



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

DECOL

DAERA EXPORT HEALTH CERTIFICATION ON LINE



**Authorised Veterinary Practice Portal:
Frequently Asked Questions**

FOR EXPORTER USERS

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DECOL - BACKGROUND

DECOL is the online application system for Third Country Export Health Certificates in Northern Ireland.

It was introduced to underpin the Export Health Certification (EHC) service provided by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

Local industry and DAERA Staff have been using the system since 2019 in the export of animals and animal products from Northern Ireland.

INTRODUCING THE AVP PORTAL

Over the past year, the DAERA Trade Program team have been developing a new facility on the DECOL Platform.

Called the **AVP Portal**, this new service provides controlled access to DECOL EHC application details for Authorised Veterinary Practice (AVP) staff.

The Portal facilitates certification across the full range of AVP certified commodities, using the DECOL online functions.

The first phase of AVPs were added to the Portal during April and May 2024, ahead of the official service launch on 10 June 2024.

This guide is intended to answer exporter queries raised after launch of the new AVP Portal service.

Export Application Process – An Overview

- Animal or product export requirements are identified from the [DAERA Website](#);
- Export Health Certificate (EHC) template obtained using [APHA Form Finder](#) or [DAERA Website](#);
- EHC downloaded and completed by exporter with unique export details;
- Exporter creates a DECOL application, uploading their completed EHC in Portable Document Format (PDF) along with associated supporting documents;
- Depending on commodity, applications are administered online by:
 - DAERA Customer Services Branch (CSB) at regional offices across Northern Ireland;
 - Local Authority (Council) Officers and staff.
- EHC's are certified by:
 - DAERA Certifying Officers;
 - Food Competent Certifying Officers (Local Authority);
 - authorised Private Veterinary Practitioners (aPVPs).
- For DAERA, EHC application is provided to the relevant Certifying Officer team for review, online DECOL actions and certification.
- For aPVPs **with** a Portal presence, EHC application is transferred to the exporters authorised Private Veterinary Practitioner (aPVP), to assess documentation and certify export.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will all AVPs be using the Portal?

Not initially. The intention is that all practices actively certifying DECOL EHCs will be connected to the Portal on a phased basis.

Phase One saw the most frequently used AVPs 'on-boarded' so they can access the new service and set up veterinary staff and administrative users.

As Phase One concluded, the Portal was officially launched, with the initial tranche of practices beginning to see applications made available for certification.

Have AVPs been informed of this new service?

Yes, DAERA Trade Programme has provided full information on the process for accessing the Portal, and how to use it, to all AVPs providing certification of DECOL EHCs to NI exporters.

As an exporter, how will I know what has changed?

The [online guide to making a DECOL application](#) has been updated.

This advises on what additional action is required when making an online application.

What has changed for EHC applications?

There are changes to processes for applying and processing EHCs using DECOL.

System user groups will experience the following changes:

Making the DECOL Application

- **Exporters** – Users have a new drop-down search function as part of Step 1 within the DECOL online application process;
- This allows an exporter to search for and select the Practice that will certify their consignment;
- This new exporter entry field has 2 purposes:
 - notifies DAERA who will certify the consignment, and;
 - connects the application to their Portal (where the AVP has been on-boarded).

NOTE: Exporters whose AVP is using the Portal Service will no longer need to upload an aPVP Nomination Form.

DAERA processing of DECOL applications

- **DAERA staff assess application documentation** to ensure all certification requirements are met.
 - Missing documents or information will be requested from the exporter using the existing Request For Information (RFI) function;
 - Exporter input of relevant AVP details at the new drop-down point will allow DAERA to ‘transfer’ the application to the relevant practice for final assessment and certification.
- Once all requirements for certification are in place, DAERA staff will transfer the application to the relevant practice Portal.

AVP Processing / Final Certification

- DECOL email notification received by AVP team – advises that an EHC has been transferred for their attention and action;
- AVPs can access all export application documents, print the DECOL Generated EHC for final certification;
- AVPs will provide the final signed certificate to the exporter, and ensure DAERA receives a copy using their Portal.

Exporters currently using aPVPs must submit a ‘Nomination of aPVP Form’ with their online DECOL application – will this continue?

Exporters will no longer have to upload an aPVP Nomination Form **if their AVP is using the Portal Service.**

However, all other DECOL applications to be certified by a practice **not yet** using the Portal, **must** include a fully completed [**aPVP Nomination Form**](#).

Will SHA follow DECOL into the AVP Portal?

Yes. Once DECOL has successfully launched in the AVP Portal, Trade Programme intend to introduce SHA Online.

This will mean that practices who also provide SHA certification services will be able to access applications using their Portal.

This will be some time away however - further details on SHA in the Portal and the impacts on user groups will be made available at the appropriate time.

Where can I get further information?

The DECOL Exporter Guide has been updated with all the information required to allow selection of Portal AVPs.

This is available on the DAERA Website, using the link below:

www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/instructions-using-daera-export-certification-online-decol-system