



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

## APHA Briefing Note 25/25

# Extension of the Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme

Date issued: 27 June 2025

### Purpose

To inform Official Veterinarians (OVs) and Food Competent Certifying Officers (FCCOs) about the extension of the Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme (GEFS).

### Background

The GEFS facilitates exports from approved food business operators by using 30-day Support Attestations to help in the certification process. The scheme was previously scheduled to close on 31 December 2025.

### Information

1. Defra has been developing the GEFS over the past couple of years, with input from members, OVs and FCCOs, to make it as robust as possible before a decision is made on its future.
2. Defra can now confirm that the decision has been made to extend the GEFS.
3. Defra also confirms that there is an assumption that the GEFS will not be needed once the new arrangements of the proposed SPS agreement between the UK and EU are in place.
4. Defra has communicated this decision to all current members of the GEFS.
5. As a reminder, the scheme will continue on the terms set out in the [revised guidance](#) issued last month. The guidance will apply from 1 August 2025.

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.

6. If you missed the follow-up explanatory webinars or want to rewatch one, [a recording can now be found on APHA's YouTube channel](#).
7. This week, Defra will also publish a short Frequently Asked Questions document to cover the most common queries received since publishing the guidance. This will be made available next week on the GOV.UK Form Finder pages for each Support Attestation
8. Finally, based on member feedback, Defra will also publish an updated version of the Support Attestation PDFs that allow users to strike through text electronically. Note that the content will not change and that Support Attestations should not be edited to add to, delete or alter the standardised text.

## Action

- OV's and FCCOs may continue to make use of the GEFS to facilitate exports until further notice.

## Further Information

For further questions or clarification on GEFS, exporters, suppliers and certifying officers should contact [GBEUPolicyQueries@defra.gov.uk](mailto:GBEUPolicyQueries@defra.gov.uk)