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**Report Highlights:**

This report provides insights into Serbian regulations and standards pertaining to food, agriculture, agricultural products, and foreign trade. It covers topics such as labeling, packaging, food additives, and import procedures. In the year 2023, Serbia adopted two amendments to the existing laws and introduced over a hundred by-laws, encompassing various rules and ordinances. Despite the significant rise in input costs for agricultural production, food prices, and the second summer drought in a row, Serbia is projected to maintain an adequate food supply for the domestic market and potentially have surplus quantities available for export in the coming year.

**DISCLAIMER:**

Recognize that while every possible care has been taken in preparing the report, include a statement that U.S. exporters work closely with their foreign customers and importers to ensure that they meet all of the requirements prior to shipment.

"This report was prepared by the FAS Belgrade Office, for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care has been 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, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped. FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCTS IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY."

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## **Executive Summary:**

Serbia is the largest agricultural market in the Western Balkans, with strong agricultural production and food processing tradition. The food processing industry accounts for approximately one-third of the entire processing industry in Serbia. Currently, there are more than 5,000 food businesses active in Serbia. Approximately 95 percent are micro, small, or medium-sized enterprises. The industry employs around 100,000 people and is one of the rare examples of sectors that have not been hit adversely by the economic crisis over the past few years. The largest subsectors by value are dairy, meat, fruits, vegetables, and the confectionery industry.

Serbia needs to make further changes to its regulatory policy, mainly in accordance with the 2023 European Commission (E.C.) Annual Progress Report for Serbia published on November 8, 2023, [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/serbia-report-2023\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/serbia-report-2023_en). According to the report Serbia made limited progress overall. The capacity to pursue key challenges in trade policy needs to be strengthened, in particular to move forward with accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), where again no progress was made. In October 2023, Serbia provided an updated list of actions to be taken in the context of the WTO accession process as part of the action plan on its remaining legislative alignment with the EU acquis. In the coming year, Serbia should in adopt a WTO-compliant law on genetically modified organisms, so as to move forward with remaining bilateral market access negotiations and to move towards finalization of its accession to the WTO.

Serbia has free trade agreements with the European Union, Turkey, and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) which consists of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan. It is also a signatory to the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) and Open Balkan Initiative Agreement (North Macedonia, Albania, and Serbia).

Total agricultural imports from the United States for CY2022 were valued at \$19.6 million, approximately 17 percent lower than in CY2021, when U.S. export was \$23.5 million. The major obstacle to stronger demand growth for U.S. agriculture and food products is the high customs tariffs (5-30 percent customs import tax) that are reducing U.S. market share in Serbia. U.S. agro-food exports consisted mainly of almonds, corn, sunflower seeds, vegetable planting seeds, dietetic foods, concentrated proteins without dairy fats, alcoholic drinks, frozen fish and seafood, snacks, and fruits.

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

### **Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM)**

The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Management (MAFWM) represents the specialized body of the central public administration with governmental jurisdiction in the fields of agriculture, including international and domestic agricultural trade, food processing, food safety, seed registration, fish quotas, rural development, environment, forestry, and water management.

### **Ministry of Environmental Protection**

The Ministry of Environmental Protection was created in 2017 and performs state administration tasks related to the basics of environmental protection, a system of protection and improvement of the environment, national parks, and inspection in the field of environmental protection, protection of water,

nature, and air, climate changes, management of chemicals and biocidal products and waste management.

### **Ministry of Health**

The Ministry of Public Health is responsible for overseeing the production and registration of drugs, food additives, and medical equipment. It is also responsible for public health as it relates to food and contaminants.

### **Ministry of Trade, Telecommunication, and Tourism**

Within the Serbian Ministry of Trade, Telecommunication, and Tourism, Sector for Market Inspection is responsible for inspecting food quality at the retail level.

### **Serbian Agriculture and Food Laws:**

As part of Serbia's E.U. integration process, it has adopted many new laws in agriculture and food, mainly in accordance with the *E.U. Acquis Communautaire*. Over the last eight years, Serbia has adopted 40 new laws relating to agriculture and food.

### **The following laws were adopted in 2009 ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia" 41/09)**

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:

- Law on Food Safety
- Law on Public Warehouses for Agriculture Products
- Law on Plant Health
- Law on Pesticides
- Law on Fertilizers
- Law on Agriculture and Rural Development
- Law on Livestock
- Law on Animal Welfare
- Law on Ethanol
- Law on Wine
- Law on Reproductive Material of Forest Trees
- Law on Genetically Modified Organisms
- Amendments to the Agriculture Law
- Law on Protection of Plant Breeders' Rights/UPOV

### **The following laws were adopted in 2010 ("Official Gazette R.S." 30/10)**

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:

- Law on Forests
- Law on Waters
- Law on Beer
- Law on Registration of Crop Varieties
- Law on Organic Production
- Amendments to the Veterinary Law

Law on Agriculture Extension and Expert Service  
Law on Plant Seeds

**The following law was adopted in 2011 ("Official Gazette R.S." 88/11)**

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:

