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## **Lithuania**

### **Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Report**

#### **FAIRS Annual Country Report**

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**Report Highlights:**

Since its European Union (EU) accession in 2004, Lithuania has consistently harmonized its domestic laws with EU food and agricultural regulations and standards. Post advises stakeholders to consult with Lithuanian importers and/or buyers to ensure current requirements are met. Post also recommends that the following report be read in conjunction with the EU Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) report, prepared by the U.S. Mission to the EU's Office of Agricultural Affairs (OAA).

## **Disclaimer**

The following report was prepared by U.S. Embassy Warsaw's OAA for exporters of U.S.-origin food and agricultural products. While every effort was taken during preparation, Post cannot guarantee complete accuracy due to policy changes since publication, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was unavailable. Post recommends that U.S. exporters verify all import requirements with their foreign customers 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. This report also should be read in conjunction with the EU-28 FAIRS report which can be found [here](#). For updated developments regarding EU food and feed legislation, please see FAS Europe's [website](#).

## **Section I. Food Laws:**

Lithuania follows EU regulations governing agricultural imports, as per the EU's single market principle. Regulation EC/178/2002 (General Food Law) establishes general principles and requirements for the EU's harmonized food law. Although exporters should be aware that some variations can exist between Member States, most relevant regulations for Lithuanian food and agricultural imports are harmonized with EU regulations.

In January 2018, the Commission finalized a "[fitness check](#)" of the General Food Law. It found that ineffective risk communication has negatively affected consumer trust regarding risk management decisions. In April 2018, the Commission presented a [proposal](#) to revise the General Food Law. The proposal aims to enhance risk communication by creating an EU public register of private-sector studies commissioned to obtain approvals for genetically-engineered products, novel foods, food and feed additives, plant protection products, and food contact materials. The proposal is still undergoing legislative review and is expected to be adopted by mid-2019.

The Government of Lithuania (GOL) enforces regulations and conducts food and market surveillance via the Ministry of Agriculture, State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS), Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Economy (MOE). SFVS implements adapted food laws and regulations for the food (raw and processed foods control and monitoring). SFVS ensures the safety of supplied foods to Lithuania and free movement throughout EU territory by ensuring quality, standards, labeling, and other requirements in compliance with EU and Lithuanian regulations. SFVS is the central competent authority with overall responsibilities in relation to food and feed safety, animal health and animal welfare. The Ministry of Agriculture develops and enforces guidelines and requirements pertaining to food quality (raw and processed), plants, and organic foods.

The MOE implements EU market policy in Lithuania. Regulations governing the movement of the food within Lithuania and the EU can be found via the [Seimas of The Republic of Lithuania](#) website. Market policy in Lithuania is regulated by the MOE. Food Safety and Quality for exported and imported foods to Lithuania can be accessed online in the Lithuanian language.

### **Other Relevant Lithuanian Food Laws:**

- Law on Veterinary Activities (December 17, 1991, No I-2110 amended October 7, 1999)

- Law on Animal Welfare and Protection (October 03, 2012, No. XI-2271)
- Law on Product Safety (June 01, 1999, No. 64-2324, consolidated version: May 07, 2001)
- Law on Consumer Protection (November 10, 1994, No. I-657, consolidated version: from 01/01/2016 to 29/02/2016), as last amended on June 2015 \_No XII-1867.
- Law on Seed Cultivation (November 15, 2001, No. IX-602, consolidated version: December 10, 2004).
- Law on Plant Protection (October 19, 1995, No. I-1069, consolidated version: June 04, 1998),
- Law on Alcohol (April 18, 1995, No I-857, consolidated version: February 07, 2013)
- Law on Environmental Protection (January 21, 1992, No. I-2223, consolidated version May 28, 2010), as last amended on 14 May 2015 – No XII-1718.

## **Section II. Labeling Requirements:**

Lithuanian food labeling requirements, standards, and specifications are based on the EU law on food composition and labeling, namely Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers (FIC). The mandatory nutrition declaration requirement introduced by the FIC regulation became applicable on December 13, 2016. Lithuania employs protected regulations for foods containing product of designated origin (PDO), products of geographical indication (GI), and traditional specialty guaranteed (TSG). Lithuanian labeling norms and regulations were harmonized with EU regulations in 2004. More information on labeling requirements can be found on FAS USEU's [website](#). In June 2018, the European Commission published additional [guidance](#) on the FIC implementation.

