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Report Highlights:

This report outlines specific requirements for food and agricultural products imports into Austria. Austria, as a member of the European Union, follows the EU directives and regulations. U.S. food and agricultural suppliers to Austria should verify with local importers and appropriate U.S. regulatory agencies for the most current local requirements prior to shipping. It is recommended that this report be read in conjunction with the EU Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Report.

Last updated November 2019.

Disclaimer

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines specific requirements for food and agricultural products imports into Austria. Austria as a member of the European Union (EU) follows the EU directives and regulations. It is therefore recommended that this report be read in conjunction with the Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) report produced by the US Mission to the EU in Brussels, Belgium, available at the [FAS GAIN Report Database](#).

Austria is a part of the EU single market and customs union and a Eurozone member. Most important Austrian food legislation is the 2006 Food Safety and Consumer Protection law and its ordinances.

I. [FOOD LAWS](#)

Austrian food legislation consists of the [2006 Food Safety and Consumer Protection Law](#)– hereby referred to as the Austrian Food Law – [ordinances](#) to this law, and the Austrian Food Codex ([Codex Alimentarius Austriacus](#)). Austrian food legislation generally conforms to EU regulations.

Austrian food regulations are valid for products produced in Austria and imported foods. However, Austria is obliged to allow entry of products permitted into other countries of the European Economic Area. Imports from third countries must comply with national legislation if no EU law exists.

Food Law

Austrian food laws and regulations follow European legislation to the extent that EU laws have been harmonized. On January 20, 2006, the Austrian Government issued the “Federal Law on Safety Requirements and other Requirements for Food, Objects of Utility and Cosmetics in Order to Protect Consumers,” (“Food Safety and Consumer Protection Law”, or hereafter, just “Food Law”). The law governs food safety regulations throughout the entirety of the food chain, from the primary production site to the end consumer. Requirements are established for food products, potable water, objects of utility, and cosmetics. The regulation applies to all production, processing, and distribution stages and includes veterinary inspection (when applicable), hygiene regulations, and monitoring/testing. The law is based on several EU regulations and directives. Since the introduction of the law it has been updated through several amendments. The aim of the law is to harmonize Austrian law with EU food regulations.

A number of EC (European Community) and European Economic Community regulations do not require a conversion to national law. Those regulations are directly incorporated in Austrian law as such and a list of those regulations can be found in the annex to the Austrian 2006 Food Safety and Consumer Protection Law.

The Austrian Food Law is primarily intended to protect the health of consumers and to provide good nutrition for the population. In addition, economic interests are considered whenever possible. However, in case of conflicting interests, consumer protection has priority. Therefore, one of the key elements of the Austrian Food Law is the increased responsibility of food producing companies to ensure food safety, specifically in close cooperation with regulatory authorities. The immediate initiation of countermeasures in case of deficiencies or food safety concerns is another essential concept in the law. According to the Food Law, food products, which are determined to be hazardous to human health, falsified, or declared wrongly, may not be distributed. Health and nutrition related claims on the label have to follow the requirements laid down in [EC 1924/2006](#). Disease related claims (e.g. “helps prevent heart attacks”) and the use of unapproved food additives are not permitted

In addition, the Austrian Food Law extends to animals intended for human consumption. Hormones, or hormone inhibitors are prohibited in meat production (including animal husbandry. Additionally, the law covers special requirements for plants intended for the production of foods (pesticide residues, etc.).

Although food safety and quality are the primary concern of the Austrian Food Law, its jurisdictional scope extends to a variety of non-food items. They include cosmetics, kitchen utensils and appliances, wrapping and packaging materials for foods, additives and cosmetics, as well as cleaning and cleansing agents, disinfectants, air purifiers, preservatives and pesticides to the extent these items may be brought in contact with foods, food additives, or cosmetics.

Essentially, imported food products have the same status as domestically produced products with respect to the provisions of the Austrian Food Law. However, subject to certain conditions, health authorities may decree by ordinance that the importation of specific items coming under the jurisdiction of this law is permissible only if these items are attested to be “unobjectionable” by one of the federal institutes for food examination. Based on (satisfactory) sample inspection findings, the institute will certify the commodity or commodities involved to be in conformity with the provisions to be spelled out in that ordinance. Product clearance may also be made contingent on the results of an inspection by an Austrian expert of the foreign manufacturing (or shipping) enterprise supplying the products in question. Liability for legal and proper marketing of imported products lies with the importer.

The enforcement authority of the Austrian food legislation is with the federal states (*Bundesländer*). Domestic and foreign products are checked through random sampling by government officials at the point of sale or at any other point in the trade chain, or at the processing location. The samples are tested by government authorized laboratories.

