

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

Code Book

The regulations in this Code Book are hereby adopted by the Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission under authority of Amendment 35 to the Constitution of the State of Arkansas. All laws, rules, regulations, or orders in conflict with the regulations in this Code Book are hereby repealed by the Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission.

11.01 Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia Virus Fish Importation Requirements

For purposes of these requirements, the following definitions shall apply:

Appropriate Fish Sample- 150 fish representing all fish lots and culture units present on a farm or facility. The ratio of fish lots on the farm or facility should be reflected in the composition of the sample. The sample should not be collected from tanks or raceways used for short-term storage of fish produced in other culture units.

Appropriate Season- The first day of spring until the first day of summer and the first day of fall until the first day of winter.

Appropriate Testing Methods- Cell culture followed by an appropriate confirmatory test. The protocol must be as described in the inspection section of the most recent edition of "American Fisheries Society - Fish Health Section Blue Book," or must be conducted according to approved protocols in a laboratory listed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service approved to test for VHSV.

Culture Units- Ponds, raceways, cages or other containments used to rear fish.

Farm-raised- Fish that spend their entire life (egg to sale) on a farm or commercial facility.

Lot- A group of fish of the same age, from the same broodfish, and that live on a single farm or facility in water from the same source.

Qualified Independent Party- A veterinarian, a fish health inspector certified by the Fish Health Section of the American Fisheries Society, or an employee of a state agency recognized as a competent authority for fish health and assigned by that agency to collect fish inspection samples and verify biosecurity.

Qualified Testing Laboratory- Any state, federal, or private laboratory recognized by the AGFC as competent to conduct fish inspections.

VHSV-free Water Source- Water from a well, borehole or spring (the spring must be covered and free of fish) which does not contain VHSV.

VHSV-positive State- Any state in the U.S. or any Canadian province listed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service as positive for viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Ontario and Quebec).

- A. A Fish Farm Health Inspection Permit may be issued to persons who submit on forms supplied by the Commission satisfactory documentary proof including the following information:
1. Proof an appropriate fish sample has been collected by a qualified independent party during the appropriate season and submitted to a fish health inspection laboratory for analysis;

2. Inspection reports from a qualified testing laboratory asserting the sample tested negative for VHSV by appropriate testing methods, and
 3. Written documentation from a qualified independent party asserting the fish are farm-raised, the farm or facility uses a VHSV-free water source, and fish or eggs to be shipped to Arkansas have not been mixed with, or potentially contaminated by, fish or water not meeting standards specified for a Fish Farm Health Inspection Permit. To be eligible for a Fish Farm Health Inspection Permit, a farm or facility must provide written documentation from a qualified independent party verifying the farm or facility has a biosecurity plan sufficient to prevent contamination of permit-eligible fish by ineligible fish or by water not from a VHSV-free source, and the farm or facility follows the biosecurity plan without exception. The fish health inspection report must be no more than 60 days old from the date of reported test results at time of application for Fish Farm Health Inspection Permit from Commission.
- B. An annual Fish Farm Health Inspection Permit is issued in 2 6-month intervals in compliance with Addendum [D1.01](#). The first interval is January 1 - June 30, and the second interval is July 1 - December 31. The second interval of the permit will be issued only after new semi-annual testing results are submitted to the Commission. Annual renewal may be granted based upon submission to the Commission of new documents as described above that include new semi-annual testing results. Failure to conduct a semi-annual inspection will result in a 1-year suspension of the Fish Farm Health Inspection Permit.
- C. **EXCEPTIONS:** A Fish Farm Health Inspection Permit shall not be required for import of live fish from a VHSV-positive state if:
1. The fish are moving to a state-inspected slaughter facility meeting the following criteria:
 - a. The slaughter facility must discharge wastewater into a municipal sewage system that includes wastewater disinfection; and
 - b. The slaughter facility must either render or compost offal, including carcasses.
 2. The fish are moving to a qualified diagnostic facility for disease testing.
 3. The fish are ornamentals and meet the following criteria:
 - a. The fish are moving directly to a home aquarium; and
 - b. The fish are moving to wholesale or retail distributors of ornamental fish and will be held in aquaria, tanks, or lined pools.