Amendments on Changes to the Law on Protection of Plant Breeders' Rights

**The following laws were adopted in 2012 ("Official Gazette R.S." 93/12)**

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:

Amendments on Changes to the Law on Waters

Amendments on Changes Law on Livestock

Amendments on Changes Law on Wine

**The following law was adopted in 2013 ("Official Gazette R.S." 10/13)**

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:

Law on Incentives for Agriculture Production and Rural Development

**The following laws were adopted in 2014 <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:**

Law on Pre-Harvest Financing of Agricultural Production ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 128/14, becomes effective June 1, 2015)

Law on Protection and Sustainable Use of the Fishery Fund ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 128/14)

**The following laws were adopted in 2015 <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:**

Law on Forests ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 89/15)

Law on Strong Alcoholic Beverages ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 92/15)

Law on Wine ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 41/15)

Amendments to Changes Law on Agricultural Land ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 112/15)

**The following laws were adopted in 2016 <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:**

Amendments on Changes of the Law on Livestock ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 14/16)

Amendments on Changes of the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development/defining functioning of the IPARD Program in Serbia ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 101/16)

**The following law was adopted in 2017 <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:**

Amendments on Changes of the Law on Agriculture Land ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 80/17)

**The following laws were adopted in 2018 <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:**

Law on Waters and baseline for this law ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 47/18)

Amendments on Changes of the Law on Public Warehouses for Agriculture Products ("Official Gazette R.S." No.44/18)

**The following laws were adopted in 2019** <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:

Amendments on Changes to the Law on Food Safety ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 17/19)  
Amendments on Changes to the Law on Plant Health ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 17/19)  
Amendments on Changes to the Law on Pesticides ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 17/19)  
Amendments on Changes to the Law on *Plant Nutrition Products and Soil Enhancers* (fertilizers) ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 17/19)

In 2020, Serbia did not adopt any new law or amendments to the existing laws.

**The following law was adopted in 2021** <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/> :

Law on the Regulation on Agriculture Products ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 67/21).

**In 2023, Serbia adopted two amendments to the existing laws**

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>:

Amendments on Changes to the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development Incentives ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 35/23)  
Amendments on Changes to the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development Incentives ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 92/23)

**In 2023, Serbia also adopted 113 new rulebooks and ordinances**

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/>. The following are of particular interest:

- Rulebook on Amendments of the rulebook on Incentives in organic cattle production ("Official Gazette Republic of Serbia (R.S.)", No. 144/22);
- Rulebook on the list of control organizations authorized to perform control and certification activities in organic production in 2023 ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 02/23);
- Rulebook on Amendments of the rulebook on quality of the planting seed ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 013/23);
- Rulebook on the codex of a good agricultural practice ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 023/23);
- Rulebook on the list of approved substances ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 029/23);
- Rulebook on amendments to the rulebook of quality of minced meat, semi-processed and processed meat products ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 034/23);
- Rulebook on incentives for the preservation of animal genetic resources ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 044/23);
- Rulebook on packaging, declaring and labeling still wine, special types of wine and other wine products in production and retail trade ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 055/23);
- Rulebook on Amendments of the rulebook on the quality of spices, extracts and mixtures of spices ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 69/23);
- Rulebook on establishing the program for monitoring safety of animal feed and imported animal feed for 2023 ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 087/23);
- Ordinance on amendments to the decree on the distribution of incentives for agriculture production and rural development for 2023 ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 21/23);

- Ordinance on amendment of the decree on identifying agricultural and food products on which a special duty must be paid when imported and determining the specific amount of the special duty ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 042/23) and;
- Ordinance on the amendments to the decree of the financial support provided to the agricultural producers of sunflowers in CY2022 ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 089/23).

*The Law on Food Safety* ("Official Gazette R.S." No.41/09)

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni/> represents one of the main agricultural laws in Serbia. It governs all aspects of production, circulation, control, and consumption of food, general conditions for ensuring food and feed safety, rights, and responsibilities of persons performing food and feed businesses, an early warning system, hygiene, and quality of food and feed. The purpose of the law is to ensure a high level of consumer protection while facilitating the efficient functioning of the food trade. The law's adoption was necessary to harmonize Serbian regulations with E.U. regulations, Directive 178/2002/E.C. and other amended E.U. regulations on food safety and to comply with the World Trade Organization's Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

In 2019, Parliament adopted Amendments on Changes to the Law on Food Safety ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 17/19). The MAFWM worked on these amendments for over five years. The main changes included in the current Food Safety Law include the establishment of the Expert Council for Food Safety that will be composed of scientists, representatives of consumer associations, representatives of academia, and MAFWM and will function as a special adviser to the MAFWM on food safety issues and establishment of the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), as in the E.U.

The new Law on Food Safety will further define competencies between the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health and establish food safety regulations for food trade. The previous law did not cover official food safety regulations in retail, bakeries, and restaurants. Legal provisions relating to Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) are deleted, and The Law will only govern GMOs on Genetically Modified Organisms, which is in force.

