

Following the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic and other extenuating circumstances, APHIS VS continues to support its industry partners by maintaining the export product facility listing process. This support includes extending the effective end date of the current temporary grace period policy until **February 1, 2023**.

To further explain, the temporary grace period policy enables certain eligible facilities to continue receiving export certification or supplying materials for manufacturing of products for export for an additional 6 months beyond their 12-month approval [until 18 months after their last validated inspection date (LVID)] OR until **February 1, 2023**, whichever comes first. Facilities should strive to renew their listings prior to those dates to avoid any trade disruptions. This policy extension does not automatically apply to all listing types because it is not allowed by some bilateral agreements and other requirements of certain importing countries. Attempting to circumvent these agreements and requirements could potentially result in closed markets. Therefore, exporters are encouraged to reach out to their Service Centers early in their listing process with any questions regarding their specific facilities.

Currently, APHIS VS strives to ensure facilities have every appropriate opportunity to meet the requirements to retain eligibility to export while also maintaining market access for many US commodities. As all involved parties - VS, industry groups, individual companies, and our trading partners - work together to achieve this common goal, we are optimistic that it can be reached. Facilities that are approaching the 12-month anniversary of their LVID should have already contacted their local Veterinary Services Service Center to initiate the annual validation process and should respond promptly to any follow up requests from those VS Service Centers. We recommend that facilities seeking to re-validate their listing submit any pre-inspection documents and respond to any questions or requests for revisions in a timely manner to prevent delays in scheduling the inspection or listing their facility.

If a facility is in the process of renewal but has not heard anything from their local VS Service Center within the previous 2 weeks or more, we recommend the facilities reach out to their local VS Service Center for an update. APHIS VS employees are committed to processing these requests and any related inspections in an expeditious manner. To assist us in this effort, it would also be helpful if facilities that do not intend to seek revalidation contacted their local VS Service Center with their intention to withdraw from the program as soon as they decide.

As always, APHIS appreciates our industry partners' in promoting and supporting American agriculture. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Magde Elshafie at Magde.Elshafie@usda.gov

This temporary policy does not mean that all facilities are automatically either granted a 6-month extension, or are automatically eligible for certificate endorsement until February 1, 2023. Industry members should check with their service center to verify whether the temporary policy applies to their specific commodities and destination countries.

For specific questions, please encourage your members to reach out to their local Service Center for additional guidance and clarifications.