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**Report Highlights:**

The Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) report provides an overview of the food laws and regulatory environment in Libya as it relates to U.S. food and agricultural exports.

**Disclaimer:**

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Rabat, Morocco 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.**

Please contact this office, if you have any comments, corrections or suggestions about the material contained in this report at: [AgRabat@usda.gov](mailto:AgRabat@usda.gov)

## **Executive Summary**

Libya poses unique opportunities and challenges for U.S. agricultural exports. The nation is characterized by an unstable government, conflict, opaque regulations, petroleum revenues, an underperforming agricultural sector, and about \$3 billion worth of agricultural imports from around the world every year.

Although Libya's governance was thrown into uncertainty in 2011, many of the old regime's food laws were carried over. Today, the Libyan Consumer Protection Agency, Arraqeeb, is responsible for food safety in Libya and ensures that agricultural products, food products, and animal feed imported into Libya are safe for human or animal consumption. Libya is not a member of CODEX, but Arraqeeb has published the CODEX ALIMENTARIS general standards for food additives as a guide on its website. Imported products must be registered with the Libyan Ministry of Health before they can clear customs and must also be accompanied by an import permit issued by the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Foreign Agricultural Service has made every effort to ensure that the information contained in this document is up to date and accurate. However, Libya's uncertain political landscape limits communication and timely information on regulatory changes. Given Libya's uncertain political situation, exporters seeking to do business with the country must be prepared for an uncertain regulatory environment. Successful exporters must work closely with an importer who is familiar with market conditions and who can advise the exporter on Libya's opaque and shifting import requirements.

**Please note that due to civil unrest the United States does not have diplomatic or consular representation in Libya. The State Department has published a travel advisory warning American citizens not to travel to Libya due to risks including "crime, terrorism, civil unrest, kidnapping and armed conflict."**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I: Food Laws .....	5
SECTION II: Labeling Requirements .....	5
SECTION III: Packaging and Container Regulations .....	6
SECTION IV: Food Additive Regulations .....	6
SECTION V: Pesticides and Other Contaminants .....	7
SECTION VI: Other Requirements, Regulations and Registration Measures .....	7
SECTION VII: Other Specific Standards .....	8
SECTION VIII: Trademarks, Brand Names, and Intellectual Property Rights .....	9
SECTION IX: Import Procedures .....	9
APPENDIX I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts .....	9
APPENDIX II. Other Important Contacts .....	10

## **SECTION I: Food Laws**

Following the overthrow of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, Libya's legal and governing landscape was thrown into uncertainty. However, food laws from the old regime carried over to the new interim government and were included in the 2011 interim constitution after Gaddafi's removal ([2011 Draft Constitution section 35](#)). Some of these policies are still being officially enforced or have been amended by national and local governing bodies to abide by Libya's interim constitution. The 2016 Draft Constitution, which has yet to be adopted maintains a similar provision ([Draft Constitution 2016 Section 219](#)).

The main regulatory agency responsible for food safety in Libya is the [Arraqeeb](#) Libyan Consumer Protection Agency, which is an independent organization established in January 2017 (See Arabic language website). The organization is administratively independent, but legally and financially protected by the Libyan Government under regulation no. 03321. Arraqeeb is charged with regulating, codifying, and enforcing consumer protection laws.

In order to ensure that agricultural products, food products, and animal feed imported into Libya are safe for human or animal consumption, it must comply with the standards established by Arraqeeb. This list of regulations indicates that all imports, not only agricultural products, must adhere to international standards, standards of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (see Arabic language [GAFTA 1981 working paper](#)), and Libya's national standards to ensure consumer health and safety.

The list of approved food specifications and regulations from before 2011 are published by Arraqeeb (website unavailable at the time of publication). This list of legislation sets the basis for Libya's national food standards, which are supplemented by regulations from the [Libyan National Center for Standardization and Metrology](#) (LNCSM), which is both a government institution and the Libyan arm of the [Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries](#) (SMIIC). While the SMIIC serves to unify standards of the Organization of Islamic Countries member states, the main task of LNCSM is to develop national standards (and/or adapt international standards). LNCSM also grants a voluntary Libyan Quality Mark and accredits inspection bodies.