The responsibility of food safety operators is strengthened, and the role of the competent authority is clearly defined. The new law also included a definition of the tasks under the responsibility of the Directorate for the National Reference Laboratory (DNRL). Other new features include: allowing the adoption of the number of rulebooks that could not be adopted according to the previous law; proposing specific measures for adaptation on requirements on the hygiene of food production and marketing in plants of small capacity/business establishments; multi-annual food and feed monitoring; changes in the system for performing official food safety control in accordance to E.U. regulations and terminology in the "Hygiene Package" (set of general provisions regulating food safety in the E.U.).

The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade (through its veterinary, phytosanitary, agricultural, and market inspection) is responsible for food safety and wholesomeness throughout each stage of primary production, processing, transportation, and import/export. The Ministry of Agriculture issues import approvals for foods of animal origin, veterinary drugs, seeds, planting materials, and pesticides. For other products, permits are not required. Sanitary Inspection (under the Ministry of Health) is responsible for the safety of novel foods, dietetic products, baby food, diet supplements, additives, and drinking water.

The MAFWM inspects the quality of food up until the moment the food is distributed to retail shops. Visual checks for products listed in the laws mentioned above (almost everything considered to be food) and additional safety checks are done using laboratory testing on essential ingredients. Visual inspections involve product identification (origin, type, quantity), determining if labeling and packaging requirements have been met, checking for the necessary statements containing the importer's name and address, the product's general appearance, taste, flavor, presence of residues, color, structure, and checking if the transportation requirements have been met. Specific ordinances define sampling procedures.

Quality control of imported products can be done after the import procedure has been completed and before retail distribution on the market. Inspection can also be done after the retail distribution in the store. The quality of individual groups of products is subject to specific rulebooks.

The following is a list of several rulebooks that determine quality:

- Rulebook on the quality of minced meat, semi-processed and processed meat products ("Official Gazette Republic of Serbia (R.S.)" No. 50/19 and 34/23);
- Rulebook on the quality of milk products and starter cultures ("Official Gazette R.S." No.33/10, No.69/10, No. 43/13 and No. 34/14);
- Rulebook on the quality of raw milk ("Official Gazette R.S." No.21/09 and 106/17)
- Rulebook on the quality of honey, honey products and other bee products ("Official Gazette R.S." No.101/15);
- Rulebook on the quality and other requirements for beer ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 145/14);
- Rulebook on the quality of animal feed ("Official Gazette R.S." No.27/14, 25/15, 39/16, and 54/17);
- Rulebook on the quality of natural mineral water, spring water, and table water ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 43/13)
- Rulebook on the quality of raw coffee, coffee products, coffee substitutes, and similar products ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 159/20);
- Rulebook on the quality of fish, crabs and shellfish ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 51/21);
- Rulebook on the quality of fruits and vegetables ("Official Gazette SCG" No.12/05, "Official Gazette R.S." No.128/20 and 130/21);
- Rulebook on the quality of sugar ("Official Gazette SCG" 56/03 and No.4/04 and ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 88/17);
- Rulebook on wine production, wine quality and wine with geographical indicator ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 87/11 and 84/18);
- Rulebook on the quality of strong alcoholic drinks ("Official Gazette" R.S. No. 74/10 and 107/21);
- Rulebook on the quality of fruit juices, fruit concentrates, powder fruit juices, fruit nectars, and other related products ("Official Gazette" R.S. No. 103/18 and 84/20) and;
- Rulebook on the quality of non-alcoholic drinks ("Official Gazette" RS 88/17 and 124/20).

*The Amended Law on Plant Health* ("Official Gazette R.S." No.17/19) is harmonization with E.U. regulations. The new law governs protection and improvement of plant health; measures for protection, detection, prevention of spreading, control, and eradication of harmful organisms; phytosanitary controls and requirements for production, processing, imports, storage, and trade in plants, plant products; requirements for prescribed facilities, as well as conditions to perform activities in protection of plant

health. This law opens the possibility that in addition to the phytosanitary inspectors, the inspection of consignments intended for export can also be carried out by an authorized legal entity according to the relevant international standard.

The law also envisages the establishment of the national reference phytosanitary laboratory and introduces controls based on risk assessment. The adoption of the law was necessary to harmonize with E.U. regulations, the International Plant Protection Convention, and the Agreement on Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the WTO.

*The Amended Law on Plant Protection Products (pesticides)* ("Official Gazette" No.17/19) is also harmonizing this area with E.U. regulations. With the new E.U. regulations in plant protection products, most of the process of approving plant protection products has been moved from the national level of the member state to the E.U. level. This law governs control, circulation, imports, and application of plant protection products in agriculture and forestry.

The law also established a national reference laboratory for residue testing. The laboratory must have technical and professional capacity to perform tests in accordance with the accreditation of SRPS ISO/IEC 17025:2006, the standards of good laboratory practice (GLP), or in accordance with the guidelines of good experimental practice. The Directorate for National Reference Laboratories is responsible for registering and controlling pesticides (see Appendix I, #16 for contact information). Pesticide users must be educated in the use of pesticides. According to this law, farmers must receive adequate training for the safe use of pesticides. Those conducting training must teach farmers about the safe application, handling, disposal, and transportation of plant protection products and the development of awareness of the potential threats to human health and the environment.

