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**Report Highlights:**

The Netherlands, as a Member State of the European Union (EU), conforms to all EU regulations and directives. However, rules for the certification of imports are complicated and, in practice, are not always harmonized across EU Member States. This report lists the recent developments related to Dutch import requirements for the certification of agricultural and food imports.

DISCLAIMER: This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs in The Hague (FAS/The Hague) 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.

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## Executive Summary

The Netherlands is a Member State of the European Union (EU). Accordingly, we strongly recommend that this report be read in conjunction with the [EU Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Export Certificate Report](#).

This report notifies the main updates of the required certification requirements for importing agricultural and food products into the Netherlands. The main updates are related to:

- The EU's Animal Health Law ([Regulation \(EU\) 2016/429](#))
- The EU Requirements for composite products
- Brexit, which complicated shipments of containers of which the content is destined to both the EU and UK market.

Ports in the Netherlands function as the major entry point for agricultural exports to Northwestern Europe. FAS The Hague regularly assists in releasing shipments from the United States. The most frequent reasons for detainment are: the shipper using the wrong/old certificate model, the absence of a certificate, the certificate was issued after the date of departure, or missing statements or references in the certificate. The most frequent products which are detained are meat, dairy, and composite products.

## Section I List all the Export Certificates required by Government

The Netherlands, as a Member State of the EU, conforms to all EU regulations and directives. We therefore recommend that this report be read in conjunction with the [EU Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Export Certificate Report](#). This report and other related FAIRS reports can be found on the FAS website at: <https://gain.fas.usda.gov/#/>

Please note that between two and three percent of all shipments entering Europe through the Netherlands are detained. The most frequent products which are detained are meat, dairy, and composite products. The main reasons provided for detained shipments from the United States are generally as follows, in order of prevalence:

- the certificate was issued after the date of departure;
- incorrect strike outs of standard text in certificates;
- missing or incorrect statements or references in the certificate;
- the shipper using the wrong/old certificate model,
- the certificate is absent;
- there were typographical errors (such as the wrong EU plant approval number);
- missing stamps (on one or more pages) or stamp/initials missing by strike outs (all strike outs must be initialed and stamped);
- page number or certificate number is missing (must both be present on all pages);
- missing information such as HS code, packaging, batch number, place of loading or vessel name;
- the number of packages listed on health certificate does not match the number of packages shipped;

- selection of the wrong Harmonized System (HS) code (in box I.19) and/or incorrect description of the goods (in box I.28); and,
- the shipment was not registered in the EU's Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES).

Additionally, changing EU legislation and the resulting changes in import requirements are often a reason for errors, such as issuance of the incorrect certificate model (e.g., using the old model), typos, and/or incorrect strike outs. Please keep these in mind when shipping to the Netherlands.

If a container with U.S. product is detained in the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, or Iceland, FAS The Hague may be able to serve as a resource. If you require assistance, please contact us by e-mail at: [AgTheHague@state.gov](mailto:AgTheHague@state.gov)

## **Section II Specific Attestation Required on Export Certificate(s)**

Please read the [EU FAIRS Export Certificate Report](#).

## **Section III Government Certificate Legal Entry Requirements**

Please read the [EU FAIRS Export Certificate Report](#).

## **Section IV Other Certification/Accreditation Requirements to ensure market entry**

The Netherlands government does not require an attestation of radioactivity for imports. To import certain radioactive materials from third countries and transport certain radioactive materials between EU countries, you have to apply for a permit or notify the Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Authority (ANVS).

### ***Brexit***

The United Kingdom withdrew from the European Union (EU) on January 31, 2020. Since January 31, 2024, Brexit has complicated shipments of containers of which the content is destined to both the EU and UK market. Please contact FAS The Hague ([AgTheHague@usda.gov](mailto:AgTheHague@usda.gov)) for more information about the options to transship or re-export products to the United Kingdom.

### ***New EU Animal Health Certificate Requirements***

Following an update of the EU's Animal Health Law ([Regulation \(EU\) 2016/429](#)), which entered into force on April 21, 2021, the EU has revised all required certificates for products of animal origin. Models of the new certificates for food of animal origin were published by the EU and implemented by U.S. agencies. Several amendments to the new certificates were made since their first publication. They are available from [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/2235 \(consolidated version July 29, 2024\)](#). FAS cooperates closely with the regulatory agencies to ensure that their export libraries are up-to-date and that the currently applicable certificate versions are made available to exporters. For more information see FAS GAIN Report – [EU FAIRS Export Certificate Report Annual](#).

## ***Seal Number***

To conduct an identity check of a shipment, the Dutch NVWA requires the seal number of the container to be on the health certificate. A seal number on the Bill of Lading is not sufficient as these can easily be re-issued by private companies. If a seal number is not present on the health certificate, a physical check is necessary to verify the identity of the shipment. If there is a broken seal, the port official will conduct an open-container check to verify the health marks, count the boxes, verify the weight, and/or open the boxes to ensure that the product in the container matches what is listed on the export documentation.

## ***Customs Procedures and E-Certification***

### ***E-Certification***

U.S. regulatory agencies and the NVWA continue to promote the use of e-certification for both exports and imports. Some advantages of e-certification are that the document check can be performed at an earlier stage, issues can be identified and rectified, and the paper certificates will not get lost. Ultimately, e-certificates will cut down on the administrative burden and save costs. TRACES (the acronym for TRAde Control and Expert System) is the European Commission's (EC) online platform for sanitary and phytosanitary certification required for the importation of animals, animal products, food and feed of non-animal origin and plants into the EU, intra-EU trade, and EU exports of animals and certain animal products. The EC's Official Controls Regulation (OCR - [Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625](#)) provides the legal basis for the general EU acceptance of electronic certificates using the EU's Integrated Management System for Official Controls (IMSOC). Currently, more than 42,000 users from roughly 85 countries worldwide are using TRACES. U.S. competent authorities utilize electronic systems for e-certification, but these are not currently connected with the TRACES system. Certification of U.S. products to the EU is currently paper based, except for almonds and organic products. The EC indicates that TRACES NT (the additional acronym is for New Technology), introduced on October 11, 2021, has enhanced traditional sanitary and phytosanitary certification practices by enabling both EU and non-EU authorities to digitally stamp official documents and certificates, thus, making the use of paper certification for participating third countries obsolete. For more information see the [TRACES website of the EC](#).

