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Russian Federation

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Country Report

2003

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Report Highlights:

Post provides updated information on the Russian Federation's food and agricultural product quality, safety, and sanitation regulations, and also provides detailed information on import procedures.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Moscow [RS1]
[RS]

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs and the Agricultural Trade Office of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Moscow, Russia for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. Exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped.

FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.

Section I. Food Laws

Quality and safety for all food products produced, imported, and sold in the Russian Federation are controlled by a set of sanitary epidemiological rules and regulations entitled "Hygienic Requirements for the Safety and Nutrition of Foodstuffs" (hereinafter referred to as "Sanitary Rules" or SanPiN-01). These Sanitary Rules, which were updated and prepared by the Russian Ministry of Health and the Nutrition Institute of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, came into force on September 1, 2002. There are several notable changes from the previous SanPiN (SanPiN-96), including a reduction in the number of "nutritious value" requirements, a shorter list of food products for which nutrition parameters are prescribed, and the introduction of mandatory labeling for GMO products or foodstuffs with GMO components.

More concretely, these Rules are designed to govern the activities of all persons and legal entities involved in foodstuff manufacturing, importation and distribution; those that provide services in retail and public food catering; and for entities of the State Sanitary Epidemiological Service of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as Gossanepidservice of Russia) engaged in sanitary epidemiological oversight and control. Finally, these sanitary epidemiological rules and regulations establish hygienic requirements for the substances and materials that come into contact with foodstuffs.

The legal status of SanPiN-01 gives the field inspectors of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation and the field officers (sanitary physicians) of SanEidNadzor (Department of Sanitary and Epidemiological Surveillance) of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation the right to withdraw from trade products that do not meet SanPiN-01 requirements.

For more complete information on SanPiN-01, please see GAIN Reports RS2020 and RS2022.

Legal Basis for SanPiN-01

SanPiN-01 was developed based on the following Federal Laws of the Russian Federation:

"On sanitary epidemiological well-being of the population" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1999, #14, Article 1650),"

"On quality and safety of foodstuffs" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 2000, #2, Article 150),"

"On radiation safety of the population" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1996, #3, Article 141),"

"On protection of consumers' rights" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1996, #3, Article 140), "The basic legislation of the Russian Federation on protecting citizens' health" (News from the People's Deputies Congress of the Russian Federation and the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation, 1993, #33, Article 13818), decrees of the Russian Federation Government of July 24, 2000 #554,"

"On approval of the Regulation of the State sanitary epidemiological service of the Russian Federation and the Regulation on the State sanitary epidemiological regulating" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 2000, #31, Article 3295)."

Section II. Labeling Requirements

A. General Requirements

SanPiN-01 does not prescribe labeling format (how required label information, including product shelf life, place of production, etc., is formatted) for food products, as had been the case in SanPiN-96. This is because control over label format in general is a function of the Trade Inspection Department of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade rather than Ministry of Health. SanPiN-01 does require the provision of information about nutrition value on food product labels. However, this requirement is included in SanPiN-01's "reference" attachment (which contains comparisons with international norms and data on testing methods), while in the previous SanPiN-96 these requirements were in the "recommended" (essentially obligatory) attachment.

Though the specific format is not regulated, to import any food product into the Russian Federation the U.S. exporter must provide Russian language labeling of each product package (such as box or bag). An importer can apply labels to each package after arrival in Russia. However this must be done in the customs warehouse, and as this procedure delays the customs clearance process and increases storage time, the cost may be excessive.

Below is a list of the specific information that must be on the label:

1. Name of the product
2. Type, grade or category of the product
3. Name, country, address of producer, packer, exporter and importer of the product
4. Weight (net and gross) or volume of the product
5. Nutritional quality of the product
6. Ingredients
7. Date of processing
8. Storage conditions
9. Shelf-life of the product
10. Conformity stamp (RST) and certification code

There is an exception to the mandatory package labeling requirements for small packages. The current law states that if these packages are not large enough to include all the necessary text in full, the information or part of it can be printed on a list enclosed with each unit of the product. Exporters should check with their Russian importer to make sure that labeling complies with current law.