*The Amended Law on Plant Nutrition Products and Soil Enhancers (fertilizers)* ("Official Gazette R.S." 17/19) regulates classification, quality, and labeling, phytosanitary control, sampling in circulation, imports, application, and testing of plant nutrition products and soil enhancers. With the amended law Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM) wanted to remove most of the defects of the previous law, which includes duplication in making decisions on eligibility for wholesale and retail trade facilities, as well as import and registration decisions in registration of the distributors and importers. It also provides a more precise definition of the conditions for accreditation that the official laboratories must fulfill for testing fertilizers. The new law facilitates exports of Serbian plant nutrition products, introduces labeling in accordance with E.U. requirements (label E.C. fertilizer), and helps harmonize Serbian requirements with E.U. regulations and the Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement of the WTO.

*The Law on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)* ("Official Gazette R.S." No.41/09) governs the production, trade, and commercial growing of GMO crops in Serbia. The law also regulates the basic conditions for using GMOs in closed systems and the deliberate release into the environment. The law currently prohibits all commercial use of GMO crops and is an obstacle for Serbia to become a WTO member. Serbia would need to establish a transparent risk-based system for reviewing/approving biotech products.

*The Law on Organic Production* ("Official Gazette R.S." 30/10) further harmonizes Serbian legislation with E.U. ordinances governing organic production and labeling. The law covers production,

processing, labeling, storing, transporting, and trade internally and internally of organic products (vegetable and animal products). The law regulates production methods and organic farming practices and sets the system of controlling and certifying the whole chain of organic production.

With changes and amendments to the *Veterinary Law* ("Official Gazette R.S." 91/05, 30/10, 93/12, and 17/19), Serbia is getting closer to the E.U. standards and is improving the conditions for the export of animals and animal products to the E.U. The amended law sets new conditions for establishing centers for storing and distributing semen for artificial insemination, defines responsibilities for the National Reference Laboratory, establishes a system of alert in the case of contagious diseases and defines the measures that will be undertaken, sets out the system of identification and registration of animals and introduces other changes to harmonize requirements with E.U. rules. The *Veterinary Law* ("Official Gazette R.S." 91/05) from 2005, which defines animal health and welfare protections, is still in effect in Serbia. It identifies animal diseases that are subject to preventative measures, detection, containment, and eradication. The law deals with diseases transmittable to humans, the veterinary sanitary control and the requirements for production and circulation of animals and their products, edible animal products and animal feed, and the requirements for engagement in the practice of veterinary medicine.

*The Law on Livestock* ("Official Gazette R.S." No.41/09, 93/12, and 14/16) regulates this important agribusiness sector. The *Law on Livestock* brought substantial changes in organization and production methods in the industry through enabling the formation of breeders' associations and organizations with special authorizations, thus ensuring the direct influence of producers on the livestock breeding selection criteria and subsequently increased productivity of farm animals. MAFWM controls the activities of these associations and organizations through the Registration Body and provides information on membership conditions to interested breeders.

*The Law on Animal Welfare* ("Official Gazette R.S." No.41/09) regulates animal welfare, as well as the treatment of animals during the killing, keeping, raising, circulating, transporting, slaughtering, and experimenting. The law facilitates exports of Serbian animals and products of animal origin by helping Serbia harmonize its requirements with those of the E.U. on keeping and transporting animals. The adoption of the law brings the Serbian requirements into conformity with the rules of the OIE, E.U. Commission Decisions, and the E.U. Council recommendations.

*Law on the Protection and Sustainable Use of the Fishery Fund* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 128/14) regulates the catch, protection, and trade in fish and the fishery fund that defines this sector as a renewable natural resource. The law sets out a system for issuing special permits for recreational fishing within the boundaries of protected areas and improves the management of fishery resources, including the protection and sustainable use of fish stocks.

*Law on Regulation of the Agriculture Products Market* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 67/21). In July 2021, to harmonize Serbian agriculture policy with E.U. Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), the National Parliament adopted the new *Law on Regulation of the Agriculture Products Market*. The law defines a set of requirements related to the sale of agricultural products on the domestic market, including special requirements for specific sectors. For the first time in Serbia, this law ensures better security of agriculture products and the food supply on the market. It officially regulates international trade if it is necessary to intervene in extreme situations.

This is the first time that other government organizations can purchase or sell agricultural commodities on the market. Until now, it was only possible for the State Commodity Reserves to do this (for their own needs). For the first time in Serbia, this law ensures better security of agriculture products and the food supply on the domestic market. It officially regulates international trade if it is necessary to intervene in extreme situations.

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

### **General requirements:**

In 2020, Serbia adopted a new amendment to the "Rulebook on Declaring, Labeling and Advertising of Food" ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 118/20, 17/22 and 23/22)

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/pravilnici/>. The new rulebook allows Serbia to fully harmonize food-labeling rules with European standards (E.U. Regulation No. 1169/2011).

