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Report Highlights:

This report provides guidance and lists and describes certificates/documents that must accompany food and agricultural products exported to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) as required by pertaining regulations. Report last updated: June 2023.

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Disclaimer: “This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care has been 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 PRODUCTS IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY’S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.”

Executive Summary

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) requires various certificates for imported food products which must be issued by the designated authorities such as FDA, APHIS, and FSIS. However, there are no specific formats that exporters must use, except for phytosanitary certificates that must be in accordance with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Some veterinary certificates require specific statements concerning contagious diseases, hormone use, pathogen reduction methods, etc., set by the State Veterinary Office (SVO). The SVO is responsible for verifying specific requirements for importing live animals and certain products of animal origin, which are in accordance with the World Animal Health Organization (WOAH) recommendations. This report includes an Export Certificate matrix and a detailed outline of the content of each certificate. BiH does not apply a waiver for export certificates. BiH does not have preclearance programs and does not use electronic certificates.

Section I. List of All Export Certificates Required by Government (Matrix):

Section I. List of All Export Certificates Required by Government (Matrix): Product(s)	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Ministry
All Food Products	Health Certificate/Evidence of Sanitary Wholesomeness (Certificate to a Foreign Government)	The food product is safe for human consumption	To certify food hygiene/safety	The Federation of BiH Inspectorate and the Republika Srpska Inspectorate ¹ [1]
All Food Products	Certificate/Evidence of Quality (no specific format; stickering permitted)	Evidence of quality such as product composition, energy value, specification etc.	To certify food quality	The Federation of BiH Inspectorate and the Republika Srpska Inspectorate
All Live Animals and Certain Animal Products (live animals, raw animal products, animal feed, semen, veterinary medicines, and waste)	Veterinary Certificate	Depends on the specific requirements set by The State Veterinary Office	To certify that products are safe for animal and human health	The State Veterinary Office
All Plants and Plant Products	Phytosanitary Certificate	To certify that the product has been inspected according to appropriate procedures, considered to be free from quarantine pests and considered to conform to the current	To certify that products are safe for plant and human health	The Federation of BiH Inspectorate and the Republika Srpska Inspectorate

¹ Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) comprise of two entities: The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska. The entities are responsible for agriculture, while the food safety responsibility is shared with the state-level institutions (State Veterinary Office, Plant Health Protection Administration and Food Safety Agency). The entity inspectorates are responsible for border and in-land food control/inspection, excluding the state-level veterinary inspection.

Section I. List of All Export Certificates Required by Government (Matrix): Product(s)	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Ministry
		phytosanitary regulations of the importing country		
Dietary supplements, medical foods, foods for special dietary use, and baby food	Certificate of Free Sale	To certify that the product is registered and is in free sale in the country of the manufacturer	To certify that products are safe for consumption	The Federation Ministry of Health and the Republika Srpska Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

Section II. Purpose of Specific Export Certificate(s)

The health certificate/evidence of sanitary wholesomeness attests to a product’s safety for human consumption. The requiring authorities are the Federation Inspectorate and the Republika Srpska Inspectorate, or more precisely their Sanitary/Food Inspection Departments (e.g., FDA Certificate to a Foreign Government is acceptable for this purpose).

The certificate/evidence of quality attests to the product’s quality and to confirm that the product meets certain quality standards. The requesting authorities are the Federation Market Inspection Department and the Republika Srpska Food Inspection Department. This information can be either stated on the package or provided in a form of a sticker attached to the product. No specific format is prescribed.

The veterinary certificate is required for live animals, semen, embryo and egg cells, some processed animal products, raw materials for processing, veterinary medicines and accessories, diagnostic kits and materials, animal feed and waste, and other products that might be carriers of animal disease and put animal and human health at risk. The certificate verifies the product’s safety for animal and human health. The requesting authority is the State Veterinary Office of BiH.

The phytosanitary certificate certifies the health of all plants and plant products. The requesting authorities are the Federation Inspectorate and the Republika Srpska Inspectorate (Phytosanitary Inspection Departments).