B. Requirements Specific to Nutritional Labeling

In an attachment, SanPiN-01 lays out nutritious value requirements only for aggregated groups of processed meat, poultry, dairy and fish products. The total list of these products decreased from 68 items in SanPiN-96 to 17 items in SanPiN-01. Energy value parameters are also excluded. Nutritional value is not determined in SanPiN-01 for grain and grain products, vegetables, fruits and products, nor for sugar and confectionary products. However very detailed criteria for the nutritional value of fruit and vegetable juices are now included. SanPiN-01 separately provides detailed hygiene and nutritious value requirements for baby food, food for school children and for diet food products.

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations

Post will update this section in a subsequent report.

Section IV. Food Additive Regulations

Basic information on food additive regulation and certification is contained in Section IX of this document.

Section V. Pesticide and other Contaminants

Russia establishes its own Maximum Allowed Limits (MALs), and publishes these requirements in several documents. These apply to both domestically produced foodstuffs and imports. In SanPiN, hygiene requirements and safety standards for food products are broken out by numerous parameters, including pesticide Maximum Allowed Level (MAL). For each group of products there are more precise requirements.

In addition, SanPiN requires that the residue level of pesticides used in primary production (for example grain or vegetable production) be monitored for each resultant processed food product. The use of officially registered pesticides and their application procedures are controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture through norms published each year in the "State Catalogue of Pesticides and Agricultural Chemicals Allowed for Use on the Territory of the Russian Federation." The Catalogue is structured by chemical, and gives norms of application, time of application, and treated pests and weeds for each chemical and brand name. Chemicals not listed in the catalogue cannot be used, and no residues in agricultural products are allowed.

Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements

In SanPiN-01, changes in hygiene norms for product groups are not very significant, and in many cases, tests are unified or the number of obligatory parameters is decreased. For example, in the group "Poultry, including semi-finished products, fresh, chilled, frozen", copper, zinc and nitrozamines have been excluded from the list of toxic elements.

Section VII. Other Specific Standards

Post will update this section.

Section VIII. Copyright and Trademark Laws

On December 16, 2002, President Putin signed extensive amendments to the Russian Federation's Law on Trademarks, Service Marks and Labeling of Origin of Goods. According to statements made at that time, the amendments are designed to accelerate Russia's integration into the global economy and its admission to the WTO. The new law is said to ensure better protection of well-known trademarks, broadly defines counterfeits for the first time, and also provides for physical destruction of seized counterfeit goods. The law also implements mechanisms to counter bad faith registrations of IP objects and trademark infringements.

Section IX. Import Procedures

Russia's Meat and Poultry Import Procedures

The process for importing meat or meat products involves two main steps: (1) Safety, Phytosanitary, and Veterinary Clearance; and (2) Customs Clearance.

(Note: Although this information is considered accurate at the time of its publication, exporters should confirm the exact import requirements for individual products prior to shipment. Also, there may be specific import requirements for certain products, which are not addressed within this report. The following documentation is **required**. An explanation on these documents will be given below. Lastly, the official language of the system is **Russian** and **all documents must be submitted in Russian**.)

To get permission to import a meat product, an importer must go through a number of steps:

First, the importer gets permission from veterinary authorities at the local, regional, and central levels. Typically, he goes to local veterinary authorities and presents a letter indicating that he wants to import meat. Local veterinarians forward his request to central veterinary authorities in Moscow who issue notification/permission to border veterinary authorities (this process takes about one week). The permission sent to border veterinary authorities indicates specific volumes and origin of meat that the importer will be allowed bring into the country. Although this process is automatic, the importer has to go through it annually, or each time he wants to increase his meat import allotment, or change the type of meat that he wants to import.

