

The Approved Establishment Program: Guidance for Approved Facilities

There are certain serious animal diseases that could enter the U.S. through imported animal trophies, their hides or their feathers – but with proper processing, the disease agents are destroyed. To ensure that trophies are safely imported, APHIS developed the Approved Establishment program. Approved Establishments allow these items, known as restricted imports, to enter the United States while still protecting U.S. livestock and poultry from disease.

Your Role As An Approved Establishment

Approved Establishments and Approved Warehouses play a very important role in protecting our nation's agriculture.

As an Approved Establishment or an Approved Warehouse, you will be handling these materials appropriately to prevent the introduction of foreign animal diseases. Approved Establishments will follow approved treatment methods to kill/deactivate the disease agents of concern. These methods may be different than those used on U.S.-origin trophies. After the processing is complete, you will release the materials back to the hunter or importer.

Approved Establishments and Approved Warehouses are inspected and approved annually by USDA. You will ensure that required paperwork is completed and submitted in a timely manner. You will also work with your inspector to ensure the proper staff training takes place.

Always Remember Biosecurity!

Biosecurity is essential for preventing the spread of infectious diseases. All Approved Establishments and Approved Warehouses need to have a customized biosecurity plan. Consider the basics below when developing your plan, in conjunction with your inspector.

- Act as if all restricted imports are contaminated with animal diseases.
- Store and treat restricted imports separately from other items.
- Use separate or disposable clothing (aprons, gloves, etc.) when handling restricted materials. Change into new clothes before working with unrestricted items. Wash or dispose of used clothing.
- Disinfect all floors, tables, instruments and packing materials after any contact with restricted materials and after each use.

WHAT NEEDS TO GO TO AN APPROVED ESTABLISHMENT?

Unfinished animal trophies, hides and feathers that come from areas of the world with the following foreign animal diseases must undergo special processing to protect against introducing those diseases into the U.S.:

- highly pathogenic avian influenza (for bird/poultry items)
- virulent Newcastle disease (for bird/poultry items)
- foot-and-mouth disease (for split-hooved animal items)
- African swine fever (for swine items)

The following items may enter without a permit or foreign certificate and do not need to go to an approved establishment:

- finished/mounted trophies
- cleaned and dried bones, antlers, horns and hooves being used as trophies
- flint dried hides from countries without African swine fever
- trophy/display materials from rabbits, rodents, fish, shellfish and non-human primates

These items may still fall under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention import restrictions.

- Wash your hands before and after working with restricted imports.
- Dispose of trimmings and waste as soon as possible. Be sure to follow any local regulations regarding disposal.
- Keep all animals, including pets, away from restricted imports and waste products.
- Implement a pest control program to prevent rodents, birds and other pests from having contact with restricted imports and related materials.
- When in doubt, always handle materials as if they are restricted imports.

Biosecurity needs to be part of your daily routine. Make sure you and all employees follow biosecurity procedures at all times.

What Does the Approved Establishment Program Cost the Hunter?

USDA does not charge hunters or importers for the Approved Establishment program. However, you can charge hunters and importers for processing and handling.

What Does the Approved Establishment Program Cost Me?

USDA charges all Approved Establishments and Approved Warehouses an annual fee. This covers our inspection and your authorization/approval letter. The fees vary and will be explained by your assigned inspector.

What Do I Need to Do to Become An Approved Establishment?

Taxidermists who wish to become an Approved Establishment or an Approved Warehouse should first contact their [local Veterinary Services service center](#). The service center will provide you with information about the inspection, fees, and responsibilities associated with becoming an Approved Establishment.

For More Information

Your first stop for questions should always be your assigned inspector. If you cannot get in touch with him or her, you can also contact your local [Veterinary Services service center](#) to begin the process.

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/approvedestablishments>