

Technical Requirements for Products of Animal Origin GCC

Contents

Dairy Products	2
KSA	2
Product Inspection	2
Health Certificate	2
Veterinary Certificate	3
Certificate of Radioactivity Measurement.....	3
Meat and Poultry	3
KSA	3
Importation of Meat	3
Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).....	4
Frozen Chickens.....	4
BAHRAIN	4
Official Meat Import Requirements	4
UAE	5
Useful Links	5

Dairy Products

KSA

Product Inspection

With the exception of herbal preparations, health and supplementary foods (inspected by the Ministry of Health) and live animals, plants, seeds and grain animal feed (inspected by the Ministry of Agriculture), all imported foodstuffs are inspected by the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) at the port of entry.

All food products, whether imported for commercial purpose, display, or sampling, must be fit for human consumption and should be within the shelf -life set. The products must have a label or sticker showing the statutory information such as product name, country of origin, producer's name and address, production and expiry dates, etc. Bilingual labeling (Arabic/English) is required if the products are commercially imported.

Health Certificate

Any government official responsible for dairy inspection must state that the dairy product was manufactured on government-approved and registered premises and is subject to regular audits or inspections. It certifies that the product at the time of shipment contains no harmful level of contaminants, including dioxins, and is fit for human consumption. It certifies that milk and milk-based product(s) have undergone a recognized pasteurization process with the aim of avoiding public health hazards arising from pathogenic organisms associated with milk. It also certifies that the product can be freely sold for human consumption in the exporting country. Other information included on the health certificate includes a trader reference number, generic product name, product description, approval of manufacturer/packer, manufacturer's address, packer's address, consignor, consignee, country of manufacture, type of packing, net weight, quantity, production codes, place of dispatch, date of dispatch, destination, and expiry date.

Health certificates for dairy products must contain the following declarations:

1. The milk/dairy products described above have been processed from raw milk/powdered milk obtained from animals free from contagious diseases and fit for human consumption.
2. All dairy products have been processed and packaged in an approved establishment under official health control.
3. On basis of a national follow-up control scheme, the dairy product complies with the importing country of origin or international standards regarding residues of chemical contaminants, such as dioxin, pesticides, veterinary drugs etc., and no harmful colorants or preservative agents (according to CODEX Alimentarius) were added to these products.
4. Complies with the importing country or international standards for bacteria count.

5. In case of heat treatment: done in a way to obtain the destruction of pathogens.
6. With regard to radioactivity: contains no harmful radioactivity, or not more than the accepted level, for the milk and milk products.
7. The declaration must be signed and stamped by an official inspector.

Veterinary Certificate

An exporting country government veterinary inspector's declaration is required, stating that the exporting country is free of foot-and-mouth disease, anthrax, rinderpest and all the other diseases on the "Office International des Epizooties" (OIE) list A, to which the bovine species is susceptible. In addition, it must state that milk is derived from cows in which BSE has not been officially identified at the time of collection and that bovine herds are subject to official control and official brucellosis and tuberculin testing. It further states that bovine herds were not fed with protein derived from animal ruminant and the exporting country is free of enzootic bovine leucosis.

Certificate of Radioactivity Measurement

A competent exporting country radiation protection institute certifies that the products detailed on the certificate contain total radiocaesium concentrations within officially established levels and are fit for human consumption. Other information provided on the certificate includes product description, quantity, manufacturer, consignor, order number, destination, official stamp and the signature of a competent official. Radiation and dioxin free requirements apply to dairy products imported from Europe, Japan and former Soviet Republics.

Meat and Poultry

KSA

Importation of Meat

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia imports only (male) beef or lamb meats, fresh or frozen. In addition to the general shipping documents all meat shipments must be accompanied by the following certificates:

- **A certificate of "Halal" meat:** Per Saudi Arabia Standard No. SSA 630/1990 (Animal Slaughtering Requirements According to Islamic Law), a Certificate of Islamic Slaughter must be issued for all meat and poultry products entering the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This certificate indicates that slaughtering has taken place in an officially licensed slaughterhouse according to Islamic procedures. The "Halal" meat certificate should be legalized by a recognized Islamic Center in Lebanon. It must also accompany shipments of poultry into Saudi Arabia.
- **An Official Health Certificate:** This certificate should indicate the date of slaughter, kind of animal and average age, in each shipment. The health certificate must also indicate that

animals were examined within twelve hours before being slaughtered, and directly after, by a licensed veterinarian, and were found free from disease and suitable for human consumption.

