

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## **Jordan**

### **Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative**

### **FAIRS Country Report**

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**Report Highlights:**

Jordan is updating its imported food and agricultural product regulations and standards. The country presently maintains a three tier inspection rate system for imported food products based on a product's potential health risk. Jordanian importers are required to ensure that imported food and agricultural products do not pose a potential threat to public health. All food and agricultural products are subject to random inspection and testing.

## Section I. 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 44 (2002)
- The Jordanian Food Control Law 32 (2003)

These laws were adopted by the Aqaba Special Economic Customs Center and the Amman Customs Center in May 2002 and January 2004.

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

The [Jordan Institute for Standards and Meteorology Organization](#) (JISMO) has delegated to the JFDA food and agricultural product testing responsibilities. The former however retains responsibility for the development of standards (including foods) and ensuring conformity with existing standards. It also supervises the national meteorology system in addition to granting Jordanian Quality Marks (voluntary) and accrediting testing and calibration laboratories.

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

- High risk products, 80-100 percent inspection rate.
- Medium risk products, 25-50 percent inspection rate.
- Low risk products, 5-10 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 (GoJ) routinely tests inbound consignments for radiation levels and chemical contaminants, as well as for heavy metals, food additives, animal growth promotants (hormones), and veterinary drug residues. Jordan tests less frequently for pesticides residues.

Jordanian drug and pharmaceutical (including vaccines for human use) importers must comply with Ministry of Health (MoH) regulations. However, the MoA regulates the import of veterinary drugs and animal vaccines, pesticides, beef, animal feed, and seedlings. In the absence of a local standard, Jordan applies internationally recognized standards.

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

**Labeling Requirements:** The Jordan Institute for Standards and Meteorology 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. A 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. Nonetheless the JISMO interprets "best before" as a 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 product's content as specified on the label. Jordan has been known to reject shipments due to labeling ambiguities and printing errors.

**Nutritional Labeling Requirements:** This labeling is mandatory for certain food categories (e.g., infant formula and food for dietary use).

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

The [Port of Aqaba](#) (Aqaba Special Economic Zone) imposes on gantry crane discharge a maximum weight restriction of 30.5 metric tons (MT). Shipping containers in excess of the maximum weight restriction require shore crane discharge. FAS Amman is unaware of any specific packaging or shipping container regulations.

The Port of Aqaba is not subject to waste disposal laws. In the eventuality that a containerized or non-containerized cargo is condemned and requires disposal, an application is submitted to the pertinent GoJ entities. The [Ministry of Environment](#) (MoE) will approve or reject the request based on the cargo's potential environmental impact.

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

Food additives are jointly regulated by the JISMO and JFDA; the latter, however has ultimate responsibility for regulatory enforcement. Jordan maintains a list of approved additives and permissible concentration levels largely conforming to the [Codex alimentarius](#) (Codex) standard. Jordan refers primarily to Codex standard 192 for food additives issues. It will refer to European Union (EU) regulations in the absence of a Codex standard.

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

The Ministry of Agriculture's Plant Protection Directorate (PPD)/ Pesticides Division regulates pesticides. Imported agricultural pesticides must conform to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO) standards. Pesticides for ensuring public health (e.g., cockroach sprays and mosquito repellents) are required to conform to World Health Organization (WHO) standards.

Jordan counts with a single laboratory capable of testing for pesticide residues in fresh fruits and vegetables. The testing laboratory's normal testing turnaround time is two weeks, making it difficult to test perishables prior to consumption. Jordan tests non-perishables to a far greater extent, requiring that residue levels not exceed Codex maximum residue levels (MRL).

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

Food products are inspected at the wholesale and retail levels by the Jordan Food and Drug Administration. Products that fail to meet technical requirements, or are found unfit for human consumption are removed from distribution channels and destroyed. All food and agricultural products are subject to random inspection and testing. Virtually all prepared and mixed foods shipments are tested at the border.

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

The Jordan Institute of Standards and Meteorology Organization, as the country's standard setting body: 1) prepares, approves, revises, and amends mandatory and voluntary standards and monitors their application; 2) adopts and approves other countries, regional and international organizations (Arabic or English language) standards, and; 3) cooperates and coordinates standardization and meteorology issues with regional and international institutions. It is also the Codex point of contact, as well as a corresponding member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Organization for Legal Meteorology (IOLM).

Since 2003, the JISMO has maintained a voluntary pre-shipment inspection program for food and agricultural product imports. Jordan does not require import licenses for most food and agricultural products. However, the MoA does require import licenses for beef, fruits, fish, and vegetables and a number of other food and agricultural products such as powdered milk. Imported food and agriculture products are required to conform to the JISMO's Codex-based standards. Alcoholic beverage imports are permissible, but elevated tariffs (50-200 percent) limit imports.

## **Section VIII. 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 their 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 (MoIT) 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).

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

As part of its WTO accession agreement, Jordan has set a reduced tariff rate ceiling of 0-30 percent for most imported products. Nonetheless it maintains a tariff rates of 50-200 percent for certain alcohol and alcoholic beverages, as well as a 150-200 percent tariff rate for tobacco and tobacco products. With the exception of alcohol and tobacco products, most import duties and trade barriers were phased out in 2010 as part of the terms of the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

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 114, article 4) (2004):** Jordanian and foreign trading companies must obtain a MoIT importer card for customs clearance purposes. Exempt from this requirement are foreign companies not domiciled in Jordan. 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 GoJ ministries must obtain a more limited MoIT importer card that authorizes the import of goods specific to the entity's activities.

**Import/Export Documentation:** As per article 31) of the Customs Law of 1998 and its amendments, all customs declarations must include the following (note, Jordan's 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 intervention. In the absence of Jordanian diplomatic/consular intervention, 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 Jordanian dinars (JOD) 2,000. (1 JOD = ~\$1.40).

**Customs Valuation:** Jordan's Custom Law (1999) as amended in March 2000 now includes GATT-compliant criteria for customs valuation (based on certified commercial invoices). Increased transparency restricts 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 alcoholic beverages and tobacco products. 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 pre-import license issuing entities. Rejected shipments may be appealed.

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for issuing pre-import clearances for live animals, fresh/chilled/frozen beef and beef products, 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, potassium bromide, food dyes, ice cream, and baby food.

## **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](http://www.moa.gov.jo)

Ministry of Environment

Tel: (962-6) 556-0113 · Fax: (962-6) 556-0288 · Web-site: [www.moenv.gov.jo](http://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](http://www.mit.gov.jo)

Jordan Institute of Standards and Metrology

Tel: (962-6) 568-0139 · Fax: (962-6) 568-1099 · Web-site: [www.jismo.gov.jo](http://www.jismo.gov.jo)

Jordan Food and Drug Directorate

Tel: (962-6) 461-2663 · Fax: (962-6) 461-2663 · Web-site: [www.jfda.jo](http://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](mailto:Customs@Customs.gov.jo)

Web-site: [www.customs.gov.jo](http://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](http://www.aqabazone.com)

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

USDA\FAS - Office of Agricultural Affairs, U.S. Embassy Amman

P.O. Box 354, Amman, Jordan

Tel: (962-6) 590-6056 · Fax: (962-6) 592-0146 · E-mail: [mohamed.khraishy@fas.usda.gov](mailto:mohamed.khraishy@fas.usda.gov)