

repayment or the date interest increases as determined in accordance with applicable regulations. FSA may waive the accrual of interest if FSA determines that the cause of the erroneous determination was not due to any action of the producer.

(d) Interest determined in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section may not be waived on refunds required of the producer when there was no intentional misaction on the part of the producer, as determined by FSA.

(e) Late payment interest shall be assessed on all refunds in accordance with the provisions of, and subject to the rates prescribed in, 7 CFR part 792.

(f) Producers must refund to FSA any excess payments made by FSA with respect to such application.

(g) In the event that a benefit under this subpart was provided as the result of erroneous information provided by any producer, the benefit must be repaid with any applicable interest.

Signed in Washington, D.C., on October 25, 2000.

Keith Kelly,

Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.

[FR Doc. 00-27794 Filed 10-27-00; 10:26 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

9 CFR Part 94

[Docket No. 00-104-1]

Change in Disease Status of KwaZulu-Natal Province in the Republic of South Africa Because of Rinderpest and Foot-and-Mouth Disease

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Interim rule and request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are amending the regulations governing the importation of certain animals, meat, and other animal products by removing KwaZulu-Natal, a province in the Republic of South Africa, from the list of regions considered to be free of rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease. We are taking this action because the existence of foot-and-mouth disease has been confirmed there. The effect of this action is to prohibit or restrict the importation of any ruminant or swine and any fresh (chilled or frozen) meat and other products of ruminants or swine into the United States from KwaZulu-Natal.

DATES: This interim rule was effective September 12, 2000. We invite you to comment on this docket. We will consider all comments that we receive by January 2, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to: Docket No. 00-104-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 00-104-1.

You may read any comments that we receive on this docket in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690-2817 before coming.

APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register**, and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Glen Garris, Supervisory Staff Officer, Regionalization Evaluation Services Staff, National Center for Import and Export, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; (301) 734-4356.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of specified animals and animal products into the United States in order to prevent the introduction of various animal diseases including rinderpest, foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), African swine fever, hog cholera, and swine vesicular disease. These are dangerous and destructive communicable diseases of ruminants and swine. Section 94.1 of the regulations lists regions of the world that are declared free of rinderpest or free of both rinderpest and FMD. Rinderpest or FMD exists in all other regions of the world not listed. Section 94.11 of the regulations lists regions of the world that have been declared to be free of rinderpest and FMD, but are subject to certain restrictions because of their proximity to or trading relationships with rinderpest-or FMD-affected regions.

Prior to the effective date of this interim rule, the Republic of South

Africa, except the FMD-controlled area that includes Kruger National Park, was among the listed regions in §§ 94.1 and 94.11 considered to be free of rinderpest and FMD. However, on September 12, 2000, a suspected outbreak of FMD was detected in the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal; on September 17, 2000, the Republic of South Africa's National Department of Agriculture (National Department of Agriculture) notified the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) with clinical confirmation of the FMD diagnosis.

Therefore, to protect the livestock of the United States from FMD, we are amending the regulations in § 94.1 by removing the province of KwaZulu-Natal from the list of regions considered to be free of rinderpest and FMD. We are also removing KwaZulu-Natal from the list of regions in § 94.11 that are considered to be free of these diseases, but are subject to certain restrictions because of their proximity to or trading relationships with rinderpest-or FMD-affected regions. Other regions of the Republic of South Africa, with the exception of the FMD-controlled area that includes Kruger National Park, will remain on the list of regions considered to be free of rinderpest and FMD. As a result of this action, the importation into the United States of any ruminant or swine and any fresh (chilled or frozen) meat and other products of ruminants or swine that left KwaZulu-Natal on or after September 12, 2000, is prohibited or restricted. We are making these amendments effective on September 12, 2000, because that is the day that FMD was initially detected in KwaZulu-Natal.

Although we are removing the province of KwaZulu-Natal from the list of regions considered to be free of rinderpest and FMD, we recognize that the National Department of Agriculture responded immediately to the detection of the disease by imposing restrictions on the movement of ruminants, swine, and ruminant and swine products from the affected area and initiating measures to eradicate the disease. At the time of publication of this interim rule, it appears that the outbreak is well controlled. Because of the National Department of Agriculture's efforts to ensure that FMD does not spread beyond the province of KwaZulu-Natal, we intend to reassess the situation in accordance with the standards of the OIE. As part of that reassessment process, we will consider all comments received on this interim rule. This future reassessment will determine whether it is necessary to continue to prohibit or restrict the importation of ruminants or swine and any fresh

(chilled or frozen) meat and other products of ruminants or swine from KwaZulu-Natal, or whether we can restore the province of KwaZulu-Natal to the list of regions considered free of rinderpest and FMD.

