

Exporter Alert: Regulation News You Can Use

Exporting goods overseas can be a risky business. One of the factors increasing a business owner's liability is how rapidly exporting regulations can change. Often they change

as quickly as the news headlines, though you may not find out about them just by picking up a newspaper.

There is one way exporters can keep abreast of changes in their markets. FAS' worldwide network of offices can provide up-to-the-minute information on regulations—even reporting on changes that are still being considered by foreign gov-

ernments. Exporters can check FAS' Web site regularly for these updates: www.fas.usda.gov

Here are a few examples of recent changes in export regulations.

Australia Issues a New Standard

Australia's government has approved new labeling requirements for food pro-





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duced using biotechnology that come into effect Dec. 7, 2001.

U.S. manufacturers currently exporting, or wishing to export, their products to Australia should make themselves familiar with these requirements.

The standard requires that all foods produced using biotechnology be assessed and approved before sale. Food products, as defined in the standard, must be labeled “genetically modified.”

Products that contain novel DNA or

novel protein in the final food, or have altered characteristics, come under this standard.

To assist companies in interpreting this standard, the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) has a user guide on its Web site: www.anzfa.gov.au/foodstandards/userguides/index.cfm

The user guide, unlike the standard itself, is not legally binding. Exporters who have questions about interpreting the standards should seek independent legal advice.

Canada Proposes Voluntary Labeling

Canadian officials have proposed a new standard for labeling foods produced from products modified with biotechnology. Under this proposal, however, the labeling will be voluntary.

The new standard is being developed by the Canadian General Standards Board. It's intended to provide guidelines for companies that want to indicate whether their products contain bio-engineered altered characteristics.

The Philippines Protects Animal Products

At the end of September 2001, concerns over bovine spongiform encephalopathy led the Philippine government to maintain its temporary ban on imports of meat products and bone meal. There is some good news, however, for countries that have not had documented cases of the disease in their animal populations. The Philippine ban does not apply to products coming from these countries—as long as the product was shipped on or before July 18, 2001. Nor does it apply to poultry-derived meals.



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This date must be shown in the bill of lading, and the shipment will need an International Veterinary Certificate to show that the meat came from healthy animals.

Furthermore, importers of items destined for animal feed must certify that their U.S. products will be distributed only to poultry and swine farms in order for the shipments to be released. The importer must also submit a report to the Philippine government on the actual distribution of the imported feed ingredients.

The United States is working with the Philippine government to demonstrate the safety of U.S. meat and bone meal to regain full access for these products.

New Organic Certification in Poland

The Polish Parliament approved legislation in March 2001 requiring certificates of compliance for production and trade for organic products. This regulation went into effect in October 2001 and covers all imported products, including those certified as organic by the European Union (EU). All such products need to be recertified in Poland. Once Poland becomes an EU

member, however, the recertification will no longer be necessary. It could become an EU member as early as January 2004.

Analysts predict the number of organic farms in Poland will increase tenfold by 2009. Poland subsidizes organic production up to \$150 per hectare.

Romania Requires Meat Certification

The United States has until Jan. 1, 2002, to comply with new Romanian veterinary health certificates for U.S. exports of poultry, pork and casings. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) requested and received an extension until that date. This extension was granted officially on Sept. 18, 2001, when FAS' Office of Agricultural Affairs in Bucharest received official written approval for the extension.

FSIS can continue to certify shipments to Romania using the currently approved Romanian veterinary certificates until Dec. 31, 2001. USDA representatives are meeting with the Romanian veterinary authorities to determine compliance with the new certificates.

The new certificates were recommended by the EU as part of the harmonization process of candidate member states, and relate to EU directives.

The current veterinary certificates for meat, poultry, fish and dairy products have been in effect since 1992. ■



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A Directory for Export Advice

Links to Posts Abroad

For more information about these requirements and others, contact the FAS posts featured in this story:

In Australia:

Office of Agricultural Affairs
U.S. Embassy
Canberra, Australia
Tel.: (011-61-2) 6214-5854
Fax: (011-61-2) 6273-1656
E-mail: agcanberra@fas.usda.gov

In Canada:

Office of Agricultural Affairs
U.S. Embassy
Ottawa, Canada
Tel.: (1-613) 688-5267
Fax: (1-613) 688-3124
E-mail: agottawa@fas.usda.gov

In the Philippines:

Office of Agricultural Affairs
U.S. Embassy
Manila, the Philippines
Tel.: (011-63-2) 887-1137
Fax: (011-63-2) 887-1268
E-mail: agmanila@fas.usda.gov

In Poland:

Office of Agricultural Affairs
U.S. Embassy
Warsaw, Poland
Tel.: (011-48-22) 628-3041
Fax: (011-48-22) 628-1172
E-mail: agwarsaw@fas.usda.gov

In Romania:

Office of Agricultural Affairs, U.S. Embassy,
Bucharest, Romania
Tel.: (011-40-1) 210-4042
Fax: (011-40-1) 210-0395
E-mail: tonyp@usembassy.ro

Other Important Contacts

Exporters should know which agency to call for the information they need on meeting standards for world trade. Here is a partial list to get you started.

Certificates and Shipping Documents

For exporting flour and grain:

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards
Administration
Tel.: (202) 720-0226
Fax: (202) 720-1015

For exporting meat and poultry:

Food Safety and Inspection Service
Tel.: (402) 221-7400
Fax: (402) 221-7479

For exporting dairy products:

Agricultural Marketing Service
Tel.: (630) 790-6920
Fax: (630) 790-6948

For exporting fish and seafood:

U.S. Department of Commerce
Tel.: (301) 713-2355
Fax: (301) 713-1081

For exporting alcohol:

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
Tel.: (202) 927-8110
Fax: (202) 927-8605

Certificates of Animal and Plant Health

For plants:

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Tel.: (301) 734-8537
Fax: (301) 734-5007

For live animals:

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Tel.: (301) 734-8364

For animal products:

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Tel.: (301) 734-3277
Fax: (301) 734-6402



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Transportation and Shipping Documents

Agricultural Marketing Service
Tel.: (202) 690-2325
Fax: (202) 690-1498

Tariffs, Duties and Non-Tariff Barriers

In Australia, Asia and the Americas:

FAS International Trade Policy Area
Tel.: (202) 720-1289
Fax: (202) 690-1093

In Africa, Europe and the Middle East:

FAS International Trade Policy Area
Tel.: (202) 720-1340
Fax: (202) 690-2079

Foreign Import Regulations

For labeling and packaging:

FAS Food Safety and Technical Services
Tel.: (202) 720-9408
Fax: (202) 690-0677

For pesticide tolerances:

FAS Food Safety and Technical Services
Tel.: (202) 690-4898
Fax: (202) 690-0677

Financing

Through commercial credit programs:

FAS Export Credits
Tel.: (202) 720-6211
Fax: (202) 720-0938

Through marketing programs:

FAS Marketing Operations Staff
Tel.: (202) 720-4327
Fax: (202) 690-4374