked form includes detailed instructions for completion.
- 2) Instructions for processing and submitting serum samples
 - a. Blood collection: Draw blood and allow it to clot. Remove the serum and transfer at least five (5) ml of the serum into a second tube. The serum should be the color of straw with little to no red tinge (no hemolysis). ***Serum with aggregates of clot or evidence of contamination or hemolysis will be discarded immediately.*** Serum submitted in clot tubes, serum separation tubes, or glass tubes is unacceptable. Tubes must be leakproof, round-bottomed, made of

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polypropylene or polystyrene, and approximately twelve (12) by seventy-five (75) mm in size. Submit a second serum sample for any horse being tested for equine infectious anemia.

b. Serum samples

1. Individually identify the serum tubes with the tube number, the animal's name, and a tattoo or registration number, if available. Record the information directly on the tubes or a label applied individually to each tube.
2. Refrigerate samples before and during shipment. Do not add preservatives of any kind to the sample. Send clear, undiluted serum only.
3. Include a copy of the import permit with the shipping documentation on the outside of the package.
4. Send samples, preferably by air mail, to:

National Veterinary Services Laboratories
1920 Dayton Ave.
Ames, IA 50010
5. The importer or broker must arrange for the pickup of the containers from the airline freight terminals and delivery to NVSL (if necessary). NVSL prefers samples to be shipped to it directly. NVSL will accept hand-carried samples **ONLY** if placed in a container sealed with an official seal of the national government of the country where the samples originated. All samples must be declared to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) on arrival. Shipping containers will not be opened until delivered to the laboratory (except in cases when CBP or USDA port inspectors believe a port of arrival inspection is necessary). In these instances, the containers will be resealed, signed, and dated by the inspector. The laboratory ***will not process*** containers showing evidence of being opened without signatures and date.
6. NVSL will furnish results by email to the person designated as the submitter of record (i.e., either the permittee or broker or the primary submitter). Do not call NVSL for laboratory results.
7. NVSL will not authorize overtime to run these tests.
8. User fees for the cost of the laboratory tests must be paid when the samples are submitted to the laboratory.

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9. Contact the User Fee Help Line ((515) 337-6200) to establish an account or to obtain a current price list for tests.

7. Inquiries

Please contact the User Fee Help Line at (515) 337-6200 for further inquiries.