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Report Highlights:

U.S. federal export certificates are valid in Guatemala. Processed food products must be registered with the Ministry of Health, and animal products require samples as part of the registration process. Pet food must be registered with the Ministry of Agriculture, but samples are not required. A certificate of analysis is required for pet food both for registration and for each shipment.

DISCLOSURE

This report was prepared by the Foreign Agricultural Service at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala, for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care has been taken in the preparation of this report, the information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since their 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 reach 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.

All links to Guatemalan government websites, laws, regulations, and norms will display in Spanish only.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Guatemala requires multiple export certificates for U.S. agricultural products to obtain import permits and clear customs. To receive preferential tariff treatment, products must be accompanied by a CAFTA-DR certificate. Plant and Animal Health Certificates, issued by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), are required under pre-agreed protocols and must include specific attestations depending on the product. The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issues export certificates for meat, poultry, pasteurized eggs, and egg products, while the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) issues certificates for dairy, table eggs, and further processed egg products. For seafood and aquaculture, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the Department of Commerce provides the necessary certificates. State authorities issue Certificates of Free Sale for the registration and commercialization of processed food products, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) also issues export certificates that Guatemala recognizes.

SECTION I. LIST OF ALL EXPORT CERTIFICATES REQUIRED BY GOVERNMENT (MATRIX)

The Vice Ministry of Plant and Animal Health and Regulations (VISAR) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MAGA) is the official entity that reviews all export certificates and issues import permits for food products, fresh or processed. In addition, if processed, a registration procedure must be followed for importing samples to acquire a permanent registration number with the Food Control Unit at the Ministry of Health (please refer to GAIN Guatemala 2025 FAIRS country report). For non-animal-origin processed food, the Ministry of Health is responsible for issuing the import permit. Below is a matrix of the Export Certificates required by the Government of Guatemala:

Product	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Government Authority
All	Certification of Origin	Name and Contact Information of Certifying Person or Company HS Classification Code Criteria for origin Date of the certification if unique or time range (one year) for the certification	CAFTA-DR preferential tariff imports	Customs Authority (SAT)
Meat and meat products	FSIS 9060-5 Meat and Poultry Export Certificate of Wholesomeness	Product complies with raising and processing requirements of country	Animal health, food safety, and certificate of free sale	Ministry of Agriculture (non-processed and processed) and Ministry of Health (processed or packed)
Pasteurized table eggs	FSIS 9060-5EP	Products comply with the requirements of countries	Food Safety	Ministry of Agriculture
Animal products	APHIS Veterinary Services (VS) Certificate	No risk material used in manufacturing	Animal health	Ministry of Agriculture

Product	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Government Authority
Dairy	AMS Grading and Sanitary Certification	Product complies with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)	Animal health and food safety	Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health
Table Eggs and Egg Products	AMS Grading and Sanitary Certification	Product complies with requirements of country	Animal health and food safety	Ministry of Agriculture
Pet Food	Certificate of Free Sale or FDA Export Certificate Certificate of Analysis	Product complies with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) Laboratory analysis for nutrient composition	Animal health Animal health	Ministry of Agriculture
Live animals	APHIS VS Certificate	Disease-free status for the originating zones	Animal health	Ministry of Agriculture
Plants and plant materials	Phytosanitary Certificate	Disease-free of specific quarantine pests	Plant health	Ministry of Agriculture
Fresh, refrigerated, or frozen plant or plant products	Phytosanitary Certificate	Disease-free of specific quarantine pests	Plant health Food safety	Ministry of Agriculture
Grains and flours	Phytosanitary Certificate Certificate of Free Sale (issued by state-level entities) FDA Food Export Certificate	Disease-free of specific quarantine pests Products are fit for human consumption Products are fit for human consumption	Plant health Food safety Food safety	Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Health

Product	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Government Authority
Fresh, refrigerated, or frozen seafood and aquaculture food and products	NOAA Certificate	Products are fit for humans consumption (U.S. origin)	Animal health and food safety	Ministry of Agriculture
Processed seafood and aquaculture products and fresh, refrigerated, or frozen (if packed for final retail)	Certificate of Free Sale issued by state level entities	Products are fit for human consumption	Food safety	Ministry of Health

PURPOSE OF SPECIFIC EXPORT CERTIFICATES:

Sanitary and/or Phytosanitary Certificate

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) issues export certificates to certify that U.S. products are free from pests and diseases of concern to Guatemala. The sanitary certificate ensures that animals and animal products were raised under previously agreed protocols and are free of specified diseases, with Veterinary Services (VS) of APHIS responsible for issuing these health export certificates. In addition, all meat and meat products must be accompanied by the FSIS-9060-5 Export Certificate, which includes language agreed upon with Guatemala. For plants and plant products, a phytosanitary certificate is required to confirm that shipments have been inspected and are free from quarantine pests, with Guatemala applying specific phytosanitary requirements for each product.

