

**Required Report:** Required - Public Distribution

**Date:** February 27,2020

**Report Number:** TZ2019-0003

**Report Name:** Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards  
Country Report

**Country:** Tanzania

**Post:** Dar Es Salaam

**Report Category:** FAIRS Annual Country Report

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**Report Highlights:**

This report updates import requirements and regulations for food and agricultural products required by the Government of Tanzania (GoT). The report outlines Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) regulations for U.S exports to Tanzania, including labeling and packaging requirements and import procedures. Exporters must be aware that Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection can be difficult–impossible because of poor enforcement of the current Copyright Legislation.

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**Executive Summary:**

Tanzania’s food regulatory system is generally consistent with the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other international treaties including CODEX, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), and International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The main regulations against which TBS evaluates U.S. exports to Tanzania are available at [TBS website](#).

Imports to Tanzania are subjected to different stages whereby the importer is advised to make declarations through their appointed Clearing and Forwarding Agent by submitting documents at least seven days before the arrival of the vessel. TBS is responsible for all matters concerning the importation and inspection of imported food products. To obtain a Food Importer Registration Certificate (FIRC), imported products must satisfy the Tanzanian import requirements as evaluated by TBS. Prior to the application seeking permission to import non-registered products, pre-shipment samples must be analyzed with the cost being incurred by the importer as prescribed in the Fees and Charges Regulations.. Additional information is available at Tanzania Bureau of Standards website.

## **Section I: Food Laws.**

In June 2019, the Tanzania National Assembly passed a Financial Bill that amended Section 130 of the Standards Act No. 2 of 2009, to reflect the additional functions of assuring the quality and safety of food and cosmetics products, which were performed by the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA). The Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) was established under the Ministry of Industry and Trade by an Act of Parliament, the Standards Act No.3 of 1975 as the National Standards Institute and became operational in April 1976. It was subsequently renamed Tanzania Bureau of Standards through an amendment to the Act by Act No.1 of 1977. The Standards Act No. 3 was later repealed and replaced by the Standards Act No. 2 of 2009, which gave the Bureau more powers in carrying out its mandate.

The implementation of the new functions commenced on 1 July 2019 and includes registration of production premises for food and registration and certification of locally produced and imported food and cosmetics products.

The following has been commissioned to the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) since July 1, 2019:

- a) Premise registration certificates issued by TFDA to local manufacturers will be recognized by TBS until their five-year Expiry Date. Thereafter, new registration will be issued in accordance with TBS procedures.
- b) TBS will assume the responsibility for registering premises for new applicants using a harmonized system that observes safety and quality requirements for food products. Moreover, new registrations will be done for expiring premise registration certificates.
- c) Food samples will now be taken and tested once for both quality and safety requirements in accordance with relevant standards for initial inspection. This is aimed at reducing testing costs and turnaround time; thus, manufacturers are advised to make necessary preparations before embarking on food product certification processes.
- d) In case initial inspection samples do not conform to the quality and safety requirements for food, the manufacturer will be advised to take corrective action on observed discrepancies. After taking corrective action measures, re-inspection and retesting of samples may be conducted before issue of a license to use the Standards Mark of Quality.
- e) Upon positive factory inspection and laboratory test results, TBS shall issue a license to use the Standards Mark of Quality for products certified against national standards or a certificate for products certified against other standards.
- f) A license or certificate issued by TBS through the procedure specified in item e) above shall serve as an attestation of premise registration and product registration and confirmation of safety and quality of food. This is aimed at reducing annual licensing and/or certification costs and the piles of licenses and/or certificates at the manufacturer's premise.
- g) Concerning imported food products, TBS will recognize the registration of food products issued by TFDA and the certification of those products shall be done through a harmonized system, which observes safety and quality requirements for food products.

- h) TBS will assume the responsibility for registering imported food products using a harmonized system, which observes safety and quality requirements for food products. Moreover, new registrations will be done for expiring registrations for imported food products.
- i) TBS will proceed with safety and quality assurance of imported products through the existing certification schemes, i.e. Pre-Shipment Verification of Conformity to Standards (PVoC) Programme or Destination Inspection (DI).
- j) To acquire the Certificate of Conformity under PVoC, the importer of food products is required to attach the registration certificate issued by TFDA (for registered products) or TBS registration certificate for products registered after the amendment of the Act.
- k) For unregistered products, the importer is required to submit samples at TBS for assessment and registration before embarking on importation process. Samples shall be accompanied with a formal request. For unregistered products entering the country, registration shall be done through a harmonized system for registration of imported food products that observes safety and quality requirements for the products.
- l) Other quality and safety assurance measures in accordance with international standards namely ISO/IEC 17067, 17065 and 17020 shall be maintained through existing procedures that are revised from time to time to enhance their effectiveness. The measures will include market and factory surveillance to ensure conformity to systems requirements and to ensure that manufacturers and distributors of products abide by the safety and quality requirements for food and other products.