In the absence of a functioning government and the ability to enforce the various regulations cited above, importers will expect that imported food products are produced under the authority of the appropriate regulations of the exporting country and will provide the relevant documentation to Libyan customs and health officials.

## **SECTION II: Labeling Requirements**

According to industry sources, Libya requires imported food items to be labeled in Arabic. For foodstuffs, the date of manufacture, expiration date for human consumption and the conditions of storage and preservation should all be written in Arabic. Trademarks should be clearly shown.

Labels should include:

- Name and type of product;
- Net weight;
- Name and address of exporter;
- Name and contact information of local importer;
- Expiration date;
- Instructions for using and storage;
- List of all ingredients.

**Public health requirements:** Food products are subject to inspection by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture. Eggs must be marked with the name of exporting company/agency, country of origin and date of production.

### **SECTION III: Packaging and Container Regulations**

The Foreign Agricultural Service is unaware of specific packaging requirements for Libya. However, trade contacts advise that packaging should be able to withstand extreme weather conditions including heat in the summer, humidity in winter, and long periods of storage in the open.

### **SECTION IV: Food Additive Regulations**

Libya is not a member of CODEX, but Arraqeeb has published the CODEX ALIMENTARIS general standards for food additives as a guide on its website. For detailed information on whether Libyan standards for a specific food item align with the CODEX system, exporters should verify with their Libyan importer. The list of [CODEX](#) approved food additives is mostly accepted as safe for consumption so long as proper documentation is provided and the additives comply with the prohibited import list.

Exporters should be prepared to provide documentation that proves an additive is safe for human consumption to receive approval and upon entry into the country, such as a laboratory analysis or approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

Requests for approval from Libyan health authorities must include the following information:

- 1) Nature of the substance
- 2) Commercial name of the substance
- 3) Identity and purity

- 4) Any other physical or chemical information
- 5) Data on approval by the country of origin indicating its authorized use

## **SECTION V: Pesticides and Other Contaminants**

Resolution no. 76 (1989) of the Secretary of the General Popular Committee for Agrarian Reform (GPCAR) on pesticides, outlines the importation, regulation, and trade of pesticides not registered in Libya as well as the maximum residual levels ([see website in Arabic](#)). This resolution was implemented by the Secretary of the GPCAR's resolution [no. 176](#) to supplement Law [No. 27](#) of 1968 on plant protection and Resolution No. 932 of the GPCAR.

There is no current list of approved chemical pesticides. Exporters should use the [CODEX list](#) of approved pesticides and maximum residual levels (MRL) as a guide. Exporters should work with their Libyan importer to verify any MRL concerns prior to shipping.

## **SECTION VI: Other Requirements, Regulations and Registration Measures**

The most relevant law on Libyan import procedures is [law no. 10](#) (website in Arabic) on customs and customs enforcement. Law no. 10 requires an import permit and prior approval from the Ministry of Agriculture for most food commodities.

Imported products must be registered with the Libyan Ministry of Health before they can clear customs. An importer may apply for registration by submitting a request to the relevant health authority, including the following:

- A detailed ingredients list, the production and control process, and the stability of the product;
- An export certificate stating that the product is legally marketed for human use (i.e. a certificate of free sale)
- Laboratory analysis certificate provided by official authorities of the exporting country, including information on the ingredients, toxicological and bacteriological analysis;
- Reference to the relevant, prevailing regulations in the country of origin;
- Result of the scientific work and experiments made to show the advantage of using the products; and
- A sample of the item to be marketed. Note that samples are not subject to the same import regulations or duties (Law no. 10).

All goods are subject to inspection by customs officials to verify their type, specifications, or conformity with the regulations in force. If goods are deemed to be unsafe or harmful to public health they may be

destroyed at the concerned party's expense. Libyan Customs is responsible for levying taxes on goods, implementing customs policies, facilitating legitimate trade, and protecting consumers in Libya.

