



Animal Health Law (Regulation (EU) 2016/429)

Summary




The Animal Health Law (Regulation (EU) 2016/429) is a major EU regulation that streamlines and modernises rules on the prevention and management of animal diseases. In force since April 2021, it replaces over 40 older legal acts with one unified framework. The law enhances biosecurity, improves disease preparedness, and clarifies who is responsible at every stage of animal production. It applies to farmers, transporters, veterinarians, and other actors in the livestock and animal-based food supply chain.



Key Points

- Consolidates dozens of EU rules on transmissible animal diseases into a single legal framework
- Introduces clear responsibilities for animal keepers, vets, and competent authorities
- Strengthens surveillance, early detection, and emergency response measures
- Promotes biosecurity, traceability, and risk-based disease prevention measures
- Applies to terrestrial and aquatic animals, including livestock, pets, and wildlife

Timeline

-  March 2016: Regulation (EU) 2016/429 is adopted
-  April 2021: Animal Health Law enters into force across all EU Member States
-  Ongoing : Continuous updates in response to emerging diseases and risk factors



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Direct Impact

- Farmers must follow stricter rules on animal identification, movement, and recordkeeping
- Livestock establishments must be registered or approved by authorities, depending on the activity
- Increased responsibilities for disease prevention and immediate reporting of suspected outbreaks
- Changes to import/export conditions for live animals and animal products



Tips

- Ensure your holding is properly registered with your national competent authority
- Review your farm's biosecurity plan and update procedures regularly
- Keep detailed animal health records and report unusual symptoms promptly
- Stay informed about listed diseases relevant to your species and region
- Work with your veterinarian to meet compliance and improve herd or flock resilience

Further Information

- The European Institute for Animal Law & Policy:
<https://animallaweurope.org/wp-content/uploads/Recent-Developments-in-EU-Animal-Law-Policy-2019-2024.pdf>
- European Commission Animal Health Portal:
https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-health/animal-health-law_en



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