When a shipment arrives, the importer must present to customs documentation from the bank that he has deposited money for duties and taxes, according to value of the shipment. In order to get bank documentation for customs release of the meat, the importer must present business registration, a contract with the supplier, and veterinary documentation that he has permission to import meat. With each shipment, the importer must present each of the following to border veterinary authorities in order to get an internal veterinary certificate that customs authorities will then accept and allow to clear the customs point:

1. Delivery Contract, Bills of Lading, Invoice, Packing List, and Customs Declaration. These documents include the following information: a contract between buyer and supplier indicating the origin, volume, arrival date, and value of shipment; location where each shipment will be stored; location of processing plant or wholesaler to receive the shipment; packing list; cargo plan indicating how vessel is loaded (on pallets, etc.); and an export declaration that indicates to Customs the value of the cargo
2. Veterinary Certificates
3. Hygiene Certificate
4. Safety Certificate
5. Certification of Conformity
6. Certificate of Origin
7. Manufacturer's Certificate of Quality

Section 1. Shipping Documents. These are the normal shipping documents that would be required of any importing country. In addition to the information necessary above, it should contain the following information:

- The country and address of the producer (The company name may be in Latin letters)
- The weight and volume of the product
- A list of the main ingredients, including food additives
- Nutritional information
- Storage conditions for products that have a limited storage life or that require special storage conditions
- The length of storage possible (This should include the date of production and the use by date)
- Method of preparation
- Recommendations for use
- Conditions for use, including avoidance during certain types of illness

Section 2: Veterinary Certificates: USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issues veterinary certificates for exports of U.S. meat and meat products. The FSIS document will state that the product meets Russian veterinary requirements. In the case of pork and poultry meat, the FSIS document will also state that the product comes from a U.S. facility that is authorized to export to Russia.

The importer must also go through the process mentioned above in order to obtain veterinary import permission from the Russian Veterinary Service. If the importer is importing meat products under the tariff codes 0201, 0202, or 0207, additional steps are required. The importer must hold a special license that allows for a specific volume of imports during the calendar year. Without this license, the importer must pay an out-of-quota duty for beef and pork that is at least three times the in-quota duty. Poultry imports are not allowed without this import license.

Section 4: The Hygiene Certificate. This document is issued by the local department of the State Committee on Sanitation and Epidemic Control (Goskomsanepidemnadzor). It takes 3 - 5 days and 3 - 4 kg of the product for this testing procedure. The Hygiene Certificate is the only Russian certificate that could be issued for the entire contract, rather than for each consignment of the product. A Manufacturer's Certificate of Quality is necessary to receive the Hygiene Certificate for the contract.

This is required for all food products, additives, and preservatives. Goskomsanepidemnadzor issues the certificates for children's foods, food additives, non-traditional forms of unprocessed food, as well as food products purchased under international agreements. Goskomsanepidemnadzor issues the Hygiene (Sanitary) Certificates through its Moscow certification laboratories and is also responsible for all other sanitary and hygiene regulations. This committee also works closely with the Institute of Nutrition, which operates under the supervision of the Russian Federation's Academy of Medical Science. The Hygiene Certificate can also be handled through the U.S. testing centers. Enquiries about pre-certification can be made to Control Union Inspection, Inc. or to the U.S. Testing Company, Inc, of New Jersey, a subsidiary of SGS. These firms can also give further information relating to certification necessary to conform to import requirements and the costs of testing. The advantage of obtaining the Certificate of Hygiene abroad is that testing in Russia can take up to two months or more.

Section 3. The Certificate of Safety. This certificate is issued by the State Standards Committee of Russia ("GOSSTANDART "). It may take 5 - 7 days and about 5 kg of samples to complete the testing. The Certificate of Safety is based on the Hygiene Certificate and tests of the samples made by the Center of Standardization.

Section 4: Certificate of Conformity Full certification to standards set by GOSSTANDART is mandatory for importing any product. The most important certification needed for exporting product into Russia is the Certification of Conformity (called GOST-R). The Russian Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS) issues the Certificate of Conformity. The testing is done by the Testing and Certification Center (Rostest), which provides a full range of quality control and inspection facilities in Russia.

However, the Certificate of Conformity can also be issued in the United States. Enquiries about pre-certification can be made to Control Union Inspection, Inc. or to the U.S. Testing Company, Inc, of New Jersey, a subsidiary of SGS. These firms can also give further information relating to certification necessary to conform to import requirements and the costs of testing.

Section 6: Certificate of Origin: This certificate is used to determine tariffs. Certificates can be obtained from local issued by the local Department of the State Sanitary Epidemiological Inspection, which also issues the Hygiene Certificate.

