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Norway

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative

FAIRS Country Report

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Report Highlights:

This report gives an overview of food laws currently in force in Norway. Being a member of the European Economic Area (EEA), Norway applies relevant legislation on food standards.

Section I. Food Laws:

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority (Mattilsynet) is the central supervisory authority for matters relating to food, including imports of food, in Norway.

Being a member of the European Economic Area (EEA), Norway applies relevant EU-legislation on food standards. The bulk of the Norwegian food legislation on food safety, labeling and traceability is subject to standardized EU rules, which have been incorporated into Norwegian legislation through the EEA cooperation. Norway has not, however, harmonized its tariffs for foodstuffs with the EU. Norwegian tariffs for commodities that are grown and/or produced domestically are significantly higher compared to EU tariffs.

In its EEA accession, Norway succeeded in receiving a derogation allowing Norway, as well as Sweden and Finland, to apply stricter salmonella control and stricter border controls (a quarantine on imports of live animals) than that of EU member countries.

Norway applies more restrictive legislation than the EU with regard to Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), under the umbrella of public health precaution.

Section II. Labeling Requirements:

The EU's labeling directive is applied in Norway (through EEA incorporation), please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations:

EU regulations apply, please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

Section IV. Food Additives Regulations:

Please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report. Information on regulations specific for Norway is given below.

Products fortified with vitamins and minerals have to be approved by the Norwegian Food Safety Authority before marketed in Norway. EU regulations do not specify any maximum levels for addition of vitamins, minerals and other substances to food. Until maximum amounts are specified in the EU regulation, the national authorization procedure applies.

Section V. Pesticides and Other Contaminants:

EU regulations apply, please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements:

A. Product Inspection and Registration Requirement

Please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

B. Certification and Documentation Requirements

Please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report. Information on certification and document requirements specific for Norway is given below.

Norwegian Salmonella Control Program

Fresh meat (included frozen), ground meat and meat preparations imported into Norway are subject to salmonella control at the border inspection post, unless a declaration on the veterinary certificate states that it has been tested according to Commission decision 1688/2005.

Health Certificates- Non-Animal Products

Norwegian rules for plant protection (Regulation No 1333 from 2000, last amended in January 2012) stipulate that the plant health authority in the exporting country should issue an official plant health certificate in accordance with the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPPC). For travelers, certain exemptions for limited quantities (private consumption) are possible.

Imports of potatoes, fresh fruits, vegetables, berries, seed and onions must be accompanied by health certificates, according to Regulation No 1333 from 2000.

Testing and Certification of Birdseed

Imports of birdseed into Norway must be sampled and tested for wild oat (*Avena fatua*). If seeds of wild oat are found, the lot is not allowed entry into Norway. In addition, it is not allowed to import viable seeds of hemp (*Cannabis sativa*).

Seed lot imports must be accompanied by a “Certificate – Test for *Avena fatua* in Birdseeds” issued by Kimen Seed Laboratory. Kimen Seed Laboratory is authorized by the Norwegian Food Safety Authority to carry out such analysis and to issue the certificates. The seed should be sampled by an official seed sampler in the exporting country and submitted to Kimen Seed Laboratory before shipment.

Section VII. Other Specific Standards:

A. Genetically Modified Foods (GMOs)

As an EEA member, Norway basically applies EU rules on Novel Foods and GMOs. It should be highlighted though, that the primary Norwegian legislation – The Gene Technology Act – is more restrictive in the sense that it lays down three additional requirements. GMO-products should also be ethically justified and provide societal benefits as well as be in line with sustainable development.

Applications for GMO approval must always be sent to the Norwegian Food Authority Mattilsynet, which evaluates the application and assesses conformity with the implementing legislation – Naeringsmiddeloven. This requirement also includes products already approved for free release on the EU’s internal market.

Norway has no LLP (low level presence) legislation in place but is planning to harmonize its national legislation with EU’s legislation on low level presence (LLP) of GMOs in feed imports.

Norway permits the import and use of certain GM feed products without any national approval requirements. For products already in the market at the time of implementation EU legislation, interim rules were imposed allowing companies to apply for continued use of these products. The fish industry received approval for the use of 19 GM varieties in fish feed. This derogation has been extended several times. Current derogation is valid until September 15, 2012. In order to keep the derogation after that, companies would need to apply for further extension.

B. Novel Foods

Please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

C. Dietetic or Special Use Food

Norway applies special legislation for baby food, e.g., lower maximum level for traces of radioactivity for baby food (370 Bq/kg) than for other food (600 Bq/kg). The lower level of 370 Bq/kg also applies to milk.