## **Compulsory Information**

Key changes introduced by the FIC regulation include:

- Name of the food
- List of ingredients
- Allergens listed in Annex II
- Quantity of certain ingredients or category of ingredients
- Net quantity of the food
- Date of minimum durability or “use by date”
- Any special storage conditions and/or conditions of use
- Name of business name and address of the food business operator under whose name the food is marketed. If that operator is not established in the EU, the name and address of the importer
- Country of origin or place of provenance in accordance with the provisions of Article 26
- Instructions for use where it would be difficult to make appropriate use of the food in the absence of such instructions
- Alcohol content for beverages containing more than 1.2 percent by volume

- Nutrition declaration
  - Minimum font size for printing label/sticker is set at 1.2 mm

The legislation update deals with the issues of label visibility, font size, font and background contrast, and obliges disclosures for allergens, such as peanuts or dairy products, on product packaging.

According to the new Regulation, country of origin labeling (COOL) is extended to fresh pork, poultry, goat, and sheep meat. The Regulation also requires nutritional information for processed foods. The new Regulation is intended to allow consumers to distinguish between products that are similar, but produced from different ingredients (*e.g.* cheese-like products).

Foods products intended for retail sales to consumers, or to restaurants, hospitality, and caterers must comply with the labeling legislation. The labeling, presentation, and advertising of food products must not mislead the consumer about the product's characteristics or effects, or attribute properties for disease prevention, treatment, or cure.

### **Flavorings**

Annex III to the labeling directive describes the way of designating flavorings in the list of ingredients. Specific requirements for the use of the term "natural" to describe a flavoring are set out in Article 16 of European Parliament and Council Regulation No. 1334/2008. For more information see Section IV "Food Additive Regulations."

### **Organic Labeling**

Organic labeling is overseen in Lithuania by the Ekoagros Company, a parastatal company founded by Ministry of Agriculture. Ekoagros is internationally accredited by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements and it certifies agricultural products. Lithuania has a patented certification mark for Lithuanian organic products. Lithuania follows all EU organic standards and regulations.

EU organic legislation covers wine via EC Implementing Regulation No. 203/2012, which establishes criteria to label wine as organic. Sorbic acid and desulfurization are not allowed and sulfite levels must be at least 30-50 mg per liter lower than nonorganic products. As Regulation 203/2012 was published in March 2012, just one month after the United States and the EU signed the Equivalency Arrangement, organic wine was not included in the deal. Conversely, U.S. organic wines certified to comply with the EU's organic wine-making rules can be imported into the EU.

### **Wine Labeling**

Chapter II of Commission Regulation (EC) No. 607/2009 establishes the application procedure for a designation of origin or a geographical indication. PDOs or GIs which have been accepted are entered in a "Register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications" maintained by the EC. The register is available online through the Commission's E-Bacchus database.

Chapter III of Regulation No. 607/2009 establishes on the use of traditional terms. The E-Bacchus database lists the traditional terms that are protected in the EU. The use of expressions such as 'style', 'type', 'method', 'as produced in', 'imitation', 'flavor', 'like' or 'similar', accompanied by a traditional term included in the E-Bacchus database is not allowed. Third-countries may use traditional terms not listed in the database. Since Regulation No.607/2009 became applicable, the EC received several

applications from third countries-mostly the United States-to use protected EU terms. EC Implementing Regulation (EU) No.723/2012 allows U.S. viticulture to use of the term “cream”. Allowing the United States to use of the term “chateau” is under consideration.

Chapter IV of Regulation No. 607/2009 establishes compulsory and optional information on wine labels. The mandatory information must appear in the same field of vision on the container, in such a way that all the information (except the lot number) is readable without having to turn the container. The mandatory information must be clearly distinguishable from surrounding text or graphics.

The indication of the wine grape variety on the label is optional. For third country wines, the grape variety must be included in at least one of the lists established by the “international Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV), the Union for the Protection of Plant Varieties (UPOV) or the International Board for Plant Genetic Resources (IBPGR). Terms such as “barrel matured”, “barrel aged” (listed in Annex XVI to Regulation 607/2009) may not be used on wines produced with oak chips.