Note: **Austrian food legislation is only available in German.** Austrian food legislation is cited with first publication number and year; amendments are not explicit mentioned. Current valid consolidated versions including amendments can be searched at the Austrian Legal Information System ([RIS](#)).

Following links refer to Austrian ordinances covered by the 2006 Food Safety and Consumer Protection Law. The legal texts are only available in German:

- [Relevant Austrian food and beverages ordinances](#)

EC regulations on various food and beverage products, which are directly incorporated into national law (Annex to 2006 Food Safety and Consumer Protection Law) can be found in the EU FAIRS report – for most recent EU FAIRS report please search the [FAS GAIN Report Database](#).

- [Ordinances on drinking water](#)
- [Food for special target groups](#)
- [Wine legislation](#)

Wine is regulated in the Austrian [Wine Law 2009 – Federal Law on the Marketing of Wine and Fruit Wine](#).

While Austrian wine legislation is based on European wine legislation, Austria, however, has maintained some individuality. The 2009 Austrian Wine Law transposes EU food relevant regulations of the Common Market Order (CMO) of wine. It includes some additional, stricter requirements for “*Land- and Qualitaetswein*,” or higher quality wine. Controlled origin, capped yields, quality designations, and official quality controls are the pillars of the Austrian wine law. Three general quality designations are recognized: *Tafelwein* (table wine), *Qualitaetswein* (quality wine), and *Prädikatswein* (premium wine). The categories are determined by the sugar content of the grape, expressed according to the *Klosterneuburger Mostwaage* system.

- [Hygiene ordinances](#)

The 2006 Austrian Food Law covers hygiene regulations for all food products including meat.

- [Irradiation of food products](#)

Austrian Food Codex

The Austrian Food Codex (*Codex Alimentarius Austriacus*) includes guidelines and definitions, compositions, tests, evaluations, and directives on the distribution of products governed by the food law. Also, it includes labeling provisions and outlines the basis for determining incorrect labeling. These guidelines are elaborated by the Codex Commission, which is installed by the Austrian Food Law. The Codex is regarded as an “objective expert opinion” but is not a law in the strict sense. It consists of numerous chapters covering different food products and food processing practices.

II. LABELING REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements/Overview

Austria applies all EU harmonized food labelling legislation.

On December 13, 2014, the EU's "[Food Information to Consumers \(FIC\) regulation 1169/2011](#)" became applicable to all pre-packaged food and drink products marketed in the EU, including those imported from third countries. The mandatory nutrition declaration requirement introduced by the FIC regulation became applicable on December 13, 2016.

Detailed information on food labeling requirements set out in the FIC regulation as well as updates on EU labeling rules can be found at <http://www.usda-eu.org/trade-with-the-eu/eu-import-rules/eu-labeling-requirements/>.

List of mandatory declarations on food and drink labels as set out in the FIC:

- Name of the food
- List of ingredients
- Allergens listed in Annex II
- Quantity of certain ingredients or category of ingredients
- Net quantity of the food
- Date of minimum durability or "use by date"
- Any special storage conditions and/or conditions of use
- Name of business name and address of the food business operator under whose name the food is marketed. If that operator is not established in the EU, the name and address of the importer
- Country of origin or place of provenance in accordance with the provisions of Article 26
- Instructions for use where it would be difficult to make appropriate use of the food in the absence of such instructions
- Alcoholic strength by volume for beverages containing more than 1.2% by volume of alcohol
- Nutrition declaration

All foods and drinks marketed in Austria must be labeled in German. Multi-language labels are allowed. Labeling may also include illustrations. Moreover, the EU's FIC regulation requires the quantity of an ingredient to be declared on the label when necessary to prevent consumer misinformation (known as the Quantitative Ingredients Declaration, or QUID). Since many other requirements are applicable, **U.S. food manufacturers and exporters should contact their potential Austrian importer regarding labels on products for distribution in Austria.**

Imported food products can enter the country with foreign labels (including U.S. standard labels) or without labels. However, before distribution, products must be labeled according to the labeling regulation. Stick on-labels meeting local requirements are permitted. A food sample does not have to be labeled. However, if samples are distributed, they must be labeled. Austrian authorities do not grant exceptions to their labeling regulations.

Other Specific Labeling Requirements

For EU harmonized requirements please consult the most recent EU FAIRS Report at the [FAS GAIN Report Database](#).

The [Wine Labeling Ordinance](#) implements and amends the labeling requirements of the EU common market order for wine and the Austrian wine law. Important labeling elements include origin, varietal, vintage, quality designation, alcohol content, residual sugar, official control number, producer, and bottler.

Non-GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) labeling: EU-harmonized legislation defining “non-GM,” “GM-free” or similar labeling terms does not (yet) exist. There is an Austrian voluntary label for biotech free products issued by “[ARGE Gentechnik-frei](#)” (Platform for “GMO-Free” Food Products) which follows the requirements for biotech-free food products laid down by the Austrian food codex. The label states “produced without biotech” (*ohne Gentechnik hergestellt*). For more information see the latest Austrian Biotechnology Annual Report at the [FAS GAIN Report Database](#).

Further important voluntary labeling according to private standards includes labeling of food produced under the criteria of sustainability, environmental friendliness, regionality, social responsibility, and improved carbon footprint.

III. PACKAGING AND CONTAINER REGULATIONS

Austria fully applies EU-harmonized legislation to packaging and containers. For detailed information on the EU’s harmonized legislation on packaging and container regulations, please consult the latest EU FAIRS Report at [FAS GAIN Report Database](#).

However, there are some Austrian [ordinances covering the materials of objects of utility in contact with food](#).

There are no special packaging or container size requirements. Due to the rising number of single households there is higher demand for smaller packages.

Packaging Waste Recycling

Requirements for packaging collection and recycling are laid down in the [Austrian Packaging Ordinance](#). Companies or individuals putting packaging material on the market are obliged to collect the used packaging for recycling. If this is not (financially) viable, they can join a collection system. The most important organization for packaging material collection and disposal services is [ARA](#) (*Altstoff Recycling Austria*, Old Material Recycling Austria). Companies making use of collection and disposal services pay a license fee. Usually, packaging material eligible for collection and recycling has a specific logo or sign, a dot with two arrows in green and white. However, the sign on the packaging material is not a pre-condition for collection. Thus, products imported in original foreign packages can be collected if the importer pays the fees for the disposal service. Companies not participating in disposal services have the obligation to report the procedures, quantities, and qualities of their packaging material disposals and recycling procedures to the [Austrian Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism](#) and are periodically audited.

IV. FOOD ADDITIVE REGULATIONS

Austria applies EU-harmonized legislation for food additives and the EU list of allowed substances.

For detailed information on the EU harmonized food additives legislation, please consult the most recent EU FAIRS Report at the [FAS GAIN Report Database](#) and check out the USEU website at: <http://www.usda-eu.org/trade-with-the-eu/eu-import-rules/food-additives/>

V. PESTICIDES AND OTHER CONTAMINANTS

Pesticides

Tolerance levels for pesticide residues are harmonized within the EU since 2008. An EU database on pesticide maximum residue levels (MRLs) is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/protection/pesticides/database_pesticide_en.htm.

For detailed information on EU-harmonized legislation on pesticide and contaminant regulations, please search for the most current EU FAIRS Report in the [FAS GAIN Report Database](#) as well as the USEU website <https://www.usda-eu.org/eu-early-alert/pesticides/>.

Austrian legislation on pesticide residues can be found in the [Pesticide MRLs Ordinance](#).

Private Industry Standards for Pesticide Tolerance Levels

As a marketing tool, some retail chains in Austria require their suppliers to exceed the EU regulations and adhere to stricter maximum residue levels of 30, 50, or 70 % of the respective EU-mandated MRL. Reports indicate that suppliers violating the new contract standard are at risk of being removed from the approved supplier list of the particular retail chain.

According to the Austrian [Pesticide Law](#), all pesticides have to be registered.

A list of approved pesticides in Austria can be found at the following webpage: [Approved Pesticides in Austria](#).

The registration office is as follows:

[Austrian Federal Office for Food Safety](#)

Spargelfeldstr. 191

A-1220 Wien, Austria

Phone: + 43 (5) 0555 - 33400

Fax: + 43 (5) 0555 – 33404

VI. OTHER REQUIREMENTS, REGULATIONS, AND REGISTRATION MEASURES

Exports of U.S. red meat, meat products, farmed and wild game meat, ratites, milk and milk products, seafood, bovine embryos and semen, porcine and equine semen, gelatin, animal casings and animal by-products to the EU from the U.S. may only originate from EU approved U.S. establishments. A comprehensive list of U.S. approved establishments can be found at the following link to the [USEU webpage](#).

Generally, there is no EU requirement to register imported foods except for “novel foods” or those more unique, niche products that have not historically been consumed in significant quantities. In addition, registration is required for foods for specific groups. This includes infant formula and follow-on formula, processed cereal-based food and baby food, food for special medical purposes and total diet replacement for weight control. Registration of such products is carried out at the [Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health, and Consumer Protection](#).