Emergency Action

This rulemaking is necessary on an emergency basis to prevent the introduction of FMD into the United States. Under these circumstances, the Administrator has determined that prior notice and opportunity for public comment are contrary to the public interest and that there is good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553 for making this rule effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**.

We will consider comments that are received within 60 days of publication of this rule in the **Federal Register**. After the comment period closes, we will publish another document in the **Federal Register**. The document will include a discussion of any comments we receive and any amendments we are making to the rule as a result of the comments.

Executive Order 12866 and Regulatory Flexibility Act

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12866. For this action, the Office of Management and Budget has waived its review process required by Executive Order 12866.

This interim rule amends the regulations by removing the Republic of South Africa province of KwaZulu-Natal from the list of regions considered free of rinderpest and FMD. We are taking this action because the Republic of South Africa's National Department of Agriculture has reported cases of FMD in that region. This action prohibits or restricts the importation into the United States of any ruminant or swine, and any fresh (chilled or frozen) meat and other products of ruminants or swine, that left the province of KwaZulu-Natal on or after September 12, 2000. This action is necessary to protect the livestock of the United States from FMD.

This emergency situation makes timely compliance with section 604 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) impracticable. We are currently assessing the potential economic effects of this action on small entities. Based on that assessment, we will either certify that the rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities or publish a final regulatory flexibility analysis.

Executive Order 12988

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. This rule: (1) Preempts all State and local laws and regulations that are inconsistent with this rule; (2) has retroactive effect to September 12, 2000; and (3) does not require administrative proceedings before parties may file suit in court challenging this rule.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This rule contains no new information collection or recordkeeping requirements under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

List of Subjects in 9 CFR Part 94

Animal diseases, Imports, Livestock, Meat and meat products, Milk, Poultry and poultry products, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Accordingly, we are amending 9 CFR part 94 as follows:

PART 94 RINDERPEST, FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE, FOWL PEST (FOWL PLAGUE), EXOTIC NEWCASTLE DISEASE, AFRICAN SWINE FEVER, HOG CHOLERA, AND BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY: PROHIBITED AND RESTRICTED IMPORTATIONS

1. The authority citation for part 94 continues to read as follows:

Authority: Title IV, Pub. L. 106–224, 114 Stat. 438, 7 U.S.C. 7701–7772; 7 U.S.C. 450; 19 U.S.C. 1306; 21 U.S.C. 111, 114a, 134a, 134b, 134c, 134f, 136, and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 42 U.S.C. 4331 and 4332; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

§ 94.1 [Amended]

2. In § 94.1, paragraph (a)(2) is amended by adding the words “the province of KwaZulu-Natal and” immediately after the words “Republic of South Africa except”.

§ 94.11 [Amended]

3. In § 94.11, paragraph (a) is amended by adding the words “the province of KwaZulu-Natal and” immediately after the words “Republic of South Africa except”.

Done in Washington, DC, this 27th day of October 2000.

Bobby R. Acord,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 00–28084 Filed 10–30–00; 1:56 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

9 CFR Part 97

[Docket No. 00–049–1]

Commuted Traveltime Periods: Overtime Services Relating to Imports and Exports

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are amending the regulations concerning overtime services provided by employees of Veterinary Services by adding a commuted traveltime allowance for travel between Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport and the metropolitan area. Commuted traveltime allowances are the periods of time required for Veterinary Services employees to travel from their dispatch points and return there from the places where they perform Sunday, holiday, or other overtime duty. The Government charges a fee for certain overtime services provided by Veterinary Services employees and, under certain circumstances, the fee may include the cost of commuted traveltime. This action is necessary to inform the public of the commuted traveltime for this location.

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 2, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Louise Rakestraw Lothery, Director, Management Support Staff, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 44, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; (301) 734–7517.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The regulations in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D, and 7 CFR, chapter III, require inspection, laboratory testing, certification, or quarantine of certain animals, animal products, plants, plant products, or other commodities intended for importation into, or exportation from, the United States.

When these services must be provided by an employee of Veterinary Services (VS) on a Sunday or holiday, or at any other time outside the VS employee's regular duty hours, the Government charges a fee for the services in accordance with 9 CFR part 97. Under circumstances described in § 97.1(a), this fee may include the cost of commuted traveltime. Section 97.2 contains administrative instructions prescribing commuted traveltime allowances, which reflect, as nearly as