The new rulebook contains specifics on declaring, labeling, and marketing packed and unpacked food. It defines general conditions on required information about food and the responsibilities of food businesses. The rulebook includes a list of substances that can cause allergies and/or intolerance; shows additional food information that must be presented at restaurants and food shops; mandates the size of letters on declarations and the general rules for declarations made related to unpacked food. The rulebook regulates the labeling requirements for packed and unpacked foods designated for consumer or public food consumption in Serbia. According to this regulation, a label must be present on retail and bulk packaged foods. It must indicate the following:

- expiration date,
- type and content of food additives,
- type and content of added vitamins, minerals, and
- other ingredients added to enrich the product's nutritional value.

All food products must have labels in the Serbian language. Stickering is permitted.

For each type of food product, there is a specific ordinance that spells out labeling requirements. According to the new rulebook on "Rulebook on Declaring, Labeling and Advertising of Food" ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 118/20), a label must contain the following information:

- 1) Product name
- 2) List of ingredients
- 3) List of additional ingredients for the production
- 4) Quantities of ingredients
- 5) Product net weight
- 6) Expiration date
- 7) Storage conditions and mode of usage if necessary
- 8) Importers or dealer's name and complete address in Serbia
- 9) Country and place of origin for shipped food
- 10) Instructions for correct use of food
- 11) Amount of alcohol for beverages that contain more than 1.2% v/v

- 12) Nutrition declaration
- 13) Lot or series number
- 14) Class or category of food

If the original label is in English (e.g., standard U.S. label) or any other language, the seller must prepare stick-on labels with a translation to accompany the imported products. The importer must place translated labels on the product before retail distribution.

Bulk packaged foods designated for bulk sale or in the public facilities for food consumption must contain the declaration with the following information: product's name and brand name, if any, product net-weight (mass or volume), and expiration date. The declaration needs to have the importer's name and complete address, country of origin, and the country from which the food was shipped for imported food products. According to this ordinance, the label must be noticeable, visible, clear, and legible. Information on the label must be printed in letters not smaller than 1.2 mm, and for products up to 80 cm<sup>2</sup>, letters must be 0.9 mm or bigger.

If vitamins are added, the label must indicate "enriched with vitamins." If the manufacturing and packaging companies are not the same, the label must indicate the company that performed the packaging.

### **Specific Labeling Requirements:**

Section No. 4 of the rulebook specifies what can be added as voluntary information on food (how the voluntary information must be specified, how it will be printed on the declaration). Suppose products were artificially colored and conserved by preservatives. In that case, this must be indicated right below the product's name, e.g., "artificially colored" or "conserved by preservative", and which chemicals were used must also be indicated. Claims such as "light" and "reduced" are permitted. However, generally, labels must not contain words, pictures and drawings, and health-related information that could mislead consumers regarding the product's origin, quantity, and quality.

Additives must be marked on the declaration by category and name or the additive's "E" number (Preservative-Sodium Benzoate or preservative E 211), except for the category of "modified starch," which has no additive denotation or "E" number. When modified starch may contain gluten, the origin of the starch must be indicated on the declaration (wheat, barley, rye, and oat). For additives belonging to the acid category and those containing the word "acid" within the actual name, it is enough to denote the additive without the category. The description of the nutritional values may contain data about the following components: starch, monounsaturated fatty acids, polyunsaturated fatty acids, cholesterol, minerals, and vitamins.

Food samples shipped to Serbia do not need to be labeled. However, all the packaging of shipped sample products should be clearly marked: "Samples - not for sale."

For food containing or derived from genetically modified substances, see the Law on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) ("Official Gazette, 41/09) <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni>.

According to the "Rulebook on Declaring, Labeling and Advertising of Food" ("Official Gazette R.S.", No. 118/20, 17/22 and 23/22) <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/pravilnici/> labeling requirement for

plant-based meat/dairy alternatives information on food is voluntarily, and it must be provided: 1) in a manner that does not deceive the final consumer, in accordance with Article 4 of this Rulebook; 2) have to be an accurate, clear and easy to understand; and 3) to be based on relevant scientific data, when necessary.

Amendments adopted in the new "Rulebook on Declaration, Labeling, and Marketing of Food" determine the conditions and terms for the use of the label "fasting" on food products and more precisely determine the use of the label related to gluten-free food. It is specified that the label "fasting" can be stated only on food that is not from warm-blooded animal origin, nor is a food of that origin used at any stage of its production and processing. Also, the label "gluten-free" may only be indicated if the gluten content of the food as a finished product is less than 20 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg). This represents a further harmonization of the Serbian legislation with the E.U. specifically with the Regulation of the European Union No. 2018/775.