Tips:

All the Certificates are being processed at the same time so, in theory, the certification process takes 7 - 10 days.

It is important to be sure that all four certificates are issued for each consignment of the product. Officially, an amount of product is called one consignment if it satisfies the following requirements:

- it is produced at one plant or processing facility
- the month of processing is the same for the entire amount,
- it all came by one transportation unit (vessel, train, truck, etc.).

If there are several consignments of the product coming as one shipment (for example some part of the product was produced in April, some in May), these consignments should be separately described in the Packing List and in each of the Certificates.

Russian Regulatory Bodies

Below is a list of the most important Russian regulatory agencies involved in food imports. Their coordinates can be found at the end of this appendix.

GOSSTANDART (State Standards Committee of Russia) is the national body for the certification of goods. A schedule of goods that are subject to mandatory certification is published and includes foodstuffs and beverages, whether of local or imported origin.

The Russian Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS) issues the Certificate of Conformity.

The Russian Testing and Certification Center (ROSTEST) provides a full range of quality control and inspection facilities in Russia.

Goskomsanepidemnadzor is the State Committee on Sanitation and Epidemic Control which is responsible for sanitary and hygiene regulations.

Specific Import Regulations: Meat and Poultry

The Russian veterinary authorities determine which meat and poultry products may be imported into Russia and the import requirements for these products.

Eligible Products

The following products are eligible for export from the United States to Russia: Poultry and poultry products, beef and products, pork and pork products, horsemeat, and bison meat. Processed meat products intended for export to Russia must comply with USDA standards and regulations. Pork and poultry products must come from only eligible plants. These plants are listed on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Ineligible Products

The following meat products are not eligible for export from the United States to Russia: ground red meat packaged in bulk form or in meat patties; beef products originating from beef animals raised in states where outbreaks of vesicular stomatitis are occurring; consumer size packages of ground poultry, mechanically deboned poultry meat, and giblets; poultry products originating from birds grown in selected counties in states affected by an outbreak of laryngotracheitis. Contact the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Technical Service Center, Omaha, Nebraska. Tel. (402)221-7400 Fax (402) 418-8914 for updated information regarding disease status in restricted regions. Contact the Export Coordination Division of FSIS at tel. (202)501-6022 or by fax at (202)501-6929 for up-to-date requirements. You can also get the latest export requirements by referring to the FSIS internet site: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/Russia.htm>

Veterinary Certificates

All meat and poultry products shipped from the United States require USDA/FSIS Form 9060-5--Export Certificate of Wholesomeness. In addition to this certificate, the following certificates are required:

Raw pork, including bacon and pork for retail sale. FSIS Form 9450-3(8/97) — Veterinary Certificate for Pork Meat Exported to the Russian Federation.

Pork casings. FSIS Form 9450-6 (7/95) — Veterinary Certificate for Pork Intestine Raw Material, Exported Into the Russia Federation.

Poultry. FSIS Form 9450-4(3/96) — Veterinary Certificate for Poultry Meat Exported into the Russian Federation.

Raw beef. FSIS Form 9450-5 (6/94) — Veterinary Certificate for Beef Meat Exported into the Russian Federation.

Fully cooked meat and poultry products and heat-treated but not fully cooked meat products. FSIS Form 9450-7 (7/95) — Veterinary Certificate for Prepared Meat Products Exported into the Russian Federation.

All certificates accompanying product into the Russian Federation must be signed by a FSIS veterinarian. Contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400 for guidance in completing the proper documents correctly.

Processing/Packing Plant Certification

Poultry

All establishments which process or store raw poultry intended for export to the Russian Federation must be reviewed by an official of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and included on the approved plant list for raw poultry prior to being eligible to export products to Russia. Establishments are inspected at their own expense. The requirements for these establishments are outlined in "The US-Russia Criteria for Processing and Refrigeration Facilities Exporting Poultry to the Russian Federation". For additional information on plant inspection, copies of inspection criteria and approved plant list please contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400. The current list of eligible plants is on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Pork

All establishments which process or store raw pork intended for export to the Russian Federation must be reviewed by an official of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and included on the approved plant list for raw pork prior to being eligible to export products to Russia. Plants are inspected at their own expense. For additional information on plant inspection, copies of inspection criteria and approved plant list, please contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400. The current list of eligible plants is on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Other Meat Products

Fully cooked pork products, pork casings, beef and beef products, fully cooked poultry products, and heat-treated but not fully cooked poultry products can originate from any federally inspected facility.