## **APPENDIX I Electronic Copy, scanned copy, or Outline of Each Export Certificate**

Please see the [EU FAIRS Export Certificate Report](#).

## **APPENDIX II: Instructions for Exporters of FDA Regulated Products Certified by Other Agencies**

Composite Products to the EU:

The EU defines a composite product as a food product containing both processed products of animal origin (dairy, egg, fishery products, or meat products) and products of plant origin. [USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service \(FSIS\) will issue EU composite product certificates](#) for composite products produced at FSIS-regulated facilities and bearing the USDA mark of inspection. AMS Dairy Program will issue the EU composite product certificates for composite products NOT produced in an FSIS-regulated

facility and not bearing the USDA mark of inspection, regardless of whether dairy is an ingredient in the composite product.

The new EU requirements for composite products will impact stakeholders who have not been required to obtain an export certificate from AMS Dairy Program in the past. Prior to requesting a certificate from AMS Dairy Program, a new customer will need to establish a USDA level 2 e-authentication account. [Go to How to Apply for an AMS Dairy or Composite Product Export Certificate for more information.](#)

#### Dairy to the EU:

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is the certifying agency for [EU export certificates for dairy products](#) regulated by FDA. For more information, contact [DairyExportsQuestions@usda.gov](mailto:DairyExportsQuestions@usda.gov). In order to obtain an EU Health Certificate, the manufacturers must have their final production, blending, and/or packing facility listed on the [List of EU approved facilities maintained on the European Commission website](#). Exporters should check whether the manufacturing facility for exported products have been included on this list. Exporters may apply for inclusion on these lists through the FDA Export Listing Module (ELM). Please visit [Online Applications for Export Lists](#) for a link to this electronic system and step- by-step instructions.

#### Dairy to Other Export Markets:

The Agricultural Marketing Service's Dairy Program is responsible for issuing dairy export certificates accepted by most countries. Information on these certificates can be [obtained through this website](#). The Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) issues export certificates for a limited number of countries including Albania, Australia, Georgia, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Suriname, and Ukraine. Information regarding APHIS export certificates [can be obtained through this website](#).

#### Eggs and Egg Products:

In the egg sector, USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) is the certifying agency for export certificates for egg products regulated by FDA. The AMS Livestock, Poultry and Seed Division is responsible for the EU export certificates for the food products containing eggs or egg products that are regulated by FDA. In addition to shell eggs, FDA-regulated egg products include hard boiled eggs, cooked omelets, frozen egg patties, imitation egg products, egg substitutes, noodles, cake mixes, freeze-dried products, dietary foods, dried no-bake custard mixes, egg nog mixes, acidic dressings, mayonnaise, milk and egg dip, foods containing egg extracts, French toast, sandwiches containing eggs or egg products, and balut and other similar ethnic delicacies. For more information on jurisdiction overlap for commercial products regulated by either or both FDA and USDA, please refer to the [FDA/USDA jurisdictional chart](#) (Exhibit 3-1). U.S. exports of eggs and egg products to the EU are subject to establishment listing requirements as a precondition for market access. Establishments may apply for inclusion on these lists via the Export Listing Module (ELM). Please visit Online Applications for Export Lists for a link to this electronic system and step- by-step instructions. [List of EU approved facilities maintained on the European Commission website](#).

#### Seafood:

The EU export health certificate is required by the EU Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection and attests to the safety of fish and fishery -- both wild and aquaculture -- products shipped to

the EU. U.S. exports of seafood products to the EU are subject to establishment listing requirements as a precondition for market access. Establishments may apply for inclusion on these lists via the [Export Listing Module \(ELM\)](#). Please visit Online Applications for Export Lists for a link to this electronic system and step- by-step instructions. Please note that the EU will only accept export certificates signed after an establishment has been added to the list published on the [EC website](#) and the list has entered into force. Once listed, U.S. establishments may contact National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Seafood Inspection Program to request export certificates for U.S. seafood exports to the EU Prior to exporting, industry should consult the EC's EU List of Approved Establishments External Link Disclaimer to verify that the establishment from which they intend to export is listed. These certificates must be requested and issued prior to shipment of the product. [Follow this link to submit a request online.](#)

#### Honey to the EU:

The European Union (EU) has listed the United States as a country eligible to export honey to the European Union provided honey producers meet their program requirements. Under the program, domestic U.S. companies must adhere to specific requirements for each shipment destined to an EU member country. The [USDA Agricultural Marketing Service outlines specific requirements for U.S. honey shipped to EU markets](#) related to Hazardous Analysis and Critical Control Point (HAACP) planning, recordkeeping, testing, sampling, as well as labeling requirements in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 and that the product(s) have been handled and where appropriate, prepared, packaged, and stored in a hygienic manner in accordance with the requirements of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 ([these regulations can be downloaded from the following link](#)).

#### Seeds for Sprouting to the EU:

USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) is the certifying agency for seeds for sprouting regulated by FDA. See: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/content/usda-announces-seed-sprouting-export-certification-program>

For more information, please contact:

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#### **Attachments:**

No Attachments