The Certificate of Free Sale is accepted for dietary supplements, medical foods, foods for special dietary use, and baby food. Products must first be approved and registered at the entity ministries of health. The recommended maximum daily intake for some products might need to be adjusted because BiH follows the EU’s regulations on this matter.

Section III. Specific Attestations Required on Export Certificate(s)

The certificate/evidence of sanitary wholesomeness— there are no specific certifications required by the authorities, except that the product is fit for human consumption and meets the exporting country’s safety requirements. There is no specific format requested, but it should be an original certificate signed by the official authority of the exporting country (e.g., FDA Certificate to a Foreign Government) and translated into local language.

The certificate/evidence of quality - There are no specific certifications required by the authorities and therefore the quality certifications commonly used in international trade are acceptable. However, the market and food inspection have the authority to sample and test imported products on a random basis, and if the product’s quality does not meet the domestic standards, it will not be cleared and allowed to enter the market.

The veterinary certificate – The veterinary certificate should clearly identify the imported product, the means and route of transportation, the packaging, consignee and consignor, as well as insure clear epizootic/disease status of the country, state, premise, and the amount of the imported item. The State Veterinary Office (SVO) is responsible for the specific requirements for importing live animals and products of animal origin, and the veterinary certificate must attest that those requirements have been met. The SVO provides the requirements in the English language upon an importer’s request. No specific format is requested; the content of the certificate is usually negotiated between the SVO and the veterinary authority of the exporting country (e.g. please see the U.S. – BiH agreed certificates). The certificate must be an original, issued by the exporting country’s official authorities and it should be translated into the local language.

The phytosanitary certificate should be in accordance with International Plant Protection Convention guidelines. The certificate should contain the name and the address of the exporter, declared name and address of consignee, origin, means of conveyance, point of entry, packaging, name of produce, botanical name of plants, quantity, any treatments conducted such as disinfestations or disinfection treatments and should state that the product has been inspected according to appropriate procedures, considered to be free from quarantine pests and considered to conform with the current phytosanitary regulation of the importing country.

Section IV. Government Certificate Legal Entry Requirements

An original document or a certified copy for a multiple shipment must accompany each shipment at the point of entry for each mode of transport, translated into the local language.

Imported products will be cleared through customs only upon presentation of all required certificates. BiH does not accept the supplier or manufacturer export declaration as a proof of compliance with its regulations and standards. BiH will accept a U.S. authority-issued export certificates (e.g., FDA Certificate to a Foreign Government/Certificate of Free Sale) if these certificates are in accordance with BiH legislation.

Phytosanitary certificates are valid for 15 days and veterinary certificates are valid for 10 days from the date of issuance. Certificates cannot be applied to multiple shipments. Products will not be allowed entry if they do not meet local regulations for quality or contain unapproved biotech products (currently only biotech soybean meal is approved).

BiH does not apply a waiver for export certificates. BiH does not have preclearance programs and does not use electronic certificates (no legal framework yet).

Section V. Other Certification/Accreditation Requirements to Ensure Market Entry

Prior import approvals issued by the BiH State Veterinary Office (SVO) are required for live animals, fresh, chilled, and frozen meat, veterinary medicines, eggs for reproduction, semen, and inseminated egg cells. To import animals for reproduction, additional certificates/evidence regarding origin, production and reproductive value is required. Importers of semen should provide progeny test results. Exporting facilities need to register with the SVO for the first time they export to BiH.

For seeds, planting materials, pesticides and mineral fertilizers the entities' Agricultural Ministries provide prior approvals/technical opinions based on presented health and quality certificates. Forms are available at the Ministries. BiH Plant Health Protection Administration issues final import approvals.

Seeds and planting material

The registered importer first files the request for consent for import of seeds and/or planting material to the competent ministry of agriculture of the entity. These procedures differ somewhat between the entities, thus it is important to contact the relevant entity regarding the documents required to be enclosed, as well as to obtain information on administrative fees. Upon obtaining the consent, it is required to file an import request with the BiH Plant Health Protection Administration (PHPA) using the form which can be obtained at PHPA. Besides the permit for import of seeds and planting material for agricultural production, it is required to have a certificate of quality issued by the authorized body of the country of origin, and the imported variety has to be listed on the PHPA List of Approved Varieties (available in local language only).