2003 Russian Meat and Poultry Import Regulations

Type of Product		USA
Pork	for processing	AP
	for retail trade	AP
Beef	Bone-in	AL
	Boneless	AL
Trimming	Beef	IN
	Pork	IN
Offal	Beef	AL
	Pork	AP
Poultry	Chicken	AP
	Turkey	AP
Ground	Beef	PR
	Pork	AP
Poultry MDM		AP
Processed meat		AL
Alive animals		AL

Abbreviations:

Import prohibited - PR

Import allowed - AL

Import allowed only for processing

Import allowed only from plants approved by Russian Veterinary

Import allowed under control of Russian veterinary specialists

Russia's Grains and Oilseed Import Procedures

Grain Inspection issues certificates for import of grains, macaroni products and cereals. Certification process takes 3 - 5 days and requires up to 12 kg of samples for the tests. The samples are usually taken from different parts of the shipment (such as boxes or containers).

Customs Payments

For customs clearance of imported food products, the following payments should be made to the customs office:

- 1) 0.1% of the customs cost of the product in rubles
- 2) 0.05% of the customs cost of the product in foreign currency
- 3) Customs duty
- 4) Value added tax (VAT): calculated based on the sum of customs cost of the product plus customs duty

Customs clearance is usually done by the customs office at destination. This procedure takes 2 - 4 days. All customs documentation should be written in Russian. Customs duties, fees, VAT are usually paid in advance in order not to delay the clearance procedure. Customs duties, fees and taxes depend on the type of the product and are calculated based on customs cost of the product, i.e.: cost of the product plus transportation expenses. The customs cost of the product could not be less than the "acceptable price" determined by the customs authorities.

Potential Import Problems to Avoid

Exporting products into Russia can be a daunting task for the inexperienced US exporter. Even more experienced US exporters encounter problems and delays due to changes in Russian import requirements or customs regulations. This is why it is always a good business practice to check with your Russian importer and other sources to make sure your shipment has all the necessary documentation prior to shipment. Some of the more common problems to avoid include incorrectly completed documents and forms; required documents and certificates missing or unavailable; price discrepancies when the invoice price is at odds with Russian customs officials' price determination; meat or poultry product shipped from a packing plant or facility not certified by Russian veterinary officials; and duties, tariffs and VAT not paid in advance delaying the shipment. Customs duties and VAT must be paid before the product will be cleared by Russian customs authorities unless product is shipped, under seal, to a Russian, bonded, customs-approved warehouse.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts

State Standard Committee (Gosstandart)

Moscow, Leninsky prospekt, 9

tel. 7 (095) 230-13-20

Mariya F. Mishina, Head of Division of Standardization and Certification of Food and Ag Products

tel. 7 (095) 237-54-68, fax 7 (095) 237-6231

State Committee on Sanitary and Epidemiological Surveillance of the RF (GOSKOMSANEPIDEMNAZOR)

Moscow, Vadkovskiy per.18/20

tel. 7 (095) 973-2748, fax. 7 (095) 200-0212, 258-4497

Evgeniy N. Belyaev, Chairman

tel. 7 (095) 973-2748, fax 7 (095) 200-0212

Anatoliy A. Monisov, Vice Chairman

tel. 7 (095) 973-2666, 973-1803, 973-2674, fax 7 (095) 258-4497

All-Russian Scientific -Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS)

Moscow, Elektricheskiy per.3

Boris Krutov, Head of Section

tel. 7 (095) 253-3580, fax 7 (095) 253-3360

"Rostest - Moskva", Russian Center for Test and Certification, GOSSTANDART, RF

31, Nakhimovsky prospect, 117418, Moscow, RF

Zlatkovich Lev Arnoldovich, General Director First Deputy

tel. 7 (095) 129-3200, fax 7 (095) 124-9966

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts