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Lithuania

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative

FAIRS Country Report

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Report Highlights:

Report Sections updated: All sections were updated. The EU Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) report for EU-28, prepared by the US Mission to the EU in Brussels should be reviewed in conjunction with this report. Since accession into the European Union Lithuania has modified national laws and brought food and agricultural regulations and standards into full concordance with EU regulations and standards. Lithuania does require local language labels but does permit local language stickers to be applied at point of distribution.

Internet links identified in this report are intended to provide the reader direction to the basis of EU law, regulation, or standard to which Lithuania now defaults. Please work with your importer/buyer to ensure current requirements are met.

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Section I. Food Laws:

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Warsaw, Poland 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 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.

In 2004, Lithuania joined the European Union and since then, has implemented regulations to harmonize Lithuanian laws with EU regulations and standards. Lithuania adopted its national food law, "Food of the Republic of Lithuania Law," in 2000 (04/04/2000, No. VIII-1608, National Gazette 2000), amended via No. 32-893; amended 06/06/2002, No. IX-937, National gazette No. 64-2574; amended paragraphs 2,3,5,9,10, 11 and 12, 2003 No. 92-4139; published in National gazette 2004, No. 93-3397, last edition in force since 12/06/2004.

EU Commission Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002 establishes the General Food Law principles and requirements to harmonize EU member states' national requirements with EU requirements and to ensure safe trade of foods in the EU.

EU regulations are employed for import of food products from third countries according to the Commission Implementing Decision (2011/215/EU) of 4 April 2011 implementing Council Directive 97/78/EC as regards to transshipment at the border inspection post of introduction of consignments of products intended for import into the EU or for third countries (OJ L90, 6.4.2011, page 50).

The government of the Republic of Lithuania establishes a legal basis for food and market surveillance in Lithuania. The Ministry of Agriculture, State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS), Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Economy are institutions involved in development and enforcement of legislative normative acts and regulations in Lithuania. The Ministry of Agriculture develops the guidelines and requirements designed to access the quality of food products (raw and processed), plants, and ecological foods. State Food and Veterinary Service implements adapted food laws and regulations for the food (raw and processed, foodstuffs) 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 laws and regulations.

Food quality and food safety policy implemented in Lithuania are approved by the order of the Minister of Agriculture and regarded as the Food Safety Strategy of the Republic of Lithuania (2001) and National Food and Nutrition Strategy and the Implementation Plan for 2003-2010 (2003). The Food Safety Strategy enforces implementation of EU Council laws and regulations into the legal system of Lithuania as a part of EU state member obligations by ensuring safeness of food and feed stuffs, phyto-sanitary, veterinary, activities of the laboratories, animal identification and registration, animal welfare, and state control system. The National Food and Nutrition Strategy is developed to foster quality and

food safety of food products, sustainable food system in order to promote healthy nutrition and prevent disease development in the population caused by inadequate nutrition and food products.

The Ministry of Economy ensures the implementation of the EU market policy in Lithuania. The movement of the food freely to Lithuania and EU is regulated by Law on Product Safety, Regulation for the Removal of Obstacles to Free Movement of Goods, Regulations for the Designation and Notification of Testing Laboratories and Certification and Control Bodies, Regulations for the Free Movement of Goods and Exchange of Information about National Measures, Regulations for the Exchange of Information about Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures, and Law on the Conformity Assessment can be accessed using legal document database web site of the Seimas of The Republic of Lithuania. The implementation of market policy in Lithuania is regulated by the Ministry of Economy. Food Safety and Quality for exported and imported foods to Lithuania can be accessed online in Lithuanian language.

Other Relevant Food Laws of The Republic of Lithuania:

1. Law on Veterinary Activities with its amendments (17.12. 1991, No.I-2110) (Official Gazette, 1992, No2-15; 1999-2639; 200. No.61-1804).
2. Law on Welfare and Protection of Animals (3 October 2012 No XI-2271)
3. Law on Amendments of the Law on Product Safety (Official Gazette 2001, No. 64-2324).
4. Law on Consumer Protection (1994, No. I-657).
5. Law on Seed Cultivation (15/11/2001, No IX-602, National gazette 2001, No. 102-3623).
6. Law on Feed (30/04/2004, No VIII-1610, National gazette 2000, No. 34-952, new wording 06/04/2000, No IX-2210, National gazette No. 2004, No. 73-2541).
7. Law on Ratification of Agreement on Use of Special Means of Transport Intended for Transportation of Foodstuffs Susceptible to Fast Spoilage (Official Gazette 2000, No.-2046).
8. Law on Alcohol
9. Law on Environmental Protection (1992 m., No. I-2223, National gazette No. 5-75; amended 1996, No. 57-1335; amended 2000, No. 39-1093; amended 2002, Nr. 2-49, National Gazette No. 5-75; 2002, No 2-49).