Also, amendments of this rulebook adopted in 2022 are regulating that the food ingredient or ingredients must make up more than 50 percent of the food so that consumers can associate the name of the food with the ingredient. These amendments are also stating that on the declaration of the product it must be specified what is the country of the origin and if this do not correspond to the country of the origin of the main food ingredient, it is necessary: 1) to specify the country of origin of the main ingredient, or 2) state that the country of the origin of the main ingredient is different than the country of the food.

Nutritional declarations allowed nutritional statements and conditions for their use are regulated by Appendix 7 of the Rulebook for the "Declaration, Labeling and Marketing of Food" ("Official Gazette" R.S. No. 19/17). Nutritional declarations are mandatory when a declaration contains a nutritional statement such as low calorie, low fat, high caffeine (>150 mg/l), low sugar, enriched with vitamins. Otherwise, they are voluntary. The rulebook does not regulate the appearance of the nutritional declaration but rather the content. Thus, the format of the U.S. "nutritional facts" label is acceptable. Part of the text of the food product name may contain the following statements: "with sweetener" (if a product contains one or more sweeteners); "with sugar and sweetener addition" (if one or more different sugars and sweeteners were added to the product); "contains phenylalanine" (if the product contains aspartame-E591); "excessive usage may cause laxative effect" (if the product contain more than 10 percent additional polys). These statements need to be highlighted. The rulebook also contains a list of the daily reference intake of vitamins and minerals (for adults), reference daily intake of energy, selected food ingredients that are not vitamins and minerals (for adults), and the conversion factors for energy values.

Further details about labeling food and certain specific food products (e.g., beef, wine, fruit juice, etc.) can be obtained from the FAS office at the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade (for contact information, please see Appendix II).

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

The Law on Packaging and Packaging Waste Management was adopted in 2009 ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 36/09), with an amendment adopted in 2018 ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 95/18)

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/zakoni>. The law brings Serbian requirements into compliance with the E.U. directive on packaging and waste material. The law regulates the use of secondary materials, manages their collection and processing and storage conditions. It does not regulate materials that come into contact with food.

Packaging requirements are subject to specific ordinances for each type of food. For example, the packaging material for raw coffee packed in ½ kg units must weigh less than 50g per square meter. The packaging requirements for different foods are comprehensive and are regulated by the rulebook on quality control of these products (meat, dairy products, fruit juices, fish, etc.).

### **Packaging Sustainability Measures:**

The Law regulates the collection and recycling of already used packaging materials on Waste Material Handling and by the Rulebook on Secondary Material Collection, Transport, Storage Conditions, and Handling ("Official Gazette R.S." No.98/10) <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/pravilnici/>. Communal waste management, including food and beverage packaging material, is enforced by local and municipal authorities.

According to the Law on Packaging and Packaging Waste Management, the basic principles of packaging and packaging waste management are:

- 1) division of responsibilities of all economic entities in accordance with the "polluter pays" principle during the product life cycle;
- 2) prevention, i.e., reduction of packaging and packaging waste, as well as their harmfulness to the environment;
- 3) reuse of packaging, recycling and other forms of reuse and reduction of final disposal of packaging waste and;
- 4) voluntary agreement between parties on packaging waste management.

According to the law, packaging must be designed and manufactured so that when it becomes packaging waste, it enables the cycling of materials used in the production of that packaging in a certain mass percentage. The values of mass percentages depend on the packaging material. The basic criteria for sustainable packaging for recycling are determined by the Serbian standard and refer to:

- 1) control of design, the composition of packaging and process of its production;
- 2) existence of available recycling technology and;
- 3) release into the environment, because of the recycling process.

According to the law, the national targets for packaging and packaging waste management are determined by the Packaging Waste Reduction Plan. The plan contains national targets related to collecting packaging and packaging waste, reuse and recycling of packaging waste.

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

Serbia's regulations on food additives were changed in 2015 by adopting the new rulebook on Use of Food Additives" ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 53/18)

<http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/pravilnici/>. According to the new rulebook, a list of additives can be used in the food processing process. According to the rulebook, additives are substances that are not foods (regardless of their nutritional value) but are added to foods during processing because of their effect on the food's organoleptic characteristics. Substances added to enrich nutritive value and salt are not considered additives. Additives can be added to foods if approved and listed in the "List of approved additives" provided in the above ordinance (approximately 500 additives in total). The quantity used must be in accordance with specific regulations for each group of products. Additives must not affect/decrease a food product's nutritional value or significantly change the taste and flavor of products unless this is the intent. They also must not create toxins in products during processing, storage, or use. They must be identifiable, which means that their type and quantity in products can be tested unless they were removed or destroyed during processing. Additive usage generally must be justified from a technical standpoint. Approved additives are listed in Section B and are divided into three groups: colors, sweeteners, and other additives (except colors and sweeteners).

