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**Report Highlights:**

Belgium is a Member State of the European Union (EU) and applies the certification requirements described in the European Union Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) Certification Report. Products not yet harmonized are subject to Belgian national rules.

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## DISCLAIMER

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in Brussels, European Union (EU), 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.**

## Executive Summary

Import requirements for food and feed, animals, and plants are harmonized between the Member States of the European Union (EU). The EU's regulations applicable to imports include specific model certificates with pre-defined attestations on animal, plant, or public health or on the quality specifications of a product. Belgium is a Member State of the EU and applies all EU certification requirements. Therefore, we recommend that this report on the certification requirements for exports to Belgium is read in conjunction with the [European Union Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Certification Report](#). The Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) is the Belgian authority in charge of defining the requirements in the limited cases where requirements have not been set at EU level. The FASFC is also responsible for import controls for products shipped to Belgium. This report provides some useful links for the trade from the FASFC website.

## Section I: Export Certificates required by Government (Matrix)

Product(s)	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Ministry
Products of Animal Origin	Health Certificate	Attestation is dependent on the product. Detailed attestation can be found in the model certificates available at <a href="#">EUR-Lex</a> under the relevant regulations.	Food Safety	The Belgian Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) (in Dutch: Federaal Agentschap voor de Veiligheid van de Voedselketen (FAVV); in French: Agence Fédérale pour la Sécurité de la Chaîne alimentaire (AFSCA))
Composite Products	Health Certificate	Attestation is dependent on the product. Detailed attestation can be found in the model certificates available at <a href="#">EUR-Lex</a> under the relevant regulations. <a href="#">Regulation (EU) 2019/625</a> defines composite products.	Food Safety	The Belgian Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) (in Dutch: Federaal Agentschap voor de Veiligheid van de Voedselketen (FAVV); in French: Agence Fédérale pour la Sécurité de la Chaîne alimentaire (AFSCA))
Animals and Genetics that can introduce animal diseases	Health Certificate	Attestation is dependent on the product. Detailed attestation can be found in the model certificates available at <a href="#">EUR-Lex</a> under the relevant regulations.	Animal Health	The Belgian Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) (in Dutch: Federaal Agentschap voor de Veiligheid van de Voedselketen (FAVV); in French: Agence Fédérale pour la Sécurité de la Chaîne alimentaire (AFSCA))
Plant Products which can introduce pests	Phytosanitary Certificate	APHIS inspectors, attest to specific requirements of EU legislation by making additional	Plant Health	The Belgian Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) (in Dutch:

		<p>declarations in the relevant phytosanitary certificate boxes. These declarations are specific for different plant species, and they are subject to change, thus the shipper needs to check for the most recent change before export.</p>		<p>Federaal Agentschap voor de Veiligheid van de Voedselketen (FAVV); in French: Agence Fédérale pour la Sécurité de la Chaîne alimentaire (AFSCA)</p>
<p>Various Plant Products</p>	<p>Other than Phytosanitary Certificate</p>	<p>e.g. aflatoxin levels in almonds: Use of the Pre-Export Checklist Program Certificate (the PEC Certificate) is not mandatory but the EU regulation mandates that consignment with this certificate are controlled for aflatoxin levels at less than 1%. USDA/AMS is the competent authority for the PEC program.</p>	<p>Food Safety and Quality</p>	<p>The Belgian Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) (in Dutch: Federaal Agentschap voor de Veiligheid van de Voedselketen (FAVV); in French: Agence Fédérale pour la Sécurité de la Chaîne alimentaire (AFSCA)</p>
<p>Organic Products</p>	<p>Certificate of Inspection</p>	<p>Attestation is dependent on the product. Detailed attestation can be found in the model certificate available at <a href="#">EUR-Lex</a>.</p>	<p>Proof of Organic Production Method</p>	<p>In Flanders Region: <a href="#">Government of Flanders, published by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries</a>  In Walloon Region: <a href="#">Service Public de Wallonie/Agriculture, Ressources naturelles et Environnement</a></p>

Belgium is a Member State of the EU and adheres to all food import and certification requirements that are harmonized throughout the EU. We, therefore, recommend that this report on the certification requirements for exports to Belgium is read in conjunction with the [European Union Food and](#)

[Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Certification Report](#) which references all existing certificates that are valid for export to all 27 countries of the EU.

The EU has created model certificates for the vast majority of products imported into the EU, reflecting general and product specific import requirements spelled out in EU animal health and food legislation. This report focuses on the limited products for which the United States and Belgium negotiated a bilateral export certificate in the absence of an EU certificate. It also addresses the occasional authorizations for shipments of non-harmonized products and the certification requirements for food samples. It furthermore lists some of the border issues that U.S. exporters have faced when shipping product to Belgium.

