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Jordan

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards – Narrative - 2017

FAIRS Country Report

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Report Highlights:

This report outlines the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's regulatory requirements for food and agricultural product imports. This report updates the FAIRS Country Report 2016's Section VI - Other Specific Standards, Table 1 - New Standards and/or Regulations. The report also revises Section VIII - Other Regulations and Requirements (i.e., updates slaughterhouse registration, dairy products – ban on partially hydrogenated oils in processed dairy products, and preserved foods – ban on tartrazine as a coloring in pickled preparations).

SECTION I: GENERAL FOOD LAWS

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Its accession to the WTO (April 11, 2000) coincides with economic and legislative structural reforms, bringing it in line with international standards and requirements. Jordan's food control regime is governed by two laws:

- The Agriculture Law No. 44 (2002)
- Jordan Food Law No. 30 (2015); this law supersedes the Jordan Food Control Law No. 32 (2003)

Jordan Food Law No. 30 was enacted in May 2015 by King Abdallah II and his Cabinet after passing through the upper and lower houses of Parliament of Jordan (parliament). It entered into force in June 2015 (i.e., thirty days after being published in the official gazette). This law gives the Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA) regulatory control over food safety and food quality issues. The statute is designed to ease processed food imports, and eliminate multi-agency territorial disputes. The impact of the unification of the regulatory authority has been positive. Under the new food law, pertinent regulations are being revised, updated, and drafted by the Jordan Food and Drug Administration.

According to Agriculture Law No. 44 (2002), the import of raw, unprocessed food items is subject to the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) granting an advance import license approval. Prior import licensing approval ensures compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements, as well as facilitates record keeping and statistical tracking. FAS Amman understands that this advance import license approval may be denied to protect domestic producer interests.

Prior to the new food law, the Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization (JSMO) delegated product testing responsibilities for food and agricultural products to the Jordan Food and Drug Administration. The former continues to retain however responsibility for the development of standards (including for food) and ensuring conformity with standards. The Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization's responsibilities include the national metrology system; it also grants (voluntary) quality marks and accredits testing and calibration laboratories.

Exporters of U.S. products are strongly advised to review the standards of any item they intend to ship to Jordan. Importers can purchase printed standards from the JSMO for a nominal fee. The Jordan Food and Drug Administration and other government authorities have very low tolerance for food standard violations. Any consignment not meeting the official standard will be rejected; being subject to either its re-export or destruction at the importer's expense.

Jordanian drug and pharmaceutical product importers, including vaccines for human use, must comply with Ministry of Health (MOH) regulations. The Ministry of Agriculture however regulates the import of veterinary drugs and animal vaccines, pesticides, meat and meat products, animal feeds, and seedlings.

Food processing and processed foods are under the sole mandate of the Jordan Food and Drug Administration; its role has been strengthened by the new food law. Ministry of Agriculture officials will occasionally assert responsibility for food control, largely based on past practices. Although food and or feed grains appear to fall within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture, the JFDA has the final say. In the absence of a local standard, Jordan applies internationally recognized standards.

SECTION II: FOOD ADDITIVE REGULATIONS

Food additives are regulated by the Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization and the Jordan Food and Drug Administration. The latter is responsible for regulatory enforcement. Jordan maintains a list of approved additives; permissible concentration levels largely conform to *Codex alimentarius* (Codex). Jordan refers to Codex Standard No. 192 for food additive issues. It will however refer to European Union (EU) regulations in the absence of a Codex standard. The United States is working with the Government of Jordan to adopt U.S. regulations whenever U.S. and EU standards differ.

SECTION III: PESTICIDES AND OTHER CONTAMINANTS

The Ministry of Agriculture's Plant Protection Directorate (PPD)\ Pesticides Division regulates pesticides. Imported agricultural pesticides must conform to the United Nations (UN) – Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) specifications. Standards pertaining to pesticide use and human health must conform to [World Health Organization \(WHO\) standards](#). The Collaborative International Pesticides Analytical Council (CIPAC) handbook is used to analyze pesticides. Food samples are sent to food safety laboratories, where these are analyzed for pesticide residues and contaminants. Labs follow the Association of Official Analytical Chemists analysis methodology and utilize the European Commission's EU Pesticide Database.