### **Requirements for food importation:**

Applicants are granted import permits after complying with the following requirements:

- i. Registration of the importer and food products to be imported. This is done by filling the online forms available at <https://oas.tbs.go.tz/>
- ii. Application for importation by completing the online forms on the TBS imports and exports portal <https://oas.tbs.go.tz/>
- iii. Inspection and approval of foods by the inspector at the point of entry prior to distribution onto the market.
- iv. Regular laboratory analysis of foods to check for compliance;
- v. Samples from suspect foods can be taken for laboratory analysis;
- vi. Shelf life of non-perishable foods should be more than six months at the time it arrives at the official point of entry; and
- vii. Foods determined to be noncompliant at the point of entry are returned to the country of origin at the expense of the importer or can be destroyed at the expense of the importer.

Tanzania's food regulatory system is generally consistent with the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other international treaties including CODEX, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), and International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

The main regulations against which TBS evaluates U.S. exports to Tanzania are available at [TBS website](#) and are listed below:

1. [The Standards \(Certification\) Regulations, 2009](#):
2. [The Standards \(Tested Products\) Regulations, 2009](#)
3. [The Standards \(Compulsory Batch Certification of Imports\) Regulations, 2009](#)

Other laws that evaluate U.S exports to Tanzania are:

1. The Plant Protection Act, 1997
2. The Plant Protection Regulations, 1998
3. The Plant Protection Act, 1997 Regulations Schedules 1-16
4. The Cereal and other Produce Act, 2009
5. The Seeds Act (No.1), 2003
6. The Coffee Industry Act, 2001
7. The Crops Laws (miscellaneous amendments) Act, 2009
8. The Protection of New Plant Varieties (Plant Breeders' Rights) Act, 2002
9. The Cereals and other Produce Regulations, 2011
10. The Finance Act, 2015
11. Value Added Tax (General) Regulations, 2015
12. National Biotechnology Policy of 2010
13. National Environmental Policy of 1997
14. National Trade Policy of 2003
15. The Fisheries Act of 2003

## **Section II: Labeling Requirements**

TBS regulates food labelling and has the task to evaluate and register prepackaged foods before approval for distribution and marketing in Tanzania. The evaluation includes assessment of labelling information to ensure that it complies with the specifications of the TBS food labelling regulations and the Codex standard 1-1985. According to the TBS Food Labelling Regulations and the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-Packaged Foods (Codex Stan 1 -1985), the pre-packaged food labelling should include name of the food, list of ingredients, net content, name, and address of the manufacturer and country of origin. Other information includes the batch /lot identification, date markings (manufacture and expiry dates), Quantitative Ingredient Declarations (QUID), storage conditions, nutrition information (composition) and instructions for use. All this information is essential to help consumers in making choices of food depending on preference, dietary restrictions, and other reasons. The GoT requires an English and/or Kiswahili label on all consumer food products.

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

The Tanzania Standard (TZS 538-1991) has defined 'packaging' as an art and the operations involved in ensuring the commodity is packed securely, including handling, storage, sale and delivery. In Tanzania, the packaging technology considers the facts about the product nature and other characteristics, facts about the hazards to transport, and about packaging materials and forms, machinery. The major acceptable packaging materials for agricultural products are:

- Metal cans and metal ended composite containers.
- Glass bottles and jars.
- Molded, rigid and semi rigid plastic containers.
- Collapsible tubes made in both metal and plastic.
- Folding and rigid paper board boxes and cartons.
- Molded paper containers; and

Flexible packaging such as papers, films (plastic films, including low density polythene and medium and high-density polyethylene, polypropylene, cellulose (cellophane), aluminum foil, and cloth or vegetable fibers (cotton, jute, linen, sisal and coconut) from any country.

### **Section IV: Food Additive Regulations**

Food additives and the regulation thereof are an important variable when considering a country's openness to trade within the context of protecting the health of its population. Nevertheless, not all developing countries are able to effectively regulate and monitor additives in food.

TBS regulates food additives through Section 130 of the Standards Act No. 2 of 2009. Where there are no specific GoT guidelines, TBS follows the CODEX approved food additives as references to regulate food additives. Tanzania has both positive and negative lists for food additives. The lists are not yet available online but are available by request from the regional or national TBS offices. The GoT restricts the use of food additives in baby food. Where an additive is not listed in GoT regulations, TBS relies, and requires that the Pre-Shipment Verification of Conformity (PVoC) agent rely on the CODEX list.

### **Section V: Pesticide and Other Contaminants**

The Tropical Pesticides Research Institute (TPRI) Act, 1979 mandates the pesticide research institute to regulate importation, exportation, manufacture, distribution, and use of pesticides in Tanzania. TPRI is also in charge of pesticide registration and maintains a list of registered products, restricted and banned pesticides. TPRI refers to CODEX standards for tolerance levels.

