

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Entering Canada with Products for a Show or Trade Fair

Report Categories:

Exporter Guide

Trade Show Evaluation

Approved By:

Jeff Zimmerman

Prepared By:

Sonya Jenkins and Maria Arbulu

Report Highlights:

In previous years, some U.S. exhibitors at shows or trade fairs in Canada have run into difficulties with getting their products across the border. FAS Canada has prepared a brief overview of the process for driving products across the border. As well, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency has just updated their [Import Guide for Food and Plant Products for Trade Fairs and Shows in Canada](#).

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has modified its [Import Guide for Food and Plant Products for Trade Fairs and Shows in Canada](#). The document now has guidance on:

- Living organisms other than plants
- Potatoes
- Seed, grain and plants
- Wood and wooden items

In Canada, some special conditions apply to products being imported for exhibiting at shows or trade fairs. This guide provides an overview of these conditions.

Conditions which apply to all products (as quoted directly from the Guide) include:

“Product safety: The importer or importer's legal representative is responsible for ensuring the safety of the food products that will be offered for tasting during the course of the event. This means ensuring that the products are transported, stored and displayed in conditions that prevent any deterioration of the product. Unsafe or infested products must be returned to their place of origin or be destroyed under CFIA supervision.

Sales ban: Exemptions to the various laws and regulations enforced by the CFIA are provided when the products are being imported solely to be presented at shows or trade fairs. Selling such products at these events is prohibited. Distributing the products outside the exhibition premises including food banks is also forbidden, unless prior special permission has been obtained from the CFIA.

Permits and letters of authorization: A number of products are subject to very strict controls and must comply with the conditions listed on the permit to import or in the letter of authorization. If the products do not comply with the stated conditions, they will not be allowed into Canada. Fees are charged for each permit.

Preauthorization: The permits and authorizations mentioned in this guide should be obtained ahead of time if you want to avoid any unpleasant last-minute surprises. Information about applying for the required documents can be obtained from resource persons mentioned in this guide for each product category. You can find out from the exhibit organizers whether there is an official broker for the event.

Other departments and agencies: In this guide you will also find references to other government departments that may be involved in controlling the import and export of some of the products mentioned.

Regulatory changes: A change in a country's sanitary status or in certain conditions set out in this guide may occur. It is therefore recommended you check at the time of shipping that you are providing all the required documents, taking into account last-minute changes.”

Specific conditions are outlined for:

- Meat and meat products

Entering Canada with Products for a Show or Trade Fair

- Milk and dairy products
- Non-federally registered food sector products (includes infant foods, alcoholic beverages, bakery products and cereal products)
- Pet food
- Eggs and egg products
- Aquatic animals including fish, shellfish and other seafood
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Living organisms other than plants
- Potatoes
- Seed, grain and plants
- Wood and wooden items
- Processed fruits and vegetables
- Honey and maple products

Additional information on bringing your product into the country can be found at the following sources:

- 1) The CFIA's [Automated Import Reference System](#)
- 2) The CFIA's **National Import Service Centre**
7:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. (Eastern Time)
Telephone and EDI: 1-800-835-4486 (Canada or U.S.A.)
1-289-247-4099 (local calls and all other countries)
Facsimile: 1-613-773-9999
- 3) The [CFIA Area or Regional Office](#) for which you will be visiting

DRIVING WITH PRODUCTS OVER THE BORDER

All products entering into Canada must clear Canadian Customs. For this reason, most trade show organizers appoint a customs broker to facilitate international shipments. While exhibitors are not required to use these services they are urged to use these services to ensure all products are cleared at the border properly and arrive on time prior to the start of the trade show. Since these shipments are smaller, clearance fees are higher than larger shipments.. Exhibitors are recommended to inquire about these estimated costs so they can budget for these costs.

For those U.S. exhibitors that choose to drive their own samples into Canada please be advised certain border crossings may be more challenging than others as procedures may vary from office to office. U.S. Exhibitors are urged to review the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Automated Importer Reference System (AIRS) for all requirements on food samples at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/plants/imports/airs/eng/1300127512994/1300127627409>

Certain products may require special permits. For example, meat samples will need an Official Meat Inspection Certificate (FSIS 9135-3) to enter Canada which is issued by a USDA veterinarian.

When following the recommended procedures please adhere to the maximum limits of 100 kg or 220 lbs. of samples as outlined below;

Food and Horticultural Products – Import Guide for Trade Fairs and Shows in Canada

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/imports/commercial-importers/trade-fairs-and-shows/eng/1376454237591/1376454238341>

At the time of the inspection, exhibitors should be prepared to show proper documentation:

- 1) A completed Canada Customs Invoice. Please ensure all it is noted on the commercial invoice that PRODUCTS ARE NOT FOR RESALE.
- 2) A commercial invoice form can be obtained at: www.cbsa.gc.ca/publications/forms-formulaires/ci1.pdf.
- 3) Identify the consignee on the invoice as the Name of the Show / Company's booth number and address of the trade show grounds.
- 4) It is recommended, U.S. exhibitors present a copy of the Canadian Customs letter acknowledging tariff 9993.00.00.00. The provision allows non-Canadians to import display items and booths temporarily duty free on the condition that the goods will return at the completion of the event. Under certain circumstances, CBSA may require a security deposit on the goods temporarily imported to Canada. To learn more about the special provisions under this tariff please click on to: <http://cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/dm-md/d8/d8-1-2-eng.html> A copy of the letter can be obtained from the trade show organizers.
- 5) Some CBSA offices may ask a U.S. exhibitor to clear their own goods by obtaining a Non-Resident Business Number (BN) from Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). A step-by-step guide to Importing Commercial Goods into Canada is available at: <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/import/guide-eng.html>. Prior to registering, it is recommended to contact Canada Revenue Agency at [1-866-453-0452](tel:1-866-453-0452) (Eastern Canada) 1-866-705-1785 (Western Canada)
- 6) You may complete a request for a BN number at: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pbg/tf/rc1/rc1-13e.pdf> or online at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bro/>. Forms should be completed a few months prior to crossing the border.
- 7) At the time of the inspection, the CBSA may require the U.S. exhibitor to complete the E29B, a temporary admission permit. For instructions on completing the form go to:
- 8) <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/dm-md/d8/d8-1-4-eng.html> and the form can be obtained here: <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/forms-formulaires/e29b.pdf>