Jordan counts with only one laboratory capable of testing for pesticide residues in fresh fruits and vegetables. The testing laboratory's normal turnaround time is two weeks, making it difficult to test perishables prior to consumption. Jordan tests non-perishables to a far greater extent. It requires that residue levels not exceed the Codex and or the European standard maximum residue levels (MRL). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is working with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Jordan Food and Drug Administration to increase lab capabilities, as well as improve pesticide testing methodologies.

SECTION IV: PACKAGING AND CONTAINER REQUIREMENTS

The maximum package size for poultry parts is set to 2.5 kilograms (kg) for direct consumers. Similarly a 2.0 kg maximum weight limit on honey packaging is imposed on imports to protect the local industry. The measure prevents bulk imports, limiting the possibility of repackaging.

SECTION V: LABELING REQUIREMENTS

Labeling Requirements: The Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization sets labeling requirements. Requirements are fairly standard. A statement of ingredients in order of preponderance is not required. All labels must be in Arabic; alternatively, an Arabic language stick-on label is acceptable. The label at minimum must contain:

- Product name
- The manufacturer's name and address
- Net weight
- Fortifying matter (e.g., added vitamins and minerals to powdered milk)
- Lot number and a "use before" or "best by" date

Jordan's labeling requirements do not include Recommended Daily Intake (RDIs) levels. Nutritional labeling nevertheless is mandatory for certain food categories (e.g., infant formula and food for dietary use). Shelf-life labeling has been replaced by the "best before" standard.

The Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization will interpret "best before" as being the product's expiry date; no product is authorized for sale beyond this date. Jordan will scrutinize product labels at border crossing points. Current legislation holds the importer accountable for a product's content as specified on the label. Jordanian officials are known for rejecting shipments due to labeling ambiguities and printing errors.

Nutritional Labeling Requirements: Labeling is mandatory for infant formula and food for dietary use.

SECTION VI: OTHER SPECIFIC STANDARDS

The Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization is the national standard setting body. It prepares, approves, revises, and amends mandatory and voluntary standards and monitors their application. It adopts and approves other countries, regional and international organizations' (Arabic or English language) standards. It also cooperates and coordinates standardization and metrology issues with regional and international institutions. The Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization is also the Codex inquiry point. It is also a corresponding member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Organization for Legal Metrology (IOLM).

The Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization established in 2003 a voluntary pre-shipment inspection program for food and agricultural product imports. Jordan does not require import licenses for all food and agricultural products; however, the Ministry of Agriculture does require import licenses for beef, fruits, fish, and vegetables as well as for a number of other food and agricultural products (e.g., powdered milk).

Imported food and agriculture products are required to conform to the Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization's Codex-based standards. Alcoholic beverage imports are permissible, but high duty tariffs (ranging from 50 to 200 percent) limit imports. On October 2017, the Jordan Standards and

Metrology Organization announced (during a press conference) obtaining international accreditation for its laboratories (including food and agricultural products testing laboratories).

Table 1: Jordan, Standards and Regulations for Food and Agricultural Products

| Standard Regulation Number | Year | Title |
|----------------------------|------|--|
| 2178 | 2017 | Fruits, vegetables and derived products – pomegranate |
| 2169 | 2017 | Rotational molded polyethylene storage tanks for drinking water |
| 2167 | 2017 | Fire extinguishers - throw type and automatic-thrown type water-based fire extinguishers |
| 1340 | 2017 | Milk and milk products - cheese - determination of fat content - Van Gulik method |
| 1339 | 2017 | Milk and milk products - cheese and processed cheese products - determination of citric acid content- Enzymatic method |
| 1214 | 2017 | Water – bottled drinking water |
| 840 | 2017 | Spices and condiments – grinded thyme mix |
| 600 | 2017 | Milk and milk products – sterilized milk |
| 484 | 2017 | Pesticides - labeling information on pesticides containers |
| 465 | 2017 | Cereals, pulses and derived products – packed chickpeas with tahini |
| 200 | 2017 | Water - natural mineral water |
| 94 | 2017 | General standard for food additives |
| 77 | 2017 | Drinks and juices – flavored drinks |
| 67 | 2017 | Cereals, pulses and derived products – dried dough (pasta) |
| | | |
| 94 | 2010 | General standard for food additives |
| | | |
| 67 | 2008 | Cereals, pulses and derived products - dried pasta |
| | | |
| 840 | 2007 | Grinded thyme mix |
| | | |
| 77 | 2004 | Drinks and juices – flavored drink and its concentrates |
| | | |
| 465 | 2003 | Cereals and pulses - canned chick peas with tahini |

SECTION VII: FACILITY AND PRODUCT REGISTRATION REQUIRMENTS:

A few specific products require registration prior to import to Jordan. Most notably, seeds for planting and products making special dietary claims require prior registration. Exporters are encouraged to work closely with Jordanian importers in fulfilling these requirements.