Other government institutions enforcing pesticide/contaminant regulations include:

- TFDA monitors and analyzes pesticide residues in their accredited analytical chemistry laboratory.
- Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) sets the standards and monitors compliance.

- Tanzania Veterinary Services (TVS) and Tanzania Veterinary Laboratory Agency (TVLA) checks on pesticide residues in animal products, feed and animal health drugs; and
- Tanzania Atomic Energy Commission (TAEC) checks on the maximum residue limit to food.

## **Section VI: Other Certification and Testing Requirements**

TBS is responsible for all matters concerning the importation and inspection of imported food products. To obtain a Food Importer Registration Certificate (FIRC), imported products must satisfy the Tanzanian import requirements as evaluated by TBS. The FIRC provided by the Director General of the TBS is valid for one year. A registered Food Importer shall be required to apply for an import permit by filling in prescribed forms as stipulated under Schedule III and Schedule IV for registrable and non-registrable foods respectively. Application for import permit should be accompanied by the following documents:

- a) Proforma invoice from the supplier;
- b) Certificate of analysis from manufacturer of the exporting country;
- c) Health certificate from competent regulatory body of the exporting country;
- d) Phytosanitary certificate (in case of importation of unprocessed cereal and plant origin products);
- e) Radiation free certificate, where applicable;
- f) Zoo sanitary certificate in case of non-processed foods of animal origin;
- g) Certificates from relevant bodies for specific food products (e.g. Sugar Board, Dairy Board);
- h) Bill of lading/Airway bill;
- i) Certificate of origin; and
- j) A copy of previous import permits which shows that the consignment was inspected at the port of entry

Prior to the application for importation of non-registrable products. Pre-shipment samples for analysis whose cost will be incurred by importer as prescribed in the Fees and Charges Regulations, 2011 shall be submitted. Additional information is available at Tanzania Bureau of Standards website.

## **Section VII: Other Specific Standards**

Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) implemented a new product conformity assessment program for the control of certain categories of imported goods. Imported goods under the program require a Certificate of Conformity (CoC). TBS has appointed two inspection companies SGS and Bureau Veritas to conduct Pre-Export Verification of Conformity (PVoC) to standards program.

PVoC to standards program started on February 1, 2012 and the new contract began May 1, 2015. PVoC aims to ensure all imports of regulated products comply with the approved Tanzanian technical regulations, (i.e. Tanzanian or other approved international standards), before shipment. The CoC issued by PVoC partners shall be provided for customs clearance.

[www.tbs.go.tz/images/uploads/PVoC\\_HARMONISED\\_PROCEDURE\\_\(SUMMARISED\).pdf](http://www.tbs.go.tz/images/uploads/PVoC_HARMONISED_PROCEDURE_(SUMMARISED).pdf)

## **Section VIII: Copyright and/or Trademark Laws**

In Tanzania, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) were introduced by the colonial administration in 1922 through Chapter 217 of the Patent Legislation and the introduction of Trademarks and 1924 through Chapter 218 of the Copyright Legislation. After independence, there were no significant changes to the IPR legal system until 1966, when the Copyright Ordinance Cap. Copyright Act No. 61 of 1966 repealed Chapter 218. The new Copyright Legislation was enacted in 1999. It is the current Copyright Legislation in force, but it is poorly enforced. Exporters must be aware that IPR protection can be difficult–to–impossible.

## **Section IX: Import Procedures**

‘Import’ means goods and services brought to Tanzania from a foreign country. Import procedures must be followed to clear goods from Customs control as per the East Africa Community Customs Management Act (EACCMA) 2004.

Imports to Tanzania are subjected to different stages whereby the importer is advised to make declarations through his appointed Clearing and Forwarding Agent by lodging documents at least seven days before the arrival of the vessel.

### **Importation procedures:**

- The importer is required to appoint a Licensed Clearing and Forwarding Agent (CFA) to clear goods.
- Documentation process is done online through Tanzania Customs Integrated System (TANCIS), Tanzania Bureau of Standards Online Operating System (TBS-OAS) and can be completed before arrival of the goods; and
- Customs agents/importers are urged to complete a declaration and self-assessment through TANCIS, TBS-OAS and attach with other relevant import/ supporting documents at least 7 days prior to the arrival of the goods.

### **Import documents include:**

- Final invoice;
- Agent’s Authorization Letter from the importer;
- Import permits from TBS etc.;
- Exemption documents (If applicable);
- Packing list; and
- Transport documents i.e. Bill of Lading/Airway Bill/Road Consignment note.

**Note:** TRA rejects illegible and insufficient descriptions through Integrated Query System (IQS), which is available in TANCIS. Additional information is available at Tanzania Revenue Authority website.

### **Attachments:**

No Attachments