Section II. Labeling Requirements:

The regulatory body of labeling requirements, standards, and specifications for foods in Lithuania is based on the EU regulations on food composition and labeling norms – European Parliament and Council Directive 2000/13/EC. Lithuania employs protected regulations for foods containing product of designated origin (PDO), product of geographical indication (PGI), and traditional specialty guaranteed (TSG). Lithuanian labeling norms and regulations were synchronized with EU regulations in 2004.

EU Commission Regulation (EC) No 2168/2004 of 17 December 2004 adapted Regulation (EEC) No 2037/93 by reason of the accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, **Lithuania**, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, and Slovakia (OJ L371, 18.12.2004, page 12)
Commission Regulation (EC) No 2167/2004 of 17 December 2004 adapted Regulation (EEC) No 1848/93 by reason of the accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, **Lithuania**, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia (OJ L371, 18.12.2004, page 8) [*relates to certificates of*

specific character for agricultural products and foodstuffs within - TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED category]

Compulsory Information

The compulsory information must appear on the pre-packaging or on a label attached to it. The information must be marked in such a way that it is easily visible, clearly legible, and indelible. The following information is mandatory on labels:

1. The name under which the product is sold.
2. The list of ingredients, in descending order of weight.
 - a. Important exceptions include added water in foods reconstituted from concentrates, and cheese, which is covered by special rules.
 - b. The following ingredients require a specific statement on the label: GMO"s, packaging gases, sweeteners, certain food colorings, aspartame and polyols, quinine and caffeine, phytosterols and phyosteranols and licorice.
3. Allergens: Annex IIIa to Directive 2000/13/EC lists the groups of potential allergenic ingredients which must be indicated on food labels: cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, eggs, fish, peanuts, soybeans, milk and dairy products (including lactose), nuts and nut products, sesame seeds, lupin and products thereof, mollusks and products thereof and sulphite at concentrations of at least 10 mg per kg or 10 mg/l, celery, and mustard. Allergen labeling also applies to alcoholic beverages. GAIN report E36066 lists the different languages that the EU member states will accept for the purpose of allergen labeling of wine.
 - a. Guidelines for the implementation of the allergen labeling rules also specify in which cases derogations may be accepted:
 1. Foodstuffs for which no ingredients list is required
 2. Sub ingredients of certain compound ingredients
 3. Ingredients which belong to well defined categories
 4. Substances that are not regarded as ingredients
 - b. Commission Directive 2007/68/EC establish a list of ingredients and substances which are permanently exempted from the mandatory allergen labeling requirement.
4. Certain ingredients may be designated by the name of the category rather than the specific name (Annex I to Directive 2000/13/EC). These include fats, oils (note that peanut oil is also subject to the new allergen rules), starch, fish, cheese, spices, herbs, gum bases, crumbs, sugar, dextrose, glucose syrup, milk proteins, cocoa butter, wine and meat preceded by the name(s) of the animal species from which it comes.
5. The quantity of certain ingredients or categories of ingredients (QUID) – see below.
6. The net quantity of prepackaged foodstuffs expressed in metric units (liter, centiliter, milliliter, kilogram, or gram).