According to the Rulebook on the "Declaration, Labeling and Marketing of Food ("Official Gazette" R.S. No. 19/17), additives must be specified on the food label, mentioning the category and name of the additive or its E number. The label must clearly indicate the following:

- The additive's name according to the group of additives or mixture name, including its usage and brand name, if any;
- The manufacturer's name and complete address;
- The date of manufacturing (day/month/year) and "best before" date;
- The product's net weight (mass or volume) in metric units;
- For additives, the category and name of the additive or its E number (preservative – sodium-benzoate or preservative E 211) must be included;
- Additive carriers (e.g., ethanol) must be declared;
- For additive mixtures: List additive names in order of their predominance compared to product's net weight. If certain additives can be used only in limited quantity, the quantity must be declared;
- Name of the country of origin-if imported.

The product's name and the manufacturer's name must be printed in larger fonts. Labels must indicate the company that did the packaging (name and address) if different from the manufacturer. Sodium nitrite, potassium, and saltpeter mixtures used for pickling may be sold but only in original packaging and must be marked as "warning – poison" and "keep in dry place."

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

All imported food products into Serbia must comply with domestic rules on pesticides and other contaminants. Serbia is a member of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CODEX), and maximum

residue limits (MRLs) are generally recognized for imported foodstuffs. In 2018, Serbia adopted a new rulebook on "Maximum Residue Limits of Pesticides" ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 22/18 and 90/18), <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/pravilnici/> describing residue limits for pesticides and other contaminants (e.g., hormones, antibiotics, and mycotoxins) which can be found in food.

The Rulebook on the "Maximum allowed quantities of pesticide residues in food and feed." ("Official Gazette R.S." No.25/10 and 28/11) <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/dokumenti/pravilnici/>, defines the maximum permitted levels of pesticide residues in food and feed as substances used for the protection of agricultural products against diseases and pests. Lists of food and feed, maximum allowed residue limits, and active substances per mg/kg are listed in the attachments to this rulebook. These lists include the different pesticides, their commercial names, chemical names, and maximum tolerances in milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) by food and type of food.

U.S. exporters can get information on Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) through the Rulebook on Maximum Residue Limits on Pesticides. Since none of these are available in English, U.S. exporter must check through their local importer or agent or through FAS Belgrade Office for this information.

Food contaminants are listed as lead, cadmium, mercury, zinc, tin, copper, arsenic, iron, and other metals, and nonmetals. The ordinance provides a table with maximum residue limits for 43 different foods (expressed in mg/kg). Hormones and antibiotic residues are generally not allowed in food products. Maximum residue limits of mycotoxins are also regulated for grains, flour, legumes, beans, nuts, coffee, roasted cocoa, and peanuts. These lists are available from the FAS office in Belgrade (see Appendix II).

Serbia has a list of approved pesticides and fertilizers that can be imported and traded. These lists can be obtained from the Phytosanitary Department/Import and Registration of Pesticides at the Ministry of Agriculture (see Appendix II). The Rulebook on the "Request Forms and Content for Registering Distributors and Importers of Plant Protection Products and the Content of this Register" ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 5/10) regulates how distributors and importers of fertilizers can be added to the official register. Serbia also adopted the new rulebook on "Packaging Conditions of Fertilizers" ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 13/10), which indicates how fertilizers should be packed, depending on whether they are in a liquid or a solid formulation.

## **Section VI. Other Requirements, Regulations, and Registration Measures:**

Importers of live animals and products of animal origin must request import approval from the Serbian Ministry of Agriculture (see Appendix I for contact). Serbian import requirements are in accordance with the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) requirements. Serbia has been a member of the OIE since May 2003.

The Rulebook on "General and Specific Conditions for Hygiene of Food at any Phase of Production, Processing and Trade" ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 72/10, 62/18) regulates hygiene in all phases of food production processing and trade. Appendix I of this rulebook includes a list of microbiological criteria for different kinds of food products.

Certification and documentation: live animals, meat, and dairy products require veterinary certification, while seeds, fruits, and vegetables require a phytosanitary certificate issued by the exporting country's relevant authorities (e.g., USDA/FSIS or USDA/APHIS). Special certification is needed for veterinary drugs, demonstrating the drugs have been approved and used in the country of origin. Information can be obtained from the Serbian Ministry of Agriculture (Appendix I).

Foods that are subject to veterinary and phytosanitary inspections can enter thru all border crossings where veterinary and phytosanitary border inspection posts exist. Importers should always inform relevant border inspection posts at the point of entry for every shipment that must be accompanied by the import approvals issued by the Serbian Ministry of Agriculture. The inspection services are charged to the importers as per a published, official price list. Inspections will cost more if they are performed after regular working hours and/or on weekends and holidays.

Serbia has specific guidance on the procedure for "Official Mixed Origin at Import" ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 44/18). The number of imported food and feed samples in Serbia was drastically reduced to approximately 150 controls per month versus sampling every shipment (8,000-10,000 controls per month). Now, sampling at the border focuses on products imported for the first time into Serbia, products that have changed their labels, products not tested in the country of origin for more than six months, or products coming from countries that have been identified as high risk based on prior problems. According to this decree, fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, grain and milling products, raw coffee and teas are sampled every three months regardless of the country of origin. The importer must provide the following required import documents: an invoice, the specifications of the imported products, a customs declaration, information on the destination of the goods until the customs procedure is completed, any prior official reports regarding the same type of product, and any official results from prior sampling of the same type of product.