### **Prepackaged Foods Labeling – Use of Stickers**

Specific rules on the use of stickers to provide mandatory labeling information are not included in FIC Regulation No. 1169/2011. On this issue, the EC refers to point 2.1.1 of their Questions and Answers on the Application of Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 document which says that “labels should not be easily removable so as to jeopardize the availability or the accessibility of the mandatory food information to the consumer.”

### **Nutritional and Health Claims**

The Annex to Nutrition & Health Claims Regulation (EC) No.1924/2006 lists the EU authorized nutrition claims and their U.S. Exporters should be aware that different pieces of legislation may apply to single product conditions of use. The use of nutrition claims not included in the annex is not allowed.

### **Health Claims**

Rules on the use of health claims are regulated under the Nutrition & Health Claims Regulation (EC) No. 1924/2006. Commission Regulation (EU) No. 432/2012 establishes the EU positive list of functional health claims and their conditions of use. Health claims referring to botanical substances have been put on hold because the Commission and the Member States are still discussing the potential conflict of the Health Claims Regulation with the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive.

Since December 14, 2012, all claims that are not authorized and not on hold or under consideration are prohibited. Food products carrying claims must comply with the provisions of the EU’s Food Information to Consumers Regulation 1169/2011(FIC). Commission Implementing Decision 2013/63 of January 24, 2013, establishes guidelines for national control authorities as regards the implementation of specific conditions for permitted health claims.

The list of permitted functional health claims is different from the individual applications for health claims relating to disease risk reduction and claims referring to the health and development of children which require an authorization on a case-by-case basis, following the submission of a scientific dossier to EFSA. A simplified authorization procedure has been established for health claims based on new scientific data.

Commission Regulation (EC) 353/2008 of 18 April 2008 sets out implementing rules for applications for the authorization of health claims as provided for in Article 15 of Regulation 1924/2006. USDA

[GAIN report](#) describes how application dossiers for authorization of health claims should be prepared and presented. Guidance on how stakeholders can apply for health claim authorizations can be downloaded from EFSA's [website](#).

Commission Regulation (EU) 907/2013 of September 20, 2013, establishes rules for the use of “generic descriptors” which could be interpreted by consumers as health claims. Generic descriptors such as “digestive biscuits” and “cough drops” would normally be banned under Regulation 1924/2006 because they suggest a beneficial effect on health but the implied health benefit has not been evaluated scientifically by EFSA. For more information see USDA GAIN report [Health Claims – New EU Regulation on Generic Descriptors](#). Trademarks and brand names that suggest health and/or nutritional benefits but do not comply with the new rules must be entirely removed from the EU market by January 19, 2022.

### **COOL**

COOL is mandatory for honey, fruit and vegetables, olive oil, fishery, aquaculture products, beef, pork, sheep, goat meat, and poultry. For more information on COOL requirements please refer to the [website](#). On May 29, 2018, the European Commission published [Implementing Regulation 2018/775](#), which introduces mandatory dual origin labeling when a country of origin is given or visually implied on the label of a food product but the origin is not the same as that of its primary ingredient. This Regulation will enter into force on April 1, 2020. Lithuania has launched national COOL scheme on milk, and milk used as an ingredient in dairy products on September 13, 2016.

### **Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations:**

The requirements on packaging and container regulations in Lithuania are in accordance with the EU standards and regulations. Packaging requirements specified in the Regulation (EC) 1935/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 (OJ L338/4) are associated with the use of safe food contact materials, inability to transfer food components and impact consumer's health, and alter food composition, taste and aroma of food products.

Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1935/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food repealed Directives 80/590/EEC and 89/109/EEC. Commission Regulation (EC) No 450/2009 of 29 May 2009 addresses active and intelligent materials and articles intended to come into contact with food. Updated information on plastic material intended to come in contact with the food is described in Commission Regulation (EU) No. 10/2011 of 14 January 2011 (OJ L12, 15.1.2011, page 1). Commission Regulation (EU) 10/2011 lists 21 permitted substances (plastic materials and articles) that may come into contact with foodstuffs.