The import of special products like blood, blood products, and material containing epizootic pathogens must be approved by the Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health, and Consumer Protection. Usually the importer (or possibly an exporter) applies to the Ministry with all relevant details. There is no set form for this kind of application.

VII. OTHER SPECIFIC STANDARDS

For detailed information on EU harmonized requirements please consult the most recent EU FAIRS Report at the [FAS GAIN Report Database](#).

Vitamin Enrichment

There are no specific regulations in Austria for the enrichment of foods with vitamins and minerals.

Dietetic or Special Use Foods

Austrian regulations on various dietetic or special use foods:

- [Ordinance on energy restricted diet food for weight reduction](#)
- [Ordinance on grain preparations and transition food for nursing babies and young infants](#)
- [Ordinance on dietetic food for particular medical purposes](#)
- [Ordinance on infant formulae and follow-on formulae](#)

Food Sanitation

The 2006 Austrian Food Law covers hygiene regulations for all food products including meat. Additional ordinances include:

- [Ordinance on the adjustment of particular food hygiene regulations](#) (Food hygiene adjustment ordinance).
- [Ordinance on hygiene requirements for the food retail](#) (Food retail ordinance)
- [Ordinance on raw milk and cream](#)
- [Ordinance on direct marketing of food](#)
- [Ordinance on the registration and certification of food establishments](#) according to food hygiene regulations

Laws/Guidelines

Other Austrian ordinances related to specific food products:

- [Ordinance on deep frozen food](#)
- [Ordinance on various sugars – sugar ordinance](#)
- [Ordinance on cocoa and chocolate products – chocolate ordinance](#)
- [Ordinance on honey – honey ordinance](#)
- [Ordinance on jams, jelly, marmalade, and chestnut cream – jam ordinance](#)
- [Ordinance on fruit juices and some other similar products – fruit juice ordinance](#)
- [Ordinance on some particular kinds of concentrated milk and dry milk](#)
- [Ordinance on coffee- and chicory extracts](#)
- [Ordinance on food supplements – food supplements ordinance](#)
- [Ordinance on the content of trans – fatty acids in food – trans-fat ordinance](#)
- [Ordinance on casein and caseinate for human consumption](#)

VIII. TRADEMARKS, BRAND NAMES, AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Trademarks and brand names are legally protected in Austria. Companies interested in the registration of trademarks or brand names have to apply at the patent office where information folders and application forms are available. The address of the patent office is as follows:

Patentamt

Internationale Markenregistrierung
(International Trademark/ Brand Name Registration)
Österreichisches Patentamt
Dresdner Straße 87
A-1200 Wien
Phone: + 43 (1) 534 24 - 288
Fax: + 43 (1) 534 24 - 535

IX. IMPORT PROCEDURES

Customs matters are regulated by EU legislation – for details search the [FAS GAIN Report Database](#) for the most recent EU FAIRS Report.

Incoming goods go either to the customs storage (small) or to a freight forwarder's facility. Storing and removal from storage is carried out under the terminals supervision of a customs officer who compares the documents with the commodities. Later, the invoice for import duty is issued. Food inspectors at the port of entry storage do not routinely check packaged foods. However, the customs officer may take samples to double check for ingredients (sugar, milk powder, alcohol) as they are responsible for correct assessment of customs duty.

Fresh/frozen food goes into deep freeze/cold storage facilities which are checked by the customs office and an official veterinarian who checks documents at the time of placement into storage and removal.

If direct imports of meat are made from third countries into the EU, the border veterinarian checks the meat, collects the accompanying veterinary documents and issues new veterinary documents, the so called "Annex B". Meat can move freely within the EU with the new documents. Most U.S. products coming into Austria go through the Netherlands or Germany where the border clearance is made. Thus, on the way to Austria, no additional controls are carried out.

Alcoholic beverages require an import license from the Finance Ministry.

The importation of livestock, meat, and dairy products require veterinary certification according to EU regulation. These certificates have to be attested by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Food Safety Inspection Service. Live animal imports require an import license of the Austrian veterinary service at the [Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health, and Consumer Protection](#).

Veterinary and customs import documents must be in German. However, if a customs officer or border veterinarian can read and understand another language, he or she can accept it. Veterinary certificates are usually bi-lingual. There is no appeal of decisions by the customs office or the veterinary service.

Foods are not automatically inspected at the point of entry. However, food inspectors of the municipality of Vienna and the offices of the provincial governments (see Appendix II) may draw samples at the point of entry and at the wholesale and retail level at any time. Samples are then brought to official testing institutes (see Appendix I).