### **Foreign Trade and Customs Policies**

*The Law on Foreign Trade* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 36/09, 36/11, 88/11 and 89/15) regulates foreign trade in accordance with the E.U. and WTO rules. The Law is in principle designed to promote free trade of goods and services. Per this law, restrictions and import bans may be applied only when they are needed to protect public health or guard the domestic market against subsidized or dumped products.

*The Law on Customs Tariff* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 95/18, 91/19, 144/20, 118/21 and 138/22) and Decree on "Harmonization of Customs Tariff Nomenclature" that is updated every year. This decree was adopted for the first time in November 2012 as part of implementing the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) between Serbia and the E.U.

Serbia applies the Harmonized System (H.S.) to its tariff schedule. Customs tariffs for agricultural products from third countries range from zero to 30 percent of imported values, with additional levies and seasonal taxes based on the unit weight being applied to some agricultural products (for some fresh fruits and vegetables) only from May to September each year. The harmonization of Serbian customs tariffs was necessary to facilitate customs clearance with E.U. countries among Serbia's key trading partners and assist with the WTO negotiation process. The Decree on the "Harmonization of the

Customs Tariff Nomenclature", established 9,706 tariff lines which are now harmonized with the E.U.'s customs tariff nomenclature. Tariff lines for agricultural commodities are in Chapters 1-24.

Serbia's tariff rates fall into six groups:

- 1) the standard tariff rates that applies to the U.S. imports;
- 2) the tariff rates for E.U. countries (according to the Stabilization and Association Agreement signed in 2008);
- 3) tariff rates for signatory countries of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) signed in 2006, which include Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldavia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina and UMNİK-Kosovo;
- 4) tariff rates for signatory countries of the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) signed in 2009 which include Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Lichtenstein;
- 5) tariff rates as per Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with the Russian Federation, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, and
- 6) tariff rates for products from Turkey (as per a Free Trade Agreement signed in 2009).

Serbia is not yet a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Still, it has been harmonizing its legislation with WTO requirements, including food safety and phytosanitary regulations to advance the accession process. Work still needs to be done on its legislation regarding genetically modified organisms to bring it into compliance with WTO and E.U. requirements. Serbia is a member of the CODEX Alimentarius, the European Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), the Union of Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the European Cooperative Program for Crop Genetic Resources Networks (ECP/GR); and is a signatory of the Aarhus Convention and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

### **Customs and Taxation**

With the amended Customs Law and the Law on Customs tariffs, Serbia passed several implementing legislative acts. The legislation has been amended to align with the E.U. *Acquis*, and some simplified procedures have been set up (i.e., summary declaration procedures and a simplified declaration). Serbia has adopted a new law on free trade zones, offering tax breaks and simplified procedures while enabling foreign-owned companies to establish and manage free trade zones in Serbia.

Overall, Serbia has reached a relatively good level of alignment with the E.U. customs *Acquis*. Significant improvements have been noted in controlling and managing preferential trade measures (by origin). This is the result of the existence of computerized customs procedures and intensified training of customs officers. Concerning taxation, taxes are applied at the same rates for locally produced and imported goods. Serbia's value-added tax (VAT) for non-essential products is 20 percent. In contrast, the VAT on essential agricultural and food products (e.g., bread, flour, milk and dairy products, sugar, edible oil from sunflower, corn, soy, rapeseed, olives, animal or plant origin fat, honey, frozen, processed, fresh fruits and vegetables, meat and meat products, fish, eggs, grains, oilseeds, sugar beet, seeds, planting material, cattle feed, pesticides, and fertilizers) is 10 percent.

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

Alcoholic beverages, wine, non-alcoholic beverages, and tobacco products are subject to specific taxation rules issued by the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance issues excise stamps, which must be included on the packaging before import into Serbia (please see Appendix I, #6 for contact information). Import of alcoholic beverages, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages does not require an import permit, but they must meet the quality controls before they can be imported. In 2009, Serbia adopted a new Law on Ethanol, in 2010 adopted a new Law on Beer, and in 2015 a new Law on Wine and a Law on Strong Alcoholic Beverages. From 2011 to 2015, several rulebooks were adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture to implement the following laws:

*The Law on Brandy and Other Alcohol Drinks* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 41/09) is superseded by the new *Law on Strong Alcoholic Beverages* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 92/15) that went into effect on January 1, 2016. This new law regulates the production, trade, geographical designation, quality, description, labeling, and transport of strong alcoholic drinks. It envisages simpler and cheaper production of strong alcoholic beverages (mostly fruit brandies called "rakija"). According to the new law, strong alcoholic spirits are beverages intended for human consumption with specific organoleptic characteristics and a minimum alcoholic volume of 15 percent. According to the law, individual producers can legally sell domestically alcoholic beverages in two ways:

- 1) by selling it in bulk to registered legal entities that then process, bottle, and trade the product or;
- 2) by registering themselves with the Ministry of Agriculture to trade domestically produced strong alