

Canadian scientist pleads guilty to smuggling germs

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A Canadian government scientist pleaded guilty on Wednesday to trying to export to China harmful pathogens that could infect humans and livestock.

Klaus Nielsen and Wei Ling Yu, former researchers at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), were both charged by [federal police](#) in October 2012.

Nielsen, now 68, was apprehended as he was heading to the Ottawa airport with 17 vials of live brucella bacteria, which can cause infections of bovine reproductive organs, joints and [mammary glands](#), as well as infertility.

Wei fled the country.

The pathogen mostly affects cattle, deer and horses, but can also be passed on to humans and cause flu-like symptoms. There is no vaccine and the only way to control its spread is to cull animals suspected of being infected.

Nielsen faces up to 10 years in prison.

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