In regulation “Barnematforskriften” ,the definition of baby food is products specifically produced for babies and small children 0-3 years old. -

The regulation provides rules on the content of protein, fat, sugar and vitamins/minerals. It is allowed to add nutritive substance to all baby food products. For those vitamins that may be added, certain maximum levels are stipulated. For a few baby food products, the added vitamins and minerals must exceed a certain minimum level. However, there are some limitations concerning vitamins A and D, for which the regulation stipulates that for certain cereal-based products the addition should be only to the minimum content. Amino acids may be added when the protein quality at the starting point is not sufficient.

D. Wine, Beer and Other Alcoholic Beverages

Retail sales of wine and liquor in Norway are restricted to a government agency, Vinmonopolet. Imports of alcoholic beverages generally require registration with the Norwegian Customs Authorities. Alcoholic beverages are subject to special legislation. For example, imports of snaps or aquavit with an alcoholic content exceeding 60 per cent by volume are not allowed. For more information please visit www.toll.no.

E. Organic Foods

Norwegian organic legislation (Regulation No 1103 from 2005) is harmonized with EU legislation.

Since July 2010, it is mandatory to use the EU label on pre-packed organic products in EU countries as well as in EEA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). In Norway, however, it is not mandatory to use the EU logo until national legislation is in place. National labels may still be used and combined with the EU label.

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority has delegated the organization DEBIO to carry out control of organic products, both domestically produced and imported. DEBIO is a member of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movement) and is well known to Norwegian consumers. DEBIO is a member organization, open also to importing representatives (e.g. interested organizations, retail and trade).

Currently, DEBIO’s label is used for more or less all approved organic foodstuffs. More information on conditions for using the DEBIO symbol is available on: www.debio.no As of June 1, 2012, the DEBIO symbol may be used on organic products (produced and certified as meeting USDA NOP standards) imported from the US. This is a result of the EU-US organic trade agreement signed in February 2012.

F. Animal Products

Please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

G. Frozen Foodstuffs

Please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

H. Ionizing Radiation

Please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

I. Fruits and Vegetables

Please refer to the USEU FAIRS Report.

J. The Norwegian Recovery System

Grønt Punkt Norge AS is a privately owned non-profit company responsible for financing the recovery and recycling of used packaging on behalf of the industrial sector. Member companies pay a license fee for the recycling services. Importers of goods packed abroad must pay a “license fee” for the relevant packaging material.

More information can be found at www.grontpunkt.no

K. Mandatory Norwegian Recycling Requirements for Non-Alcoholic Beverages

Recycling and waste disposal of beverage packages are regulated by the Ministry of Environment through regulation 930 (dated June, 1 2004). The recycling system covers only packages distributed for and destined to end consumers. The purpose of the legislative measure is to contribute to an effective system with a high degree (minimum 25%) of recycling, and also to achieve reduction of littering.

The importer is responsible for either establishing a recycling system himself or, more likely for practical reasons, associating himself with an established system. The application should be sent to the Norwegian Climate and Pollution Agency (KLIF), www.klif.no. KLIF decides the recycling share for a particular year. Minimum is always 25%. Packages subject to deposit payments should be labeled, such as return bottles.

Section VIII. Copyright and/or Trademark Laws:

To register a trademark in Norway, you need to file a trademark application with the Norwegian Industrial Property Office (NIPO). NIPO is a government authority organized under the Ministry of Trade and industry.

A Norwegian trademark registration provides protection only within Norway.

More information on the protection of trademarks can be obtained at <http://www.patentstyret.no/en/>

Section IX. Import Procedures:

A. General Requirements on Trade Documents

Trading with live animals, animal products and food within the European community and EEC, and import from third countries must be registered in the EU database TRACES (TRAdE Control and Expert System). The first part of the Health Certificate can be filled out electronically in TRACES and then sent to the Norwegian Food Safety Authority for approval. Non animal food and feed products must be notified through the Norwegian Matilda VAM-system. Imports of non-animal products that must be accompanied by health certificates must be notified through the Norwegian MATS system.

B. Customs Clearance Procedures in Norway

All customs clearance of commodities shall be registered in the Norwegian Business Information System TVINN (Tollvesenets informasjonssystem med næringslivet). Norwegian customs clearance is based on the principle of self-declaration. This means that the importer declares the imported commodities through a transmission to TVINN. Alternatively, the importer can fill out a blank SAD (Single Administrative Document). In that case, the Norwegian Customs Authority will carry out the TVINN registration based on the SAD declaration.