### **Belgian Import Controls on U.S. Certificates**

The Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) (in Dutch: Federaal Agentschap voor de Veiligheid van de Voedselketen (FAVV); in French: Agence Fédérale pour la Sécurité de la Chaîne alimentaire (AFSCA)) is the Belgian authority in charge of import controls both for EU harmonized and non-harmonized products shipped to Belgium:

[http://www.afsca.be/overhetfavv/structuurfavv/dgcontrole/;](http://www.afsca.be/overhetfavv/structuurfavv/dgcontrole/)

<http://www.afsca.be/apropos/structureafsca/dgcontrole/default.asp>

These controls take place in facilities that have been designated to perform controls, in line with the requirements of the [EU Official Controls Regulation \(OCR\)](#). The link to the up to date list of FASFC Border Control Post (BCPs) and to the list of the Control Posts (CPs) at the premises of Belgian operators designated by the FASFC for the official controls on certain products is available from [https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.favv-afsca.be%2Fprofessionelen%2F invoer%2F\\_documents%2FBCPICCPlistBE.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSE LINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.favv-afsca.be%2Fprofessionelen%2F invoer%2F_documents%2FBCPICCPlistBE.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSE LINK)

U.S. exporters are recommended to closely work with their importer in Belgium who will find some of the needed specific information in the FASFC's International Affairs Circulars and in the section on Third Country Imports:

<http://www.afsca.be/exportderdelanden/omzendbrieven/default.asp#A973640;>

<http://www.afsca.be/exportationpaystiers/circulaires/>

[FAVV - Invoer derde landen \(favv-afsca.be\)](#)

[AFSCA - Importation pays tiers \(favv-afsca.be\)](#)

The FASFC's Circulars on Protection of Plant Products, Animal Feed and Animal By-Products also have useful information related to the imports of those products:

<http://www.afsca.be/plantaardigeproductie/omzendbrieven/>

<http://www.afsca.be/productionvegetale/circulaires/>

## **Bilateral Export Certificates**

Turtles: Veterinary Health Certificate for Export of Commercial Turtles from the United States of America to Belgium. Exporters of turtles should contact APHIS to obtain this certificate. Contact [vs.live.animal.import.export@usda.gov](mailto:vs.live.animal.import.export@usda.gov) in USDA, APHIS, VS National Import Export Services.

Lanolin: Belgium requires facilities to be registered by APHIS for the export of lanolin (wool grease). For information regarding how to become registered, facilities should contact the VS Field Office covering the area from where the product will be exported or is produced. For further information see: [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/regulations/vs/iregs/products/downloads/be\\_lanolin\\_grease.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/regulations/vs/iregs/products/downloads/be_lanolin_grease.pdf).

## **Occasional Shipments of Non-Harmonized Products**

The Belgian authorities may accept occasional shipments of products for which no harmonized specific EU legislation exists. In those cases, the Belgian authorities will require on an ad hoc basis guarantees about animal and public health issues related to the specific product. An import authorization from the FASFC will list the import requirements. The importer in Belgium has to request the authorization by means of standardized documents ([Import Authorization Request for Animals](#); [Import Authorization Request for Products of Animal Origin](#)). The U.S. exporter will likely have to work with the appropriate regulatory agency in the United States to demonstrate that the import conditions set by FASFC are satisfied, before the FASFC will grant the import authorization to the requesting operator in Belgium. FAS can help facilitate this process.

## **Food Samples Shipped to Belgium**

Under EU legislation, food samples sent to Belgium with the intention to be consumed are considered foods for human consumption and are subject to the same listing and certification requirements as regular commercial shipments. As mentioned above, these requirements are largely harmonized throughout the EU and are described in the [European Union Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Certification Report](#)[https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report\\_Brussels%20USEU\\_European%20Union\\_09-30-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report_Brussels%20USEU_European%20Union_09-30-2021). In other cases (e.g. for the testing of equipment, diagnostics materials etc.), such goods come under the animal by-products regulation ([Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 142/2011 of 25 February 2011 implementing Regulation \(EC\) No 1069/2009](#)). Only registered users in Belgium can receive such goods after they have obtained an import permit from the FASFC. The importer in Belgium has to request the authorization by means of a standardized document ([Import Authorization Request for Commercial Samples](#)).

[http://www.favv-afsca.be/plantaardigeproductie/omzendbrieven/ documents/2019-04-05\\_aanvraagformulierinvoermachtigingdemonstratiemateriaalNLv0.1.pdf](http://www.favv-afsca.be/plantaardigeproductie/omzendbrieven/ documents/2019-04-05_aanvraagformulierinvoermachtigingdemonstratiemateriaalNLv0.1.pdf) or [http://www.afsca.be/productionvegetale/circulaires/ documents/2019-04-05\\_aanvraagformulierFR.pdf](http://www.afsca.be/productionvegetale/circulaires/ documents/2019-04-05_aanvraagformulierFR.pdf)).