For more information on specific substances, see the EC's Food contact materials database. Additional directives applied in Lithuania established by the Lithuanian legislative acts are published in the Lithuanian Official Journal “[Valsybes zinios](#)” online. For more information on size and content of packages and containers requirements please refer to the EU-28 FAIRS Report [here](#).

### **Section IV. Food Additives Regulations:**

The EU's “Package on Food Improvement Agents” includes four Regulations: Regulation 1331/2008

establishing a common authorization procedure for food additives, food enzymes and food flavorings, Regulation (EC) 1332/2008 on food enzymes, Regulation (EC) 1333/2008 on food additives and Regulation 1334/2008 on flavorings.

Regulation (EC) No.1331/2008 establishes a common authorization procedure for food additives, food enzymes and food flavorings based on safety evaluations carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The implementing rules are laid down in Commission Regulation 234/2011, explaining the content of an application and all the data both administrative and technical that have to be submitted to the Commission. The Commission will then request EFSA to verify the suitability of the data. An application consists of a letter, a technical dossier and a summary of the dossier.

Additives that are authorized in food and their conditions of use are listed in Annex II to the Food Additives Regulation 1333/2008. The authorized uses of additives are listed according to the category of food to which they may be added. Annex I to Regulation 1333/2008 lists the definitions of 26 different categories of food additives. Only additives included in the EU's positive list are authorized under specific conditions. The use of flour bleaching agent's chlorine, bromates, and peroxides is not allowed by the EU. Additional information on regulations pertaining to food additives laws in the EU can be obtained [here](#).

#### **Section V. Pesticides and Other Contaminants:**

European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 1107/2009 set out rules for the authorization of plant protection products (PPPs) and replaces Directive 91/414/EEC related to the presence of pesticide and other contaminants in food and foodstuffs. It entered into force at the end of December 2009 and became fully applicable on June 14, 2011. This Regulation establishes a list of approved active substances. Only PPPs containing active substances included in the list may be authorized for use in the EU. Member States can approve PPPs containing the active substances. According to the new Regulation, the EU is divided into three different zones. Once a Member State approves the PPP, it can be mutually recognized and authorized within the same EU zone as set out in Annex I of the Regulation.

The EU implemented special import conditions on testing almonds supplied to the EU Member States. Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1152/2009 imposes special regulations for importing of almonds to EU from third countries due to the aflatoxin contamination.

Commission Regulation (EU) No 178/2010 of 2 March 2010 amended Regulation (EC) No 401/2006 which relates to groundnuts (peanuts), other oilseeds, tree nuts, apricot kernels, licorice, and vegetable oil (OJ L52, 3.3.2010, page 32).

Commission Regulation (EU) No. 165/2010 of 26 February 2010 amended Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 sets maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs with regards to aflatoxins (OJ L50, 27.2.2010, page 8).

In November 2017 a Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/2158 established benchmark levels to reduce the presence of acrylamide in food. The new regulation requires that food business operators apply mandatory measures to reduce the presence of acrylamide, proportionate to the size and nature of their establishment.

### **Maximum Residue Limits (MRL)**

Since September 2008 all MRLs in the EU have been harmonized by European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No.396/2005 on food or feed of plant and animal origin. Pesticide MRLs for processed or composite products are based on the MRLs of the raw agricultural ingredients. See the European Commission's [website](#) at for the latest updates.

### **Import Tolerances**

Information on import tolerances is available in "[Pesticide Use and Food Safety](#)" guide published by the European Crop Protection Association (ECPA). As of September 2, 2008 all MRLs, including import tolerances, apply EU wide. The application form for an import tolerance can be found [here](#).

### **Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements:**

In 2004 Lithuania joined the EU and adapted regulation and standards of the European Union. [The Integrated Tariff of the Community](#) describes regulations carried out by the EU. The Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 282/2011 of 15 March 2011 describes implementing measures for the Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax (recast) Council implementing Regulation No 2011/282/EU.

[Customs duty](#) is required to be paid by natural persons and legal entities when importing goods into the EU. The EU duties are imposed on the cost, insurance, and freight value of the product imported by the Custom Department. Common Custom Tariff is applied on imported products in Lithuania. Type and origin of imported products influence product's duty rate. Article 12 of the Custom Code establishes classification of goods.