Plant health protection products

Only registered importers can receive imports and disburse them onto the market. Importers that register with the entity ministries of agriculture must have the appropriate professional and technical capabilities to handle plant protection products (i.e., the proper storage facilities and educated workers). With each shipment, the importer (distributor or representative) must file the request for consent to import and request for authorization for placement onto the domestic market of a given product. The request is filed in writing with the competent ministry of agriculture of the entity per prescribed procedure and on the prescribed form. These forms are available from the entity ministries. The procedures differ to a certain extent between the entities, and it is important to contact the competent entity first.

As an example, the request for consent to import and for placement on the market should indicate the tariff number, trade name, active substance, manner of use, quantity imported, value of goods and border crossing point for the entry of goods and control, as well as the pro forma invoice. With the request, all the documentation must be submitted as evidence of fulfillment of the aforementioned conditions, including evidence of registration. Based on Article 12 of the Law on Phyto-Pharmaceutical Products in BiH, the import of products prohibited in the country of origin and in the EU shall be prohibited. BiH PHPA monitors and regularly updates the list of prohibited products in the EU, and this information can be obtained at PHPA. Upon obtaining consent and approval from the responsible entity ministry of agriculture, the importer must file an import request form with PHPA.

Mineral fertilizers

The importer is obliged to file the request for mandatory control of shipments at the point of entry with the phytosanitary inspector of the entity (according to the location of the entry point). The importer is obliged to have the import permit from PHPA, and a certificate of quality.

Mercantile products

Certain mercantile products are subject to mandatory control by a phytosanitary inspector at the border as well, according to the list in Annex 1 of the Decision on Classification of Goods in the Regimes of Import and Export (e.g., potato). The request for mandatory control is to be filed with the competent entity inspection body according to the location of the border crossing.

A certificate attesting that the product is free of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), or a GMO free-related statement is often required on the health certificate for grains and similar products (e.g., soy, corn, and rice). Based on the 2009 Law on GMOs, BiH permits the licensed use of biotech products. To date, the first and only GE product approved for import is GE soybean meal for feed.

Appendix I. Direct Hyperlink, Electronic Copy, Scanned Copy or Outline of Each Export Certificate

Because BiH accepts all kinds of export certificates, post cannot provide digital copies. A detailed outline of the content of each certificate is provided under the Section III.

Appendix II. Government Regulatory Key Agency Contacts

State Veterinary Office

Marsala Tita 9a/II

7100 Sarajevo

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Contact person: Aleksandar Nemet

Phone: +387 33 565 746

E-mail: info@vet.gov.ba

aleksandar.nemet@vet.gov.ba
Website: <http://www.vet.gov.ba/>

BiH Plant Health Administration

Marsala Tita 9a
71000 Sarajevo
Phone: +387 33 290 700
E-mail: infouprava@uzzb.gov.ba
Website: <http://www.uzzb.gov.ba/>

Federation Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry

Phytosanitary Department
Hamdije Cemerlica 2
71 000 Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Contact person: Mario Beus
Phone: +387 33 726 586
Email: info@fmpvs.gov.ba
mario.beus@fmpvs.gov.ba
Website: <https://fmpvs.gov.ba/>

Republika Srpska Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Phytosanitary Department
Trg Republike Srpske 1
78000 Banja Luka
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Federation BiH Inspectorate

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Republika Srpska Inspectorate

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Website: <http://www.inspektorat.vladars.net/>

Federation Ministry of Health

Titova 9
71 000 Sarajevo
Phone: +387 33 226 635
Email: amra.karic@fmz.gov.ba
Website: <https://www.fmoh.gov.ba/>

Republika Srpska Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

Trg Republike Srpske 1
78000 Banja Luka
Phone: +387 51 339 486
Email: ministarstvo-zdravlja@mzs.vladars.net
Website: <https://www.vladars.net/sr-SP-Cyrl/Vlada/Ministarstva/mzs/Pages/default.aspx>

Attachments:

No Attachments