

Oifig Faisnéise
Áras Talmhaíochta
Sráid Chill Dara
Baile Átha Cliath 2



Press/Information Office
Agriculture House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2
D02 WK12

Tel: (01) 607 2802

Twitter: 
E-mail: press@agriculture.gov.ie
Website: www.agriculture.gov.ie

If you have any queries on this press release please contact press@agriculture.gov.ie

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Creed details agreement on thoroughbred horses with Chinese authorities

Minister Creed and his Chinese counterpart, Minister Zhi Shuping, signed an updated protocol on the export of horses to China on 18th April. The update, requested by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, will allow horses not born in Ireland, but present here for six months, to be exported to China. Up to now, only horses born in Ireland were allowed to be exported to China under the protocol, which was signed in 2012.

Minister Creed said: *This change to the protocol is good news for the Irish equine industry and a further step to develop the market in China for Irish horses. Over 80 Irish thoroughbred horses were exported to China in January this year, and I am sure that this trade will continue to strengthen going forward.*

Note for editors

A Protocol for the export of Irish (born and bred) horses to China, which provided for pre-export isolation and quarantine in Ireland, was signed in 2012 by then Minister Coveney and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (AQSIQ). Before the Protocol was agreed, Irish horses were exported via the Netherlands which was costly and burdensome for Irish breeders. This Protocol only allowed animals born and reared in Ireland to be exported. The Department subsequently requested that the Protocol be amended to allow horses not born in Ireland, but present in Ireland for six months before export, to be exported to China. It was this amended Protocol that was signed by Minister Creed and Minister Zhi on 18th April. 140 horses, mainly thoroughbred racing horses, have been exported to date under the protocol.

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