On March 10, 2006, the United States and EU have signed an agreement on trade of wine. The description of regulations and normative can be found in the Regulation (EC) No 606/2009. Beer, wine, fermented beverages, and other than beer and wine (example: cider), intermediate products (example: port and sherry), and ethyl alcohol (i.e. spirit drinks) are subject to duties according to Council Directive 92/83/EEC. The Directive COM (2006) 486 presented on 8 September 2006 amended increase of minimum rates of excise duty due to inflation.

### **Section VII. Other Specific Standards:**

Specific standards are required when importing wine and spirits from third countries into the EU territory. An Import License must be supplied for the shipment of wine exceeding 3,000 liters. This license is issued by [Lithuanian National Paying Agency](#). The declaration on foods from third countries is required by Lithuanian custom authorities and a single administrative document (SAD) must be supplied. More information can be found EC Commission Union and Taxation [website](#). The export of wines from U.S. must also include a [simplified export certificate or VII document](#).

### **Novel Foods Labeling**

Use of genetically engineered (GE) ingredients, GE foods require special labeling in concordance with the EU Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003.

### **Section VIII. Copyright and/or Trademark Laws:**

Lithuania Copyright and Trademark Laws are in concordance with the EU requirements. Council Regulation (EC) No. 207/2009 establishes a unified Community registration of trademark for EU members.

### **Section IX. Import Procedures:**

The EU Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2913/92 describing the EU custom code amended implementation of the custom code by Commission Regulation (EEC) No. 2454/93. Enhancement of security was implemented in the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1875/2006. Customs provides electronic information on current EU issues, trade laws, and regulations, access to administrative forms, custom consultation committees, restrictions, and prohibitions, and access to tariff regulations regarding foreign trade. More information can be found on Customs of the Republic of Lithuania [website](#).

The Integrated Tariff of the Republic of Lithuania ([LITAR](#)) database provides electronic access to information resources on EU tariff and Lithuanian taxes, import, and export procedures and regulations. Information found on LITAR must be cross-referenced with EC legal regulations and Excise and VAT laws of Lithuania. European Union tariff and non-tariff requirements can be found online in [TARIC database](#). Supplemental information on free movement of goods in Lithuania can be found on the [europa.eu](#) website.

### **Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts:**

#### **The Ministry of Agriculture**

Gedimino av. 19 (J. Lelevelio 6)

LT-01103 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 239 1111

E-Mail: [zum@zum.lt](mailto:zum@zum.lt)

Fax: +370 5 239 1212

<http://www.zum.lt>

#### **State Food and Veterinary Service**

Siesikų str. 19

LT-07170 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 240 4361

Email: [vvt@vet.lt](mailto:vvt@vet.lt)

Fax: +370 5 240 4362

<http://vmvt.lt/en>

#### **Ministry of Health**

Vilnius str. 33,

LT-01506 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 800 66 004; +370 5 268 5110

Fax: +370 5 266 1402

Email: [ministerija@sam.lt](mailto:ministerija@sam.lt)<http://sena.sam.lt/en> <http://www.sam.lt/go.php/lit/English>

#### **Ministry of Economy**

Gedimino Ave. 38 / Vasario 16-osios st. 2,

LT-01104 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 2625515; +370 5 262 6584

Fax: +370 5 262 3974

Email: [kanc@ukmin.lt](mailto:kanc@ukmin.lt)

<http://www.ukmin.lt/web/en/>

**Muitinės departamentas (Customs Department)**

A. Jakšto g. 1/25

LT-01105 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 266 6111

E-mail: [info@cust.lt](mailto:info@cust.lt)

Fax: +370 5 266 6010

<http://www.cust.lt>

**Nacionalinė mokėjimo agentūra (National Paying Agency)**

Blindžių g. 17

LT-08111 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 252 6703

E-mail: [info@nma.lt](mailto:info@nma.lt)

Fax: +370 5 252 6945

<http://www.nma.lt>

**Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts:**

For additional information concerning market entry, other import requirements, and a current importer list, U.S. exporters of agricultural products and commodities contact:

**Office of Agricultural Affairs (Covering Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia)**

Warsaw, Poland

Tel: (+48-22) 504 2336

Email: [agwarsaw@usda.gov](mailto:agwarsaw@usda.gov)