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**SUBJECT: REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION INTO JAMAICA OF
FEATHERS AND PRODUCTS CONTAINING OR MADE FROM
FEATHERS.**

Recently, queries have been raised in relation to the importation of feathers into Jamaica, for the hosting of various events, in particular Carnival. Feathers are used in a number of decorative products such as masks, costumes, costume accessories and fake flowers in addition to pillows and comforters.

In keeping with the guidelines of the World Organization for Animal Health, regardless of the avian influenza status of the country of origin, Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an international veterinary certificate attesting that, these commodities have been processed to ensure the destruction of any virus such as, avian influenza virus.

I am to advise that in an effort to safeguard the poultry industry, human and animal health and in keeping with the **Animals (Diseases and Importation) Law**, all feathers, products containing or made from feathers or any by-products of avian origin should only be allowed entry into Jamaica upon presentation of a valid veterinary import permit issued by the Veterinary Services Division.

The following are the veterinary requirements for the importation of feathers and products containing feathers into Jamaica:

The importer must first obtain an import permit from the Director of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Jamaica. Official (Government) Veterinary Certification

from the exporting country must be provided attesting that feathers and products containing feathers were:

- derived from birds kept in a country or zone declared free from Avian Influenza and other notifiable diseases of the avian species, since they were hatched.
- derived from birds, which were slaughtered in an approved place of slaughter in a country or zone free from Avian Influenza and other notifiable diseases of the avian species and were subjected to ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections and found to be free of signs of infectious or contagious disease.
- processed in order to remove all waste and faecal material.
- washed, cleaned, and then subjected to one of the below processing methods to ensure destruction of all pathogenic microbes including avian influenza virus:
 - 1) Fumigated, using formalin (40% formaldehyde) and potassium permanganate in an airtight chamber for a period not less than 24 hours.
 - 2) Treated with moist heat at **100°C** for a minimum of 30 minutes.
 - 3) Subjected to a minimum temperature of **82°C**, thoroughly cleaned followed by fumigation with formalin vapour, for at least 10 hours.
 - 4) Subjected to irradiation at 20kGy.
 - 6) Treatment with ethylene oxide.
 - 7) Other internationally acceptable method used to effectively inactivate viruses.

Additionally, all precautions must be taken to prevent contamination of the feathers or products by pathogenic agents after processing has taken place. The feathers must be packaged to prevent contamination during transport, handling and storage.

Chief Veterinary Officer
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