7. The date of minimum durability: the shelf life is indicated by the words "Best before..." when the date includes an indication of the day or by "Best before end of..." in other cases. The date has to be given in order of day-month-year. However, for foodstuffs with a shelf life of less than three months, the day and month of expiry are adequate; for a shelf life of three to eighteen months the month and year are sufficient; for more than eighteen months shelf life the year is sufficient indication. In the case of highly perishable foodstuffs the minimum durability date is replaced by the "use by" date consisting of the day, the month, and possibly the year (articles 9-10 of Directive 2000/13/EC).
8. Any special storage conditions or conditions of use.
9. The name or business name and address of the manufacturer or packager, or of the seller established within the European Community.
10. Particulars of the place of origin or provenance in case absence of such information might mislead the consumer.
11. Instructions for use.
12. The actual alcoholic strength for beverages containing more than 1.2 percent alcohol by volume.
13. A mark to identify the lot to which a foodstuff belongs, determined by the producer, manufacturer or packager or by the first seller in the EU. The marking must be preceded by the letter "L," except in cases when it is clearly distinguishable from other indications on the label. Foods marked with a "Best Before" or "Use By" date that consists of at least the Day and Month are exempt from the lot marking requirement. Food marked with a "Best before End" date with Month and Year only does not qualify for exemption. (Directive 89/396/EEC)
14. Treatments undergone, with specific indications for irradiated foods and deep-frozen foods (see section 7).

Organic Labeling

Implementing Regulation (EU) No 426/2011 of 2 May 2011 amended Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labeling of organic products with regard to organic production, labeling, and control. The labeling of organic foods regulations is overseen in Lithuania by Ekoagros founded by Ministry of Agriculture. Ekoagros holds international accreditation of International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements and certifies agricultural products. Lithuania has a patented certification mark for Lithuanian organic products.

Wine Labeling

Commission Regulation 607/2009 lays down detailed rules on protected designations of origin and geographical indications, traditional terms and labeling.

Chapter II of Regulation 607/2009 establishes the application procedure for a designation of origin or a geographical indication. Designation of origin or geographical indications which have been accepted are entered in a “Register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications” maintained by the European Commission. The register is available through the Commission’s online “E-Bacchus” database.

Chapter III of Regulation 607/2009 sets out rules 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.

Chapter IV of Regulation 607/2009 sets out rules for the indication of 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.

For detailed information see GAIN REPORT E49061 “New EU wine labeling rules”.

Additional information on import of wine into the EU, incl. Lithuania can be located at:
<http://www.usda-eu.org/trade-with-the-eu/eu-import-rules/eu-labeling-requirements/wine-labeling/>

Prepackaged Foods Labeling

Labeling of prepackaged food products is in accordance with EU Directive 2000/13/EC. The recent updates on the food labeling at the European Parliament (EP) are in negotiation stage. The important highlights pertaining changes in food labeling include presence on the label of the nutrition declaration, country of origin labeling (COOL), minimum font size, allergen labeling, vegetable oils, and trans fats.

Nutritional and Health Claims

European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 1924/2006 sets EU-wide conditions for the use of nutrition claims such as “low fat” or “high in vitamin C” and health claims such as “helps lower cholesterol.” The regulation applies to any food or drink product produced for human consumption that is marketed on the EU market. In order to carry a claim, foods must fit a certain “nutrient profile” (below certain salt, sugar and/or fat levels).

The development of nutrient profiles, originally scheduled for January 2009, has not been finalized yet. The European Commission is still working on a proposal but a timeline is not yet available. Once the nutrient profiles, based on scientific evaluations by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), have been set, there will be another two-year period before the nutrient profiles begin to apply to allow food

operators time to comply with the new rules. Nutrition claims can fail one criterion, i.e. if only one nutrient (salt, sugar or fat) exceeds the limit of the profile, a claim can still be made, provided the high level of that particular nutrient is clearly marked on the label. For example, a yogurt can make a low-fat claim even if it has high sugar content but only if the label clearly states “high sugar content.” Health claims cannot fail any criteria.

In December 2011, the European Commission proposed a [list of 222 functional health claims](#). The proposed list includes generic claims for substances other than botanicals and will be submitted to the European Parliament and Council for scrutiny. If no objections are raised within three months, the list will be published in the Official Journal and included in the online EU Register. Botanical claims are being placed on hold and will be assessed at a later stage. Disease risk reduction claims and claims referring to the health and development of children require an authorization on a case-by-case basis, following the submission of a scientific dossier to EFSA. Health claims based on new scientific data will have to be submitted to EFSA for evaluation but a simplified authorization procedure has been established.

Only nutrition and health claims included in one of the EU positive lists may be used on food labels. Some sections of the Register are missing but will be completed as appropriate. Food products carrying claims must comply with the provisions of nutritional labeling [Directive 90/496/EEC](#).