According to the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Investment's 2008 [decree no. 9](#) the following items are prohibited from being imported:

- live pigs, pork and pork products including items that use pork fat as a preservative;
- alcoholic beverages of all kinds;
- preserved meat, prepared foods and animal fats for the purpose of human consumption;
- table eggs prepared for direct consumption;
- fresh fruits such as citrus, grapes, figs, apricots, melons, dates, plums, peaches, olive oil;
- fresh vegetables, dried and prepared for consumption with the exception of dry legumes;
- natural mineral water;
- and bread improvers containing potassium (potassium bromate).

NOTE: Trade contacts report that the list of prohibited items can change without notice. The Foreign Agricultural Service advises exporters to verify the list of prohibited items with their Libyan importer when determining a product's eligibility for export.

Libya has been sanctioned by the United States and the United Nations since 2011. It is prohibited to engage in certain economic activities, such as the import of arms or the smuggling of Libyan produced petroleum, or conduct business with [Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons](#). The export of food items and medicines to Libya are exempted from sanctions. Exporters should avoid any activity, economic or otherwise, that contributes to Libya's ongoing conflict or undermines local, regional, or national governing bodies (U.S. [Executive Order 13726](#), 2016). For further information on U.S. sanctions on Libya, exporters should consult the [U.S. Department of Treasury](#) and the [United Nations Libya Sanctions Committee](#).

## **SECTION VII: Other Specific Standards**

Food products require halal certification in order to be imported. Exporters should work with their importer to identify a halal certification organization that can meet the importer's requirements.

Fresh egg imports must be stamped with the name of the exporting company and with the name of the country of origin and the date of production.

Pork and products containing pork (including fat) are prohibited for import. Exporters may be requested to supply analysis to verify that the product does not contain any prohibited imported product.

All grain shipments must be accompanied by a letter attesting that the shipment is free of products derived from genetic engineering.

## **SECTION VIII: Trademarks, Brand Names, and Intellectual Property Rights**

The main Libyan copyright protection laws are [Law No. 9](#) 1968, the [Law of Commercial Trademarks no. 40](#) (1956), and [Decision of the Secretary of the General People’s Committee for Economics and Commerce No. 86](#) (2004). (Note all websites provided in Arabic).

Libya is a party to the [Universal Copyright Convention](#) of 1976, which requires a copyright length of 50 years.

Trademarks, brand names, and copyrights must be registered at the Ministry of Information and Culture by a Libyan national. Exporters may be represented by a Libyan national who has right of attorney.

## **SECTION IX: Import Procedures**

Libyan food importers face lengthy processes for documenting a consignment and preparing customs procedures. To facilitate customs procedures, import documents should be made available in Arabic.

1. Shipments must obtain provisional preclearance prior to berthing. Estimated time-in-wait for final clearance is one week.
2. Foodstuffs requiring health clearance may obtain temporary clearance upon arrival. Estimated time-in-wait for final clearance is ten days.

Required Customs Documents:

1. Original bills of lading
2. Copies of all invoices
3. Health certificates
4. Packing list
5. Certificate of Origin

Prior to 2011, Food and agriculture products being imported into Libya needed approval from the Libyan Ministries of Health and Agriculture. However, due to the current political and institutional divisions within Libya, exporters should work with their importer to identify the relevant local health official for appropriate approvals.

## **APPENDIX I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts**

**Arraqeeb Libyan Consumer Protection Agency**

Phone: +21-891-029-4258

Email: [Info@alcpo.org.ly](mailto:Info@alcpo.org.ly)

**The National Centre For Standardization and Metrology**

Email: [info@lncsm.org.ly](mailto:info@lncsm.org.ly)

Phone Number: +218214630886 / +218214630884

Fax: +218214630885

Website: [www.lncsm.org.ly](http://www.lncsm.org.ly)

**Administrative Control Authority**

Email: [info@aca.gov.ly](mailto:info@aca.gov.ly)

Phone: +218-21-3607152

Website: [www.aca.gov.ly](http://www.aca.gov.ly)

**National Food & Drug Control Centre (FDCC)**

Phone: +218-21-333-3763 / +218-21-444-1491

Website: [www.fdcc.ly](http://www.fdcc.ly)

**APPENDIX II. Other Important Contacts**

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**Attachments:**

No Attachments.