The FASFC will check whether the products originate from a country that is authorized to ship to the EU. The FASFC will also check whether the applicant for the permit is included in the [list of registered users](#)

## **Common Certification Issues**

Certification issues are often at the basis for the detention of shipments in Belgian Border Control Posts and are no different than the problems reported by other FAS posts in EU countries:

- the certificate was issued after the date of departure;
- there were typographical errors;
- EU plant approval number mentioned on the certificate did not match the approval number on the product label or on the list of EU approved establishments. Please note that the approval number has to be identical on the certificate, label and the EU list; Belgian Border Control Posts will not accept small inconsistencies such as the addition of a letter to FSIS establishments which is commonly accepted in the United States.
- the shipper used the wrong/old certificate model;
- or a certificate was absent; or was not provided for every animal origin ingredient in the final product;
- the copy of the certificate is not the original;
- incorrect strike outs of standard text in certificates were implemented or initials were missing by strike outs; and,
- the stamp was unclear or the stamp is not original.

## **Section II: Purpose of Specific Export Certificate(s)**

Please read the [European Union Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Certification](#)

[Reporthttps://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report\\_Brussels%20USEU\\_European%20Union\\_09-30-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report_Brussels%20USEU_European%20Union_09-30-2021).

## **Section III: Specific Attestations Required on Export Certificates(s)**

Please read the [European Union Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Certification](#)

[Reporthttps://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report Brussels%20USEU European%20Union\\_09-30-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report%20Brussels%20USEU%20European%20Union_09-30-2021).

#### **Section IV: Government Certificate Legal Entry Requirements**

Please read the [European Union Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Certification](#)

[Reporthttps://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report Brussels%20USEU European%20Union\\_09-30-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report%20Brussels%20USEU%20European%20Union_09-30-2021)

#### **Section V: Other Certification/Accreditation Requirements to ensure market entry Composite Products - Products Subject/Not Subject to Veterinary Certification**

[Regulation \(EU\) 2019/625](#) defines composite products as foodstuffs intended for human consumption that contain processed products of animal origin and ingredients of plant origin. Composite products include a wide variety of products, including cheesecakes, high protein food supplements, pizza, and lasagnas. U.S. exports of “composite products” continue to be restricted due to burdensome certification requirements. While the U.S. is eligible to ship hormone-free meat, dairy products, egg products, and fishery products separately, it is sometimes not possible to ship the composite products that combine these eligible ingredients.

Exporters should be aware that the EU also made changes to the categories of composite products that require U.S. Government-issued health certificates. The new system is no longer based on the percentage of ingredients of animal product in the final product, as was the case until April 21, 2021. The current system that went into effect on April 21, 2021 establishes three categories of composite products: (1) non-shelf stable composite products, (2) shelf stable composite products that contain meat products and (3) shelf stable composite products that do not contain meat products. All processed products of animal origin have to be sourced from EU-approved establishments. The EU continues to require composite product certificates for all non-shelf stable products and for shelf stable composite products with a meat ingredient.

For shelf stable products not containing meat, no certificates signed by the U.S. Government are required. For these products, the representative of the importer must declare that the goods meet the relevant EU requirements, using the “Private Attestation” model form in Annex V of [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/2235](#). Specifically, the EU importer has to provide the list of ingredients and the establishment approval numbers for the animal origin ingredients in the product.



More information on the import conditions for composite products is available on the European Commission's [website](#). This website also includes a compilation of [Questions & Answers](#) intended to clarify a multitude of practical questions that have been raised on the new rules.

### **Products Subject/Not Subject to Veterinary Checks and Certification**

The list of animal origin products subject to official controls at border posts was updated in [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/632](#). Composite products listed in [Commission Delegated Regulation 2021/630](#) are exempted from checks at the border because of their low risk. The list includes products such as biscuits, confectionary, and food supplements. For these products, a private attestation in accordance with the model laid down in Annex V to of [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2020/2235](#) still has to be presented by the importer. All consignments to be presented at the border control posts have to undergo documentary checks. Identity and physical checks are carried out at a frequency depending on the risk linked to the specific animals or goods. The criteria to determine and modify the frequency of rates are established by the Commission.

### **Appendix I: Electronic Copy, scanned copy, or Outline of Each Export Certificate**

Please read the [European Union Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Certification](#)

[Reporthttps://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report\\_Brussels%20USEU\\_European%20Union\\_09-30-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report_Brussels%20USEU_European%20Union_09-30-2021).

**Attachments:**

No Attachments