Exporters of dairy products are required to register their facilities with the Jordan Food and Drug Administration prior to shipment. This registration is a simple verification of the exporting firm’s hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP) certification. It requires that the Jordanian importer provide a copy of the exporter’s HACCP certificate with a completed application to the Jordan Food and Drug Administration. Hazard

A new requirement being implemented in 2017 requires that slaughterhouses to be registered with the corresponding national authority prior to export to Jordan. In the case of the United States, this would be the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The registration is only required once per facility, though it is yet unclear for how long the registration will be valid. Exporters are encouraged to contact Jordan's Ministry of Agriculture or FAS Amman for updates prior to shipment.

SECTION VIII: OTHER REGULATIONS AND TESTING REQUIREMENTS:

- a) **Slaughterhouse Registration:** The Ministry of Agriculture now requires that any slaughterhouses exporting to Jordan for the first time must register. The following documentation is required:
- Slaughterhouse license certificate from a federal government or any local agency endorsed by the U.S. Embassy in Jordan
 - Registration code
 - Quality assurance certificate ISO 22000 or HACCP
- b) **Halal:** Jordanian authorities stipulate that all meat products are halal as defined by the Jordanian government. The Jordanian halal requirements include:
- The animal was slaughtered in observance of the Islamic traditions in the presence of a Muslim (male) accredited by any Islamic association within that country
 - The product is free of pork products
 - The product is free from alcohol. This is also applicable to non-animal food
- c) **Genetically Modified Organisms (Genetically-Engineered):** Food items with a genetically-engineered content/component label are not allowed entry. However trade to date continues to flow. Jordan's Environment Law No. 6 (2017), through eventual regulations, may potentially take a more moderate and modern approach for addressing genetic-engineering issues.
- d) **Radiation:** Whenever there is a radiation leak reported Jordan imposes a mandatory radiation level inspection on food from impacted countries. For example, Japanese products were required to be inspected in the wake of the Fukushima incident.
- e) **Dairy Products:** A 2016 standard banned the use of partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs) in processed dairy products. Processed cheeses, or other products that replace milk fat with any other fat, must not use partially hydrogenated oils. Exporters are encouraged to clearly mark the oil used on any products that could potentially contain partially hydrogenated oils. New to market dairy products should expect an increased level of scrutiny by customs officials.
- f) **Preserved Food:** The color tartrazine E102 is no longer permitted as a coloring in pickled preparations. This regulation is in line with EU and Codex standards, Category 4.2.2 and 4.2.2.3 respectively.

SECTION IX: IMPORT PROCEDURES

Jordan maintains a three-tier inspection rate system for imported food products based on the product's health risk. A document review is mandatory regardless of the level of inspection.

- High risk products, 80 to 100 percent inspection rate
- Medium risk products, 25 to 50 percent inspection rate
- Low risk products, 5 to 10 percent inspection rate

Jordanian importers are required to ensure that imported food and agricultural products do not pose a potential threat to public health (i.e., must be free of microbial, parasite, and fungal contamination). At the same time, the Government of Jordan routinely tests inbound consignments for radiation levels and chemical contaminants, as well as for heavy metals, food additives, animal growth promotants (i.e., hormones), and veterinary drug residues. Jordan tests less frequently for pesticides residues. For cheese, if the facility is exporting for the first time, a certificate-of-free sale is required.

Tariffs: As part of its WTO accession agreement, Jordan set a reduced tariff rate ceiling of 0 to 30 percent for most imported products. Nonetheless, it maintains tariff rates of 180 to 200 percent for certain alcoholic products, as well as a 150 to 200 percent tariff rate for tobacco and tobacco products. Under the terms of the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (FTA), import duties and other trade barriers were phased out in 2010; the exception being alcoholic beverages and tobacco products.