The phytosanitary certificate confirms that the shipment of plants or plant products was inspected and is not carrying pests that are quarantined in Guatemala. Guatemala has specific phytosanitary requirements per product.

Certificate of Free Sale or FDA Export Certificate

Most Certificates of Free Sale are issued by an official entity at the state level, and must indicate that the product is suitable for human consumption, if applicable. This certificate

indicates that the export company is complying with the country's regulations regarding wholesomeness, food quality, and food safety standards, in general. For commercial purposes, the Certificate of Free Sale is only required every 5 years, after accompanying the sample for registration purposes. Commercial shipments are granted import permits based on the registration number assigned.

FDA has signed memoranda of understanding for AMS and NOAA to certify certain FDA-regulated products. When describing this situation in a FAIRS report, please use the following language, as relevant:

- Firms exporting products from the United States are often asked by foreign customers or foreign governments to supply a written export certification for products regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). FDA may provide this certification in a form the agency determines appropriate. For food products, FDA provides written certification for exports in the form of certificates and lists of eligible exporters for specific products or destinations.
- For more information on FDA-Issued Export Certificates go to FDA's website for Food Export Certificates. Export Certificates include Certificate to a Foreign Government, Certificate of Exportability, Certificate of Free Sale, Certificate for Cosmetics, and health certificates for collagen and gelatin for products intended for export to the European Union.
- For certain exported food products, some foreign food safety authorities require certification in the form of publicly available lists of establishments eligible for export. For more information on FDA Food Export Lists go to FDA's website for Food Export Lists.

You can also view country specific information in FDA's export library.

USDA AMS Grading Certificate

This certificate is issued by USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. Though it is a grading certificate, Guatemala accepts it for both registration purposes at the Ministry of Health and import permit purposes at the Ministry of Agriculture. This certificate is issued for dairy, table eggs, and egg products (except for pasteurized eggs, which are supported by an FSIS Certificate).

SECTION II. SPECIFIC ATTESTATIONS REQUIRED ON EXPORT CERTIFICATES

Each export certificate may have a series of specific attestations that are required, according to the "risk analysis" of the importing country. Attestations on the sanitary and phytosanitary certificates are established by the Ministry of Agriculture. Each Ministry is responsible for authorizing the entry of a food product if it complies with its requirements. Compliance with

one of the two ministries does not imply import authorization. All paperwork and certificates must be original to clear Customs.
For high-risk products like meat, the Ministry of Agriculture has notified USDA of the country's requirements. Those requirements and attestations can be found on the FSIS Export Library. For lower risk products such as table eggs, please visit AMS website.

For phytosanitary-specific attestations, please ask your Guatemalan importer to access MAGA's specific requirements.

SECTION III. GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATE LEGAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To obtain an import permit in Guatemala, the following original import documents are required for any animal or plant products intended for food consumption:

1. **Certificate of Origin**
   - Issued by the U.S. producer or exporter, or by the Guatemalan importer, for tariff determination purposes.
   - Under CAFTA-DR, this certificate must be presented to the Customs Authority to qualify for preferential tariff treatment.
   - Preferential tariffs may be denied if the required information is incomplete or unclear, especially regarding the Harmonized Tariff System (HS) code.
   - Whenever possible, include the HS code assigned by U.S. Customs and Border Protection. If discrepancies arise, the certificate may be corrected multiple times during the importation process.

2. **Sanitary and/or Phytosanitary Certificate**
   - The sanitary certificate serves as the animal health certificate; the phytosanitary certificate serves as the plant health certificate.
   - These certificates must be issued by the official federal authority and sealed and signed by authorized inspectors.
   - APHIS issues plant and animal health certificates, while FSIS issues meat export certificates (covering both animal health and food safety).
   - For re-exports, the country-of-origin certificate (sanitary or phytosanitary) must be included, and the U.S. re-export certificate must clearly indicate the original country of origin.

3. **NOAA Export Certificate**
   - A NOAA export certificate is required for fisheries and seafood products.

4. **Commercial Invoice**
   - Must include exporter and recipient information, date, invoice number, product description, unit price, net and total weight, currency exchange rate, CIF value, and FOB value.

5. **Bill of Lading**
    - Required by Guatemala's Customs Authority (SAT).
    - If transshipment occurs, a transshipment letter from the port authority is mandatory. This letter is issued to the cargo company but must be presented by the Guatemalan importer to clear customs.

6. **Certificate of Free Sale**
    - Generally issued at the state level, confirming the food product is suitable for human consumption.
    - Required for processed foods that must be registered with the Ministry of Health for commercialization.
    - For meat products, Guatemala accepts the FSIS 9060-5 certificate.
    - For dairy and table eggs, Guatemala accepts the AMS Grading Certificate.

7. **Copies for Import License Process**
    - Copies of all documents should be sent in advance to the Guatemalan representative to help expedite the import license process.

Guatemalan law requires inspections at the point of entry as well as at the wholesale and retail levels to ensure the wholesomeness of food products. Primary processed foods must be registered with the authorities, while food additives are exempt from registration requirements.

The Central American Economic Integration Committee (COMIECO) Resolution 175-2006 eliminates the need for a phytosanitary certificate as a requirement for imports and exports of vegetable materials/products that are considered processed, such as the following:

- Vegetable fats and oils and their byproducts (crude or refined)
- Prepared or preserved vegetables, fruits, or nuts
- Dried vegetables, fruits, or nuts, coffee, tea, and extracts
- Cereals and vegetable products
- Raw materials used primarily in dyeing or tanning
- Prepared foods
- Miscellaneous edible preparations
- Beverages, spirits, and vinegar

Food ingredients classified as seeds under the Harmonized System (HS) code must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate confirming they are free of weeds; otherwise, even if processed, they will not be permitted entry into Guatemala. Product eligibility for import depends on a risk assessment of the exporting country, based on the presence or absence of specific pests or diseases in Guatemala. All fresh or processed animal products are considered high-risk, as are certain plant products, including fresh or dehydrated medicinal plants, ethnic fruits (fresh and dried), grains and flours, and ethnic or fresh vegetables. For fresh vegetable

products in the high-risk category (see Guatemala's 2022 FAIRS report), both a phytosanitary certificate and a certificate of free sale are required.

Guatemala enforces strict requirements for SPS certificates, basing export documentation on the exporting country's SPS status. Since March 2006, under CAFTA-DR, Guatemala has recognized the U.S. food safety inspection system as equivalent. As a result, the USDA FSIS Certificate of Wholesomeness (Form 9060-5) is accepted as valid for sanitary, microbiological, and free sale purposes for U.S. meats and meat products.

All original documents must accompany the product at the time of entry. Import licenses range in cost from US$1.25 to US$31, depending on the product's risk category, and are valid for 30 days. If the product has not departed from the U.S. port within that timeframe, the license can be revalidated for an additional 30 days.

Import forms are available online and must be filed by the importer. Strict requirements apply, and exporters must ensure all documentation is accurate to avoid delays or problems at the port of entry. Once submitted, the paperwork is first reviewed by the Food Safety Department within the Ministry of Agriculture. If approved, it is then processed by the relevant phytosanitary or sanitary departments. If rejected, the application will include a technical explanation of the issue, and the shipment may undergo inspection. In such cases, an evaluation or diagnostic review can be requested to reconsider the product's eligibility for import.

SECTION IV. OTHER CERTIFICATION/ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

APHIS websites will provide detailed information on the attestations on its export certifications.

FSIS will also provide detailed information on the required attestations to issue the FSIS 9060-5 form, which, in the case of Guatemala, fulfills the need of both a sanitary and food safety certification, for both raw and processed meat and products; Ministry of Health in Guatemala will also consider the 9060-5 form as valid enough for registration purposes of processed labeled meat products.

U.S. Radiation Monitoring

Guatemala requires attestation of radioactivity for domestic and imported food. For processed food, if the product has an irradiated ingredient, it must be spelled out in parenthesis after the listed ingredient. If the product is based on one ingredient only, from an irradiated raw material, it must be indicated in the front panel. The radiation symbol is optional.

Attachments:

No Attachments