

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

**Date:** March 20, 2025

**Report Number:** CO2025-0009

**Report Name:** Alert on Changes to Colombian Import Permit Enforcement

**Country:** Colombia

**Post:** Bogota

**Report Category:** Agricultural Situation, Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety, Detained Shipments, FAIRS Subject Report, Livestock and Products

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**Report Highlights:**

Anyone exporting food or feed products to Colombia should note that since March 2025, Colombian quarantine officials have stopped allowing updates to many details on import permits and are no longer allowing any changes after the products have left port. Previously, most agents permitted modifications to be made, to fields such as the export facility, after payment of a small fine. This change in enforcement measures has resulted in many detained and rejected shipments.

In early March 2025 the Colombian Institute of Agriculture (ICA), which oversees animal and plant quarantine issues under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, began detaining shipments due to importer requests to change certain details on import permits. Previously, it was common for ICA to approve requests from importers to modify certain details on import permits, such as port of departure or manufacturing facility, to ensure that all details are correct, after paying a small fine. These modifications are often needed due to changes that occur between the time the permits are requested (often 90 days in advance) and the time that the shipment is sent, particularly for large orders that involved several shipments and rapidly changing inventories.

When contacted, ICA noted that although the practice of updating import permits had become common, their regulations 1) only allow certain types of information to be changed after issuance, such as quantity, weight, type of packing, changes in the transportation route, port of departure, port of arrival, and name of the importing company and 2) certain items can never be changed or modified on import permits after issuance. These items include but may not be limited to country of origin, establishment or facility name, type of good, and 3) no changes can be made once the SPS document (health certificate in the case of meat products) is issued.

ICA noted that although approval of modifications to import permits had been granted almost automatically by port officials in the past, leadership of ICA had recently advised all of their port officials to be more strict in reviewing and enforcing these rules related to import permits. Shipments with non-conforming import permits will be rejected, even for minor differences that do not reflect fraud or a food safety concern. ICA has cited Colombian Resolution 1558 as the basis for these decisions. According to Article 4.2, import permits must be issued before the merchandise departs for Colombia

**Anyone shipping products to Colombia should work with their importers and customs brokers to ensure that all details on the import permits are correct** and if not, ask their importers to amend or request new permits before the products depart the United States, or they could risk their products being rejected when they arrive to Colombia. Already within less than 2 weeks of these enforcement changes, over \$1.4 million of U.S. meat products are detained and many were ordered to be reshipped elsewhere.

#### **Attachments:**

No Attachments.