Jordan launched its Customs Integrated Tariff System (CITS) in August 2005. The system allows importers to access import requirements, as well as evaluate tariff and trade agreement information. Data is provided in both Arabic and English.

Customs Law No. 114 (2004): Jordanian and foreign trading companies must obtain an importer card from the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT) for customs clearance purposes. Foreign companies not domiciled in Jordan are exempt from this requirement. Bonded goods, temporary imports, and imports entering under the provisions of [Jordan's Investment Promotion Law](#) do not require import licenses. Banks and other non-trading entities such as hospitals, hotels, and Jordanian ministries must obtain a more limited MIT importer card that authorizes the import of goods specific to the entity's activities.

Export-Import Documentation: Jordan's Law No. 20 of 1998 on Customs (entered into force on January 1, 1999 and amended on June 11, 2000 entering into force on July 2, 2000), article 31 and amendments establishes that all customs declarations must include the following (note: Jordanian customs reserves the right to request additional documentation):

- A maritime or airway bill of lading
- A commercial invoice indicating the value, weight, and freight and insurance charges. All invoices require Jordanian diplomatic/consular approval. In the absence of Jordanian diplomatic/consular approval, Jordan's Customs Director is empowered to accept the country of export's chamber of commerce certification
- Commercial invoices are required to describe the product in Arabic
- A notarized certificate of origin issued by the competent authority in the export country
- A value declaration form for shipments exceeding Jordan dinar (JOD) 2,000 (currently JOD 1.00 = \$1.40)

This law, and its amendments, has been amended by Temporary Law No. 37 of 2010 Amending Customs Law.

Customs Valuation: Jordan's Law No. 10 of 1999 on Customs, and its subsequent amendments, has been amended by Temporary Law No. 37 of 2010 Amending Customs Law (see, Section X for the sequence of customs law). These include WTO-compliant criteria for customs valuation, based on certified commercial invoices. Increased transparency restricts the recourse to arbitrary valuation, but does favor undervaluation.

Customs utilizes cost-insurance-freight (CIF) prices for valuation purposes. Commercial invoice values are converted into Jordanian dinars at the official rate. In some cases, Jordan's Customs will factor into its valuation calculations exporter discounts. Imported products, as well as locally produced goods are subject to a 16 percent value-added tax (VAT).

Imported products are subject to a VAT based on the CIF value. Agricultural and pharmaceutical products are exempt from the 16 percent sales tax. Jordan's General Sales Tax Department levies a special sales tax on specific items such as tobacco products and alcoholic beverages. These are subject to a 13 percent general sales tax in addition to the special sales tax. Non-basic foodstuffs are subject to a 4 percent general sales tax.

Special Import Provisions: Pre-import clearance is required for certain commodities. The clearance, once obtained, acts as an import license. The Ministries of Agriculture, Industry and Trade, and Health are the three import license issuing entities. Rejected shipments may be appealed.

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for issuing pre-import clearances for live animals, for fresh/chilled/frozen beef and beef products, as well as for embalmed wild animals, frozen animal semen, and milk products. The Ministry of Industry and Trade oversees the issuing of pre-import clearances for barley, rice, wheat, flour, sugar, and corn. The Ministry of Health issues pre-import clearances for medications and antibiotics, athletic food supplements, as well as for potassium bromide, food dyes, ice cream, and baby food.

Inspection and Clearance: Jordan maintains the ASYCUDA computerized customs clearance system. This platform has been implemented at border crossings with the intent of simplifying customs clearance procedures. The [Ministry of Agriculture](#) along with the [Jordan Food and Drug Administration](#) and the [Jordan Customs Authority](#) form the border committee that inspects inbound food and agricultural product shipments.

SECTION X: COPYRIGHT AND/OR TRADEMARK LAWS

Jordan's legal system protects the acquisition and disposition of intellectual property rights. Prior to its WTO accession, Jordan passed a series of laws strengthening the protection of intellectual property rights for patents, copyrights, and trademarks. Jordan in the past has enforced foreign copyrights and trademarks despite it not requiring prior registration.