If an importer objects to the quality of the product, the case can be brought to the arbitration center at the following address:

[International Arbitration Center](#)

of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

Wiedner Hauptstr. 63

A-1045 Wien

Phone: +43 (5) 90900-0

Fax: + 43 (1) 502 06 216

APPENDIX I. GOVERNMENT REGULATORY KEY AGENCY CONTACTS

Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit und Konsumentenschutz

(Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection)

Radetzkystrasse 2

A-1030 Wien

Phone: +43 (1) 71100 – 0

Bundesministerium für Nachhaltigkeit und Tourismus

(Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism)

Stubenring 1

A-1011 Wien

Phone: + 43 (1) 71100 - 0

Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung

(Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research)

Minoritenplatz 5

A-1011 Wien

Phone: +43 (1) 53120 - 0

Agrarmarkt Austria (AMA)

(Agricultural Market Austria)

Dresdnerstr. 70

A-1200 Wien

Phone: +43 (1) 33 151 – 0

The AMA is responsible for import and export licenses of food products:

The federal authority for label clearance and product testing is with the:

Bundesamt fuer Ernaehrungssicherheit

(Federal Office for Food Safety)

Spargelfeldstr. 191

A-1220 Wien, Austria

Phone: + 43 (5) 0555 - 3500

APPENDIX II. OTHER IMPORT SPECIALIST TECHNICAL CONTACTS

Each province has its own control organizations that may inspect food products. The addresses of the head offices of Austria's Federal States regarding food inspection are as follows:

[Amt der Kaerntner Landesregierung](#)

Lebensmittelinspektion

Arnulfpl. 2

9021 Klagenfurt, Austria

Phone: + 43 (463) 536 - 0

Fax: + 43 (463) 536 - 31 220

[Amt der Burgenlaendischen Landesregierung](#)

Gesundheitswesen - Lebensmittelaufsicht

Landhaus

Europaplatz 1

7000 Eisenstadt, Austria

Phone: + 43 (2682) 600 - 682

Fax: + 43 (2682) 600 - 2055

[Amt der OÖe. Landesregierung](#)

Lebensmittelaufsicht

Harrachstr. 20

4010 Linz, Austria

Phone: + 43 (732) 7720 - 4271

Fax: + 43 (732) 7720 - 4259

[Amt der NOe. Landesregierung](#)

Nahrungsmittelkontrolle

Landhausplatz 1

A- 3109 St. Poelten, Austria

Phone: + 43 (2742) 200 - 0

Fax: + 43 (2742) 200 - 2060

[Amt der Stmk Landesregierung](#)

Gesundheitswesen

Trautmannsdorffgasse 2

8010 Graz, Austria

Phone: + 43 (316) 877 - 0

Fax: + 43 (316) 3373

[Amt der Tiroler Landesregierung](#)

Abteilung Vc, Nahrungsmittelkontrolle
Neues Landhaus
Eduard Wallnhoeferplatz 1
6010 Innsbruck, Austria
Phone: + 43 (512) 508 - 2669
Fax: + 43 (512) 508 - 2665

[Amt der Landesregierung Salzburg](#)

Referat 9/03
Nontaler Hauptstrasse 55
5010 Salzburg, Austria
Phone: + 43 (662) 80 42 - 2200
Fax: + 43 (662) 80 42 - 32 66

[Amt der Vorarlberger Landesregierung](#)

Nahrungsmittelkontrolle
Landhaus
6900 Bregenz, Austria
Phone: + 43 (5574) 511 - 0
Fax: + 43 (5574) 511 - 80

[Amt der Landesregierung Wien](#)

MA 59
Am Modenapark 1-2
1030 Wien, Austria
Phone: + 43(1) 711 16 - 0
Fax: + 43(1) 711 16 - 99 87 918

Other Food Testing Institutes:

[Lebensmittelversuchsanstalt](#)

Blaasstr. 29
A-1190 Wien, Austria
Phone: + 43 (1) 36 88 555
Fax: + 43 (1) 36 88 555 - 29
Food Testing Institute of the Municipality of Vienna:

Lebensmitteluntersuchungsanstalt der Stadt Wien
Hennebergg. 3
A-1030 Wien, Austria
Phone: + 43 (1) 79514 - 0
Fax: + 43 (1) 79514 - 9

EC directives in English can be obtained at the following webpage:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/index.htm>

Austrian regulations can be obtained at the following webpage (Austrian regulations are only available in German language)

<http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Bund/>

Attachments:

No Attachments