Commission [Regulation \(EC\) No. 353/2008](#) sets out implementing rules for applications for the authorization of health claims as provided for in Article 15 of [Regulation 1924/2006](#). [GAIN Report E48055](#) describes how application dossiers for authorization of health claims should be prepared and presented. A guidance document on how companies can apply for health claim authorizations can be downloaded from EFSA’s [website](#).

The State Food and Veterinary Service of Lithuania oversee quality and labeling of meat products by inspecting local meat producers plants. The results of the inspection of meat processing plants are published on [SFVS website](#). The quality and labeling requirements of meat products are originated by the Lithuanian standard LST 1919 “Meat Products” and Lithuanian Hygiene Norm 119:2002 “Labeling on foodstuffs.”

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 Framework [Regulation \(EC\) 1935/2004 \(L338/4\)](#) 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.

Additional directives applied in Lithuania established by the Lithuanian legislative acts are published in the Lithuanian Official Journal “Valsybes zinios” online.

Section IV. Food Additives Regulations:

The Lithuanian Ministry of the Health harmonizes its regulations on food additives with Regulation (EC) No. 1333/2008 on addition of food additives into food preparations. Risk assessment of food additives, enzymes, and flavoring is regulated by Regulation (EC) No 1331/2008. Similarly, Regulation (EC) No. 1332/2008 concerns food enzymes and Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 food flavorings.

Commission Directive 2011/3/EU of 17 January 2011 amended Directive 2008/128/EC and laid down specific purity criteria on colors for use in foodstuffs (L13, 18.1.2011, page 59).

Commission Directive 2010/69/EU of 22 October 2010 amended the Annexes to European Parliament and Council Directive 95/2/EC on food additives other than colors and sweeteners (OJ L279, 23.10.2010, page 22).

Commission Directive 2010/67/EU of 20 October 2010 amended Directive 2008/84/EC which laid down specific purity criteria on food additives other than colors and sweeteners (OJ L277, 21.10.2010, page 17).

Agents such as chlorine, bromates, and peroxides are **not permitted** for use in EU food preparations.

Section V. Pesticides and Other Contaminants:

European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 1107/2009 set out new 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 thus 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 relates to groundnuts (peanuts), other oilseeds, tree nuts, apricot kernels, liquorices and vegetable oil (OJ L52, 3.3.2010, page 32) [*Sampling procedures for contaminants*]

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).

Maximum Residue Limits

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 DG SANCO's webpage for the latest updates.

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 (TARIC, Tarif Intégré de la Communauté) 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 (CCT) 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 U.S. 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 and accessed on line <http://www.ttb.gov/agreements/eu-wine-agreement.pdf>. 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. The excise duty rates for the EU current as of 1 July 2013 can be found here.

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 (Nacionalinė mokejimo agentūra). The declaration on foods from third countries is required by Lithuanian custom authorities. 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 GM ingredients, GMO 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](#). Beginning in January, 2011, the security information on supplied goods by the trader must be transferred to EU custom authorities. 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](#). More information on import and export procedures, regulations, and documentation can be found online at the [Seima](#) custom border. Supplemental information on free movement of goods in Lithuania can be found [here](#).

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

Fax: +370 5 239 1212

<http://www.zum.lt/index.php?1816667578>

State Food and Veterinary Service

Siesikų str. 19

LT-07170 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 240 4361
Email: 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<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

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

Muitinės departamentas (Customs Department)

A. Jakšto g. 1/25

LT-01105 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 266 6111

Fax: +370 5 266 6010

E-mail: info@cust.lt

<http://www.cust.lt/web/guest/titulinis#en>

Nacionalinė mokėjimo agentūra (National Paying Agency)

Blindžių g. 17

LT-08111 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 252 6703

Fax: +370 5 252 6945

E-mail: info@nma.lt

<http://www.nma.lt/index.php?lang=2>

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:

Embassy of the United States of America

Office of Agricultural Affairs – (Covering Poland and Baltic States)

Warsaw, Poland

Dr. Piotr Rucinski – Senior Specialist

Ms. Jolanta Figurska – Senior Agricultural Marketing Specialist

Ph: (+48-22) 504 2336

Fax: (+48-22) 504 2320

E-mail: agwarsaw@usda.gov