NOTICE TO THE WILDLIFE IMPORT/EXPORT COMMUNITY

September 14, 2022

Subject: Updated: Migratory Game Bird Imports from Canada

Background: Waterfowl hunting in Canada is a popular activity for U.S. hunters, who then import hunted birds into the United States. This update supersedes the previous bulletin issued September 6, 2022.

Due to the confirmation of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) being detected in several Canadian zones, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued an import alert stating that "Hunter-harvested wild game bird trophies entering the United States from Canada must be fully finished, or accompanied by a VS import permit, or consigned directly to a USDA Approved Establishment." It further outlines, “Unprocessed hunter-harvested wild game bird carcasses, originating from or transiting Canada, must meet following conditions:

- Viscera, head, neck, feet, skin, and one wing have been removed; and
- Feathers have been removed, with the exception of one wing – as required by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for species identification; and
- Carcasses must be rinsed in fresh, clean, potable water prior to packaging and must not have visible evidence of contamination with dirt, blood, or feces; and
- Carcasses must be imported in leak-proof plastic packaging and stored in a leak proof cooler or container during transport and import; and
- Carcasses must be chilled or frozen during transport and import.”

Regarding the importation of migratory game birds, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, under 50 CFR § 20.63, states that “No person shall import migratory game birds unless each such bird has one fully feathered wing attached, and such wing must remain attached while being transported between the port of entry and the personal abode of the possessor or between the port of entry and a migratory bird preservation facility”.

Action: The USDA and CFIA requirements have no bearing on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requirements for migratory game birds, which have not changed. A fully feathered wing must remain attached to any birds being imported into the United States to provide adequate species identification.

Those found not to be in compliance with the regulations, as outlined in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, are subject to enforcement action by the Service, including, but not limited to seizure of wildlife and/or monetary penalties. The regulations of both agencies must be met in order to import your migratory game bird legally. For further guidance on the USDA regulations please visit the USDA website here.

Contact:
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