

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Less Paperwork More Trade - Argentina Revamps Food Import Rules

Country: Argentina

Post: Buenos Aires

Report Category: Policy and Program Announcements, Trade Policy Monitoring, Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety, FAIRS Subject Report, Agriculture in the Economy

Prepared By: Chase McGrath

Approved By: Chase Mcgrath

Report Highlights:

Argentina has reformed its food import and export regulations. The new rules allow food imported from countries with “high sanitary standards”, including the US, to enter with minimal paperwork. Also, exports from Argentina now only need to meet the requirements of destination countries rather than Argentine domestic regulations. These changes aim to provide consumers with greater choice and more affordable food. They also seek to boost Argentina’s competitiveness, facilitate trade, and benefit both consumers and producers with faster, more efficient food trade processes. Note: At this time, these changes only apply to products regulated by the National Food Institute (INAL). They do not apply to products regulated by SENASA, including meat, poultry, dairy, pet food, and feed.

On January 20, 2025, Argentina implemented a series of modifications to the Argentine Food Code (*Código Alimentario Argentino*, CAA) through Decree 35/2025, aiming to simplify and streamline procedures for the import and export of food products. These new deregulations primarily apply to consumer-oriented finished food products. **Note:** The decree applies only to products regulated by the *Instituto Nacional de Alimentos* (INAL), roughly equivalent to the U.S. FDA, and does not extend to products regulated by the *Servicio Nacional de Sanidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria* (SENASA), the counterpart to APHIS in the United States. Most regulations governing market access and certifications for products such as meat, poultry, dairy, pet food, and feed, among others, remain in place. This reform is part of a broader series of deregulations by the government aimed at improving the ease of doing business in Argentina. Stakeholders should conduct their own review of the changes.

The reforms aim to reduce bureaucracy and lower the costs associated with international food trade by facilitating access to foreign products in the Argentine market, providing consumers with greater choice and potentially more affordable food. At the same time, they seek to enhance the competitiveness of domestic products abroad. By eliminating redundant procedures and streamlining administrative processes, the government aims to stimulate trade and support the food industry, benefiting both domestic consumers and producers.

Imports

For imports, the new regulation establishes that food products originating from countries with “high sanitary surveillance standards,” which includes the United States, as well as Australia, Canada, Japan, and European Union member states, can enter the country by submitting only an Import Affidavit. These products are exempt from additional national procedures as long as the regulations in the country of origin are equivalent to or exceed Argentine standards.

This eliminates any previous certificate, product or facility registration, and import licensing requirements for these products and has the potential to substantially simplify the import process and expand volume and range of imported products for sale in Argentina.

For products originating from countries with which Argentina maintains “economic integration treaties or reciprocity agreements,” compliance with CAA requirements will be considered met after an evaluation of the food control system in the country of origin. The circulation and commercialization of these products will be authorized once their compliance with the established hygienic-sanitary and bromatological conditions has been verified.

Exports

The regulation states that domestically produced food products intended to be exported to foreign markets must comply only with the requirements and restrictions imposed by the destination country. The Argentine national health authority cannot impose additional requirements. Exporters may request the necessary sanitary certificates from the National Food Institute (INAL), which operates under the National Administration of Drugs, Food, and Medical Technology (ANMAT), if required by the receiving country.

Decree Highlights

The following are the main points of the decree:

Article 2: All food products, condiments, beverages, or their raw materials, and food additives, which are manufactured, shipped, sold, or displayed must comply with CAA requirements.

CAA requirements also apply to imported products.

It will be considered that CAA requirements are met when imported food products and/or packaging have a certification issued by countries listed in Annex III of this decree, or when countries apply Codex Alimentarius standards (FAO/WHO).

Food products and/or packaging which have a certification issued by countries listed in Annex III of this decree are exempt from the obligation of being included in the CAA.

Food products and/or packaging which have a certification issued by countries listed in Annex III of this decree must only submit an import sworn declaration, and the National Sanitary Authority (NSA) will not be allowed to demand additional requirements.

Products for export must only comply with requirements and restrictions established by the country of destination, and the NSA will not be allowed to demand additional requirements.

Article 4: Both importers and exporters must carry out the following procedures, as required:

- a) Import operations: Importers who import food products and/or packaging with certification issued by any of the countries listed in Annex III of this decree must fill in the corresponding sworn declaration with the following information:
 1. Importing company data: company name, Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (CUIT, in Spanish), address, city, province, registration as per current standards.
 2. Merchandise storage data: storage name, address, city, province.
 3. Product data: denomination, brand/name, “fancy name,” lot No., expiration date, unit number, presentation by unit, country of origin, manufacturer’s name or company name.
 4. Information on labels as per current standards, in Spanish, including importer’s name and address, and lot No.
 5. Use: if the product is for sale, for use of the Importing Establishment (UPEI, in Spanish), or if it is a sample with no commercial value.

In addition, importers must attach the “authorization for sale” or the “certificate of free sale” of the product, or similar document, approved by the Competent Sanitary Authority of countries listed in Annex III of this decree.

Importers who are not included in point (1) of this article must fill in an “import authorization” request application, which allows registration in the National Registers of Establishments (R.N.E., in Spanish), Food Products (R.N.P.A., in Spanish), Packaging Establishments (R.N.E.E., in Spanish) and Packaging and Food Utensils in Contact with Food Products (R.N.P.E., in Spanish), and the Declaration of Food Label Seals and Nutritional Claims,

In such cases, the NSA will perform an analytical verification of the hygienic and sanitary conditions of a given product entering the country. Its distribution and sale will not be authorized until the results of the above-mentioned verification is finalized.

- b) Export operations: Exporters will be able to request to NSA the appropriate certificates which the countries of destination may require. NSA must issue the certifications requested by the exporter without demanding additional requirements as long as he/she proves that he/she is complying with established requirements.

Attachments:

No Attachments.