



Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 12/4/2000

GAIN Report #VM0022

Vietnam

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Vietnam's Hygiene Standards for Food and Food Products- 2000/01

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Report Highlights: The Government of Vietnam (GOV) has started to check imported foodstuffs against the GOV's list of food additives and ingredients published in April 1998. U.S. exporters are urged to contact the GOV's Ministry of Health or FAS-Vietnam for assistance.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Hanoi [VM1], VM

The Vietnamese Ministry of Health (MOH) issued a circular (a public announcement) on July 24, 2000 (Circular Number: 5288/YT-QLTP) noting that all imported foodstuffs must conform with Vietnam's foodstuff quality, hygiene and safety regulations.

The MOH, coordinating with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE), has recently issued the following regulations.

1. Decision 867/1998/QD-BYT, dated 4-April-1988, issued Vietnamese hygiene standards and authorized food additives.

NOTE: See GAINs report VM-9019, July 1999, for details about Decision 867.

2. Decision 305/2000/QD-BYT, dated 2-Feb-2000, on imported foods subject to GOV and international standards.

3. Quality Control: Eight GOV agencies (from MOH and MOSTE) are identified as state controlled agencies to be responsible for quality control (inspections in absence of approved export certificates) of all imported foodstuff.

4. Customs Department: The GOV's Customs officials have now started to check imported foodstuffs for non-permitted ingredients and additives.

NOTE: Import inspection is rather flexible. Recently, one shipment of U.S. food products was detained while the list of food additives and ingredients was reviewed. Following a rapid review, that shipment was released.

U.S. EXPORTERS: Before exporting any foodstuffs to Vietnam, please check that all food ingredients/additives are permitted under Decision 867. If not, or if there is any doubt, please contact the Ministry of Health.

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FUTURE: Dr. Kim notes the MOH and MOSTE are committed to expanding the GOV's list of authorized food ingredients and additives. By mid-2001, they plan to release a much expanded list of food ingredients and additives, using CODEX's lists as models. They pledge to minimize difficulties during this interim period. They usually confirm/deny importer requests within one day. If the food ingredients/additives are on the CODEX lists, or are part of an internationally recognized list, the approval process is usually completed within several hours.

FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE:

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