C. VAT Registration is Mandatory

To import foodstuffs subject to tariffs for commercial purposes, it is necessary to be registered for VAT. The VAT rate for foodstuffs is 15%. The rate for products other than food is 25%. Foreign enterprises with no local office or company in Norway must register for VAT through a representative.

The normal procedure for a foreign company is to register, e.g., with a representative. There are no specific professional qualifications required except that the representative must have a location in Norway. Both the exporter and his representative are legally responsible for payments of VAT levies. The primary responsibility lies with the foreign company. Only when it has not been possible to receive VAT payments from the foreign company will the Norwegian tax authorities assign the representative as legally responsible.

D. Information on Tariff Rates and Related Levies

The Customs tariff schedule provides specific information regarding costs of importing particular commodities. The schedule can be viewed on the following website:

http://www.toll.no/templates_TAD/Tolltariffen/StartPage.aspx?id=164540&epslanguage=EN

Additional information is available from the Norwegian Customs Information Centre.

E. Special Taxes

In addition to VAT and tariffs, Norway applies consumption taxes for specific products. These special taxes are paid both by Norwegian producers and importers indiscriminately and apply to the tobacco industry, breweries, distilleries and the chocolate and sweets industry.

Norway also applies a food production fee on all goods related to foodstuffs with the exception of water. The food production fee was introduced as part of a simplified model for the financing of the

food authorities' inspections and controls and is charged on both Norwegian as well as imported goods. Correspondingly, a plant health fee is charged for plant products. Importers of fish and fishery products intended for food are exempted from paying the food production fee.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts:

1. Information on product classification, tariff rates and procedures for customs release:

Norwegian Customs
Directorate of Customs and Excise
Postboks 8122 Dep.
0032 Oslo
Phone: +47 22 86 03 00
www.toll.no
E-mail: tad@toll.no

Customs Region East Norway
E-mail: ostnorge@toll.no
Phone: +47 69 36 22 00

Customs Region Oslo og Akershus
E-mail: oslo@toll.no
Phone: +47 22 86 03 00

Customs Region South Norway
E-mail: sornorge@toll.no
Phone: +47 38 12 00 12

Customs Region West Norway
E-mail: vestnorge@toll.no
Phone: +47 55 57 37 00

Customs Region Central Norway
E-mail: midtnorge@toll.no
Phone: +47 73 88 43 00

Customs Region North Norway
E-mail: nordnorge@toll.no
Phone: +47 77 62 55 00

2. Labeling, food legislation, health claims, pesticides, GMO, food and animal health control measures:

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority
Felles postmottak
Postboks 383
2381 Brumunddal

Phone: +47 23 21 68 00
Fax: +47 23 21 70 01
E-mail: postmottak@mattilsynet.no

Kimen Seed Laboratory
P.O.Box 164
N-1431 Ås
Norway
Tel: +47 64 97 06 60
E-mail: savarekont@kimen.no

3. Allocation of tariff quotas/import licenses:

Norwegian Agricultural Authority (SLF)
P.O. Box 8140 Dep.
0033 Oslo, Norway
Phone: +47 24 13 10 00
Fax: +47 24 13 10 05
www.slf.dep.no
E-mail: postmottak@slf.dep.no

4. Questions regarding packaging materials, recycling scheme, environmental protection rules:

The Norwegian Climate and Pollution Agency (KLIF)
Postboks 8100 Dep.
0032 Oslo
Phone: +47 22 57 34 00
Fax: +47 22 67 67 06
www.klif.no
E-mail: postmottak@klif.no

5. In order to import alcoholic beverages, a special permit must be obtained. Applications for permits are handled by:

Norwegian Customs
Directorate of Customs and Excise
Postboks 8122 Dep.
0032 Oslo
Phone: +47 22 86 03 00
www.toll.no
E-mail: tad@toll.no

6. Some health foods may be classified as pharmaceutical products. The key contact for such products is the Norwegian Medicines Agency (NoMA).

The Norwegian Medicines Agency

Postboks 63

Kalbakken

0950 OSLO

Phone: +47 22 89 77 00

Telefax: +47 22 89 77 99

www.legemiddelverket.no

E-mail: post@legemiddelverket.no

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts:

U.S. Embassy

Foreign Agricultural Service

Dag Hammarskjölds Väg 31

115 89 Stockholm

Tel: + 46 8 783 5470/5392

Fax: +46 8 662 8495

Email: AgStockholm@fas.usda.gov

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