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)

On February 9, 2003, the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry issued the Ministerial decree number 2436 to all Chambers of Commerce in the country requiring the insertion of a new clause in health certificates accompanying imported meat and meat products to make sure that the abattoirs used to produce meat & meat products exported to the Kingdom implement the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as a system of production process control.

Frozen Chickens

SSA 117/1979 deals with frozen chicken standards. Per the regulation, imported frozen chickens must meet the Islamic slaughtering requirements mentioned above. The standard also calls for salmonella testing for imported frozen chickens. If the result of the test is positive in more than one sample out of five samples tested, the whole shipment is rejected.

BAHRAIN

All meat and poultry products must be accompanied by an Islamic (Halal) slaughter certificate issued by an approved Islamic center in the country of origin.

All imported eggs must be individually stamped with the supplier name or country of origin and dates of production and expiry.

Poultry products are granted a 20 percent tolerance for salmonella bacteria. Inspection officials routinely test for salmonella and will reject a shipment if salmonella is detected in more than 20 percent of samples taken.

Bahrain Standard 988/1998, which is identical to GS 988/1998, defines the permitted level of radioactivity in foodstuffs. Irradiated food products are permitted but the label must include the international irradiated foods logo. A certificate of irradiation type and level is required for these foods.

Bahrain health authorities randomly inspect food products in retail outlets. In addition to visually inspecting labels, samples are taken and analyzed to ensure that product ingredients match those listed on the label. This procedure is conducted without the knowledge of the importer. If a discrepancy is found, the importer is informed and the product is removed from the market and destroyed at the importer's expense.

Official Meat Import Requirements

Importers of meat to BAHREIN are required to have the following certification TEXT :

“We (name the body issuing the certificate) testify that the meat is derived from animals slaughtered in an approved and recognized slaughterhouse under the supervision of (name of the official body) and we also testify that:

1. The meat is derived from animals with an average age of (...) and had been tested within the range of 12 hours before and after slaughtering by the official bodies concerned to ensure their safety and fitness for human consumption.
2. The meat is derived from animals born and reared in (name of country of origin) and from herds that are officially registered in (name of the body responsible for registering herds).
3. The meat is from animals, which have never been suspected or proved to be infected with an infectious disease.
4. The meat is prepared, handled, stored and transported according to the approved standards.
5. The meat is supervised through all stages of production, storage, and transportation by the official technician from (name of the official body).
6. The meat is not subjected or stored with products made from regions that do not comply with the conditions mentioned in paragraph 3.
7. The meat is transported from the slaughterhouse to the cutting house and then to the port of export, according to regulations, that does not allow it to pass by or stop at areas where pigs are kept, and the means of transportation should not be at any time used to carry pigs or its meat or products.”

UAE

The Halal certificate and the accompanying health certificate are the only documents that UAE food control authorities require to be legalized by the UAE embassy in the exporting country. Aside from the Halal certificate and accompanying health certificate, exporters are not required to have any other documents legalized for export to the UAE. However, many importers request that exporters have health certificates for other products, certificates of origin and other documents legalized. Many importers believe that legalization helps to reduce the occurrence of detained shipments.

Pork products may be sold in designated excluded areas of retail stores and in certain restaurants.

Other non-Halal meats (meat and poultry) are permitted import through an exemption issued by the Director, Food Control Section of the municipality. Such products are subject to certain restrictions, i.e., can only be sold to non-Muslims via the designated areas/establishments. Labels for pork and pork-containing products must comply with the general labeling requirements and must clearly state that the product contains pork.

Useful Links

Gulf standard Organization (GSO); includes food standards; can purchase standards online.

<http://www.gso.org.sa/>

Codex alimentarius standards: Many GCC standards match the codex standards GCC being member of the WTO.

http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.do?lang=en