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Report Name: Cold Chain Control Measures Expand Across South China

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Post: Guangzhou ATO

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Report Highlights:

Effective January 27, 2021, Guangzhou became the latest city to implement requirements for imported frozen food to pass through and test negative for COVID at a ‘centralized supervision warehouse’ within the city before being sold into the local market. The process, seen as largely duplicative, is part of cities’ moves to be seen as vigilant, but adds costs and time for cold chain items bound for local consumption. An unofficial translation of the measure is provided in the report.

Cold chain control measures expand across south China

Following the strict requirements released by Shenzhen city authorities in August 2020 (see report [Shenzhen Institutes New COVID-19 Measures for Imports of Meat and Seafood](#)) several Chinese cities, including Guangzhou, implemented similar policies requiring imported frozen food products destined to enter the city - for warehousing, processing or consumption - to enter a centralized supervision warehouse for additional COVID testing and disinfection. Contacts report that this duplicative testing and disinfection process adds both time and cost, reducing the margins, complicating logistics, and likely resulting in the backlog that is starting to emerge at some ports.

Under the new requirements issued by Guangzhou's COVID-19 Epidemic Prevention and Control Headquarters, effective January 27, 2021, 'any imported frozen food destined to enter storage, production and processing, sales or catering sectors must go through mandatory inspection (testing) and disinfection of the outer packaging at a centralized warehouse in Guangzhou city before being released to commerce.' Product destined for sale in another city is subject to rules within that city.

The General Administration of China Customs (GACC) is doing some testing of frozen food imports at the port-of-entry. Products destined for use in a city with centralized supervision warehouse system, like Guangzhou or Shenzhen, then must pass another COVID test and disinfection at a designated facility within the city. Contacts lamented that this redundancy of the efforts could add up to \$3,000 per container in some places like Guangzhou, which cut into their bottom line. The lack of central leadership coordinating the recognition of various local traceability QR codes, and an apparent unwillingness to do so for fear of culpability, is causing cities to enact these redundant testing measures to be seen as vigilant.

Though there are some similarities in cities' centralized cold storage systems, there are noteworthy differences. In Guangzhou, the city designated 28 warehouses; importers are responsible for covering the cost of the nucleic acid test, disinfection, and storage, and, if the results are reportedly positive, the product will be destroyed. By contrast, in Shenzhen, the government covers the cost of the nucleic acid test, the disinfection of inner and outer packaging, and storage fees within the 1 designated centralized warehouse in the city. No mention is made in the Shenzhen policy of what happens to product if the nucleic acid test is reportedly positive.

Centralized supervision warehouse systems are also in place in Dongguan, Foshan, Shanghai, and other cities around China.

An unofficial translation of the new inspection and handling procedures from Guangzhou follows below.

Announcement of Guangzhou COVID-19 Epidemic Prevention and Control Headquarters on Centralized Supervision of Imported Frozen Food (No. 12)

In order to further improve the prevention and control of imported frozen foods, in accordance with the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases" and its

implementation measures, "The Decision of the Standing Committee of the People's Congress of Guangzhou Municipality on the Prevention and Control of COVID-19 Epidemic ", hereby notified as follows on strengthening the prevention and control of imported frozen foods in our city:

1. Starting from January 27, 2021, the centralized supervision warehouse for imported frozen food (hereinafter referred to as the centralized supervision warehouse) established in our city would be fully put into use. Any imported frozen foods that intend to enter our city's storage, production and processing, sales, catering service and have obtained relevant customs declaration forms, inspection and quarantine certificates for imported frozen foods, must enter the centralized supervision warehouse; each carton will have mandatory inspection and disinfection of the outer packaging.
2. For imported frozen food entering the centralized supervision warehouse, the owner should make an appointment with each centralized supervision warehouse in advance (by phone, WeChat, etc.), and provides information related to the owner, customs declaration form, vehicle, driver and personnel on board, the sales destination of goods, etc. Then book the specific time for transport vehicles to enter the centralized supervision warehouse. Vehicles and personnel engaged in the transportation of imported frozen foods in the city shall be filed with the transportation department.
3. For imported frozen foods entering the centralized supervision warehouse, the out package of each carton (box) shall be inspected before entering the warehouse; the inner package and products of each batch shall be inspected based on certain portion; the inner surface of the container and outside package of each carton will have disinfection treatment as a preventive measure. After inspection and disinfection of the outer packages, below documents are required to move the products out of the centralized supervision warehouse: customs declaration form for imported products, the inspection and quarantine certificate of imported goods, the negative nucleic acid test report, the disinfection certificate, and the certificate of exit from the centralized supervision warehouse (hereinafter referred to as "Five Certificates"). After being notified by the centralized supervision warehouse, the owner shall pick up the products within the notified time.
4. For those imported frozen foods with positive nucleic acid test result, the corresponding batch shall be destroyed in accordance with relevant regulations; in accordance with the epidemiological investigation results and disposal guidelines, nucleic acid test and health management shall be carried out towards those personnel who may be in contact with the products.
5. Starting from January 27, 2021, cold storages other than the centralized supervision warehouse that are storing imported frozen foods, as well as the entities of food production, food sales, and restaurants that are handling imported frozen foods, must strictly inspect and retain the "five certificates"; those imported frozen foods that have not been tested and disinfected in a centralized supervision warehouse shall not be stored, produced, or sold in Guangzhou.
6. In violation of the provisions of this notice, imported frozen foods that should enter the centralized supervision warehouse but fail to do so, and those cannot provide the "five certificates", will be investigated and strictly punished in accordance with relevant laws and

regulations and relevant policies for epidemic prevention and control, and failure to follow the requirements of this announcement shall be included in the credit system.

7. The city's centralized supervision warehouse will be adjusted based on real time situation. After the adjusted list is submitted to the city's COVID-19 prevention and control headquarters for approval, it will be announced by the city's Market Supervision Bureau.

Guangzhou Centralized Supervision Warehouse (first batch) address: see the attached list.

Report and complaint hotline: 12345.

This notice will be implemented on January 27, 2021, and the suspension date will be announced separately.

Guangzhou COVID-19 Epidemic Prevention and Control Headquarters
January 19, 2021

Attachments:

No Attachments.