Jordan has now enacted Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) consistent legislation, requiring that patents, copyrights, and trademarks be registered. Patents and trademarks are registered with the Ministry of Industry and Trade’s Registrar of Patents and Trademarks; while copyrights are registered with the Ministry of Culture’s National Library.

Jordan is seeking to become a contracting state to the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the protocol relating to the Madrid Agreement (registration of marks). It is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).

Law No. 20 of 1998 on Customs

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Year of Version: | 1998 |
| Date of Entry into Force: | January 1, 1999 |
| Date of Text (Enacted): | 1998 |
| Type of Text: | IP-related Laws: enacted by the Legislature |
| Subject Matter: | Copyright and Related Rights (Neighboring Rights), Enforcement of IP and Related Laws, Geographical Indications, Industrial Designs, Industrial Property, Layout Designs of Integrated Circuits, Patents (Inventions), Trademarks, Undisclosed Information (Trade Secrets). |
| Notes: | Article 41 of this law, prohibiting the entry of imported goods that infringe rights of intellectual property, was repealed and replaced by Article 13 of the Law Amending the Customs Law No. 16. |

Law No. 10 of 1999 Amending the Customs Law

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Year of Version: | 1999 |
| Date of Entry into Force: | January 1, 1999 |
| Date of Text (Enacted): | March 9, 1999 |
| Type of Text: | IP-related Laws: enacted by the Legislature |
| Subject Matter: | Enforcement of IP and Related Laws |

Notes: Article 1 provides that the Act should be read in conjunction with the original Act No. 20 of 1998 and shall enter into force on the date of entry into force of the original law 01/01/1999. The law was published in the Official Gazette No. 4338 on 01/04/1999.

This law amends the Customs Law that contains provisions concerning intellectual property rights.

Law No. 27 of 2000 Amending the Customs Law

Year of Version: 2000

Date of Entry into Force: July 2, 2000

Date of Text (Enacted): June 11, 2000

Type of Text: IP-related Laws: enacted by the Legislature

Subject Matter: Enforcement of IP and Related Laws

Notes: Article 1 provides that the Act should be read in conjunction with the original Act No. 20 of 1998 and be considered together as one Act. It also provides that the Act comes into force on the date of its publication in the Official Journal. The law was published in the Official Gazette No. 4443 of 02/07/2000.

This law amends the Customs Law that contains provisions concerning intellectual property rights.

Temporary Law No. 37 of 2010 Amending Customs Law

Year of Version: 2010

Date of Entry into Force: November 1, 2010

Date of Text (Enacted): September 28, 2010

Type of Text: IP-related Laws: enacted by the Legislature

Subject Matter: Enforcement of IP and Related Laws

Notes: Article 1 provides that this law shall be read in conjunction with original Law No. 20 of 1998 and considered together as one Law. It indicates also that this Law shall enter into force as of the date of its publication in the Official Gazette. The Law was published in the Official Gazette No. 5062 of 01/11/2010.

This law amends the Customs Law that contains provisions concerning intellectual property rights.

APPENDIX I: GOVERNMENT REGULATORY AGENCY CONTACTS

Ministry of Agriculture

Veterinary Services Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate

Tel: (962-6) 568-6151 • Fax: (962-6) 568-6310 • Web-site: www.moa.gov.jo

Ministry of Environment

Tel: (962-6) 556-0113 • Fax: (962-6) 556-0288 • Web-site: www.moenv.gov.jo

Ministry of Industry and Trade

Tel: (962-6) 560-7191/566-3774 • Fax: (962-6) 560-4691 • Web-site: www.mit.gov.jo

Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization

Tel: (962-6) 568-0139 • Fax: (962-6) 568-1099 • Web-site: www.jsmo.gov.jo

Jordan Food and Drug Administration

Tel: (962-6) 461-2663 • Fax: (962-6) 461-2663 • Web-site: www.jfda.jo

Jordan Customs Authority

P.O. Box 90, Amman, Jordan

Tel: (962-6) 462-3186/8; 462-4394/6 • Fax: (962-6) 464-7791

E-mail: Customs@Customs.gov.jo • Web-site: www.customs.gov.jo

Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority

P.O. Box 2565, Aqaba 77110, Jordan

Tel: (962-6) 3 203 5757/8 • Fax: (962-6) 3 203-0912 • Web-site: www.aqabazone.com

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