

The Codifier of Rules approved emergency rule 02 NCAC 52B .0214 adopted by the Board of Agriculture and the Commissioner of Agriculture. The emergency rule will be effective on July 13, 2021.

The notice for the proposed temporary rulemaking is posted on the OAH website:

<https://files.nc.gov/ncoah/documents/Rules/02-NCAC-52B-.0214-proposed-temporary-rule.pdf>

Reason for Action: *This rule is necessary for preventing the introduction and mitigation of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus - 2 ("RHDV-2"). RHDV-2 is a highly contagious and always fatal disease for both domesticated and wild rabbits. Many times, the only signs of the disease are sudden death and blood stained noses caused by internal bleeding. Infected rabbits may also develop a fever, be hesitant to eat, or show respiratory or nervous signs. RHDV-2 is a foreign animal disease and has spread to multiple states, including the Southwest, West, Midwest, and Florida. Cases were also detected in New York City, and more recently, Georgia. Currently, there are no import restrictions or any monitoring requirements for the importation of rabbits into North Carolina. Furthermore, the Veterinary Division is aware of the practice of at least one business group that travels from state to state, buying and selling rabbits, including in RHDV-2 detected states, prior to importing commingled rabbits to North Carolina, a practice that increases the risk of disease spread. This emergency rule will establish permitting and health certificate requirements for rabbits that are imported from RHDV-2 detected countries and states so that the Veterinary Division may monitor the imported rabbits for RHDV-2 and have the information at hand for disease tracing and quarantine in the event of the disease being introduced. Due to the concerns of RHDV-2 being introduced and causing deaths of both wild and domesticated rabbits, emergency adoption of the rule is required.*

CHAPTER 52 - VETERINARY

SUBCHAPTER 52B - ANIMAL DISEASE

SECTION .0200 - ADMISSION OF LIVESTOCK TO NORTH CAROLINA

02 NCAC 52B .0214 IMPORTATION REQUIREMENTS: RABBITS

(a) An import permit from the State Veterinarian is required for the importation of a rabbit into the State of North Carolina originating from:

- (1) any country or state with Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus-2 ("RHDV-2") detected; or
- (2) a state or country without RHDV-2 if the rabbit makes any intervening stop in a country or state with RHDV-2 detected, if the rabbit is commingled or exposed to any other rabbit not being shipped directly from the point of origin together, or if the imported rabbit is exposed to materials such as cages, beddings, and supplies that have been in contact with another rabbit not shipped directly from the point of origin together.

(b) The rabbit import permit application shall be accompanied by an official health certificate certifying the rabbit to be free from any contagious animal disease, including RHDV-2.

- (1) If the rabbit is shipped directly without any intervening stops, without commingling or exposure to any other rabbit not being shipped directly from the point of origin together, and without exposure to materials such as cages, beddings, and supplies that have been in contact with another rabbit not shipped directly from the point of origin together, then the official health certificate shall be obtained within seven days of the date of importation into North Carolina.

(2) If the rabbit is shipped with intervening stops, with commingling or exposure to another rabbit not being shipped directly from the point of origin together, or with exposure to materials such as cages, beddings, and supplies that have been in contact with another rabbit not shipped directly from the point of origin together, then the official health certificate shall be obtained from the location of the last intervening stop, commingling, or exposure, and within seven days of the date of importation into North Carolina.

(c) No permit is needed for direct shipment of a rabbit from a country or state without RHDV-2 or if the rabbit makes intervening stops only in countries or states without RHDV-2, the rabbit is not commingled or exposed to another rabbit not shipped directly from the point of origin together, and the rabbit is not exposed to materials such as cages, beddings, and supplies that have been in contact with another rabbit not shipped directly from the point of origin together.

(d) The application for rabbit importation shall include the arrival date, the import destination within the State of North Carolina, a contact person and phone number at that location, and any federal licensing, permit, and documentation required for the importation of the rabbit if imported from outside of the United States of America.

(e) A rabbit requiring an import permit that is imported into North Carolina shall be accompanied by an official health certificate with the import permit number and shall be made available for inspection by the State Veterinarian or his or her designee upon request.

(f) An intervening stop is defined as a stop in a country or state longer than 24 hours but less than 10 days. The location of any stop for longer than 10 days shall be deemed the new country or state of origin.

(g) Health certificates issued outside of the United States shall be issued in English and by a veterinarian with a valid license to practice veterinary medicine in the country of export.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 106-317; 106-400;
Emergency Adoption Eff. July 13, 2021.*