

# Notice on the Ministry of Agriculture' Strengthening the Supervision Work of Live Sheep Trans-provincial Transportation

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## INTRODUCTION

*Peste des petits ruminants*, also known as sheep sickness or small ruminant animal plague, is caused by small ruminants virus. It is highly contagious and causes animal diseases among goats, sheep and wild small ruminants. Goats and sheep are the natural reservoirs of the disease, and they can be infected with the onset of blue sheep, ibex, argali and other wild small ruminants and Asian water buffaloes, camels, etc. Animals will appear onset dyspnea, diarrhea, abortion, and even death. The incidence of sheep being susceptible to disease is usually more than 60%, and the mortality reaches above 50%, which may cause significant economic losses to sheep farmers directly.

In 2007, *peste des petits ruminants* were found for the first time in Tibet as well as in China. By the end of 2013, Yili, Hami, Aksu and other regions have been found to have *peste des petits ruminants*, followed by Gansu, Inner Mongolia, Shanxi, Guizhou, Guangzhou and other 19 provinces where a large number of sheep has died and the market demand of lamb products continues to decrease. *Peste des petits ruminants* spread mainly through the respiratory and digestive tracts. It often spreads through contact, and can be spread through direct contact with sick sheep. In order to prevent further spread of the epidemic, since the discovery of *peste des petits ruminants*' in China, the Ministry of Agriculture issued a notice requiring continuous *Peste des petits ruminants* prevention and control work and restricting living sheep transportation, including closing all living sheep market, pausing living sheep trade, pausing transporting live sheep, etc. The live sheep trade market suffered a huge impact from the epidemic and serious control measures.

On the one hand, there are direct economic losses caused by the death of a large number of sheep and the onset of disease prevention uninfected sheep need to pay high fees. On the other hand, the consumers who worry about food safety decline their demands of living sheep. The consumers had to change the consumption structure and look for other alternatives. *Peste des petits ruminants* do not infect human beings and do not belong to zoonotic disease, therefore, to some extent, strict supervision and quarantine measures can prevent the spread of the epidemic. In the case of living sheep market remaining sluggish, on July 2, the Ministry of Agriculture issued *Notice on the Ministry of Agriculture' Strengthening the Supervision Work of Live Sheep Trans-provincial Transportation*, to some extent easing restrictions for live sheep trans-provincial transportation to ensure effective supply and mutton sheep production development products.

### Main content

1. According to the immune and non-immune differences between transporting provinces, four different cases of inter-provincial trade of live sheep transportation (the implementation of *peste des petits ruminants* transported between provinces immunity, immune province to

province transporting non-immune, non-immune provinces *Peste des petits* ruminants to implement immunization provinces transporting and dispatching among non-immune provinces) were made specific provisions in the notice, and the same rules are as follows: sheep in 21 days prior to dispatching should be immunized; where the sheep which were recently within 21 days are not introduced as live sheep; on the basis of laboratory serological detection, transporting live sheep need to go through qualifying quarantine in place of origin. There should also be an animal quarantine certificate subject to animal health oversight agencies which was signed by a above the county level responsible person. Meanwhile, there are further provisions for the implementation of *peste des petits* ruminants immune to non-immune provinces transporting live sheep, transporting live sheep can only be used for slaughter, Immune provinces to importer provinces slaughterhouse "peer-to-peer" dispatching, day quarantine and certification information needs to enter the county level and the animal health oversight agencies have to be informed about the full implementation of strict supervision. Non-immune provinces or regions by the provincial department in charge of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department of Agriculture to the record, the Ministry of Agriculture should also be promptly informed of the situation to the nation.

2. When transporting breeding sheep, except for the general provisions for live sheep transportation, the breeding sheep should come from the stud farm which have "kind of livestock and poultry production license" and "animal epidemic prevention certificate".

Although the ban on live sheep and breeding sheep trans-provincial transportation prevents the spread of the outbreak of *Peste des petits* ruminants to some extent, it also impacts the development of the sheep industry and causes certain influence to the residents' life. the notice issued by the Ministry of Agriculture on July 2, 2014 eases the work of live sheep' trans-provincial transportation on the basis of strengthening regulation, maintain normal living sheep transportation under a series of strict supervision and epidemic prevention measures such as security, weakening the impact of the epidemic of live sheep trading market and guaranteeing efficient development and mutton sheep production product market supply. After the release of the notice, the provinces implemented it strictly according to the actual situation, While preventing the further spread of *peste des petits* ruminants, the provinces try to make the transaction before the downturn of living sheep to the good development of the market gradually, moderately reduce the economic losses of sheep farmers, lamb and other food companies because of the epidemic caused. However, the policy can achieve the desired effect if it requires continued strong execution, to avoid violation of the relevant provisions of companies driven by interests and makes substandard quality lamb products entering the market. Thus, people from all walks of life need to play a supervisory and control roles, and urge the relevant agencies to ensure the quality of the implementation of the Ministry of Agriculture to implement policies to protect the development of the sheep industry as well as its residents.

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