



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Elliptical Road, Diliman
1100 Quezon City

June 11, 2020

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

No. 25
Series of 2020

SUBJECT: INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF ELECTRONIC VETERINARY HEALTH CERTIFICATES (e-CERT)

WHEREAS, Electronic documents shall have the legal effect, validity or enforceability as any other document or legal writing pursuant to Republic Act No. 8792 s.2000 also known as the "Electronic Commerce Act";

WHEREAS, Article 10.2 to 10.4 of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement provides that "Each Member shall, where appropriate, endeavor to accept paper or electronic copies of supporting documents required for import, export, or transit; Use relevant international standards or parts thereof as a basis for their import, export, or transit formalities and procedures" which in theory would apply to standards relevant for ecommerce as well; and Endeavor to establish or maintain a single window, enabling traders to submit documentation and/or data requirements for importation, exportation, or transit of goods through a single-entry point to the participating authorities or agencies."

WHEREAS, the Department has existing e-cert acceptance agreements for International Veterinary Certificate (IVC) or Health Certificate (HC) in 2008 with New Zealand and Australia in 2010; the submission of the IVC or HC is part of the SPS Import requirements for animal and animal products to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Philippines in accordance with the OIE standards;


WHEREAS, the direct experience of using these e-cert systems at the first border has strengthened the government's confidence and capability to consider expanding its current list of trading partners for the acceptance of electronic IVC/ HC;

WHEREAS, given the global disruption caused by ongoing COVID-19 cases worldwide, there is a need to optimize government processes to ensure business continuity in this challenging time and beyond;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM D. DAR, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, by the authority vested on me by law hereby institutionalize the acceptance of electronic Health Certificate with its corresponding e-signatures for animals and animal products as legal and functional equivalent of paper-based certifications issued by the counterpart Competent Authority of exporting country. In order to facilitate its full implementation, the following shall be authorized:

1. The Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) is the recipient of electronic health certificates from trading partners for imported animals and animal products. The BAI may accept, reject or request the revision of the certificate and share the information on the certificate with other agencies;
2. The BAI shall coordinate the requirements of electronic health certificates for inclusion in the System or Individual Accreditation (CSA or CFMEA) agreements with the Competent Authority of the source country;
3. DA-ICTS to enhance current IT interoperability and interconnectivity capabilities to support the expanded acceptance of electronic health certificates in accordance with international standards or methods;
4. BAI may issue guidelines, such as, but not limited to, the terms of use for the purposes of its implementation.

This ORDER shall take effect immediately.


WILLIAM D. DAR, PhD
Secretary

A food-secure Philippines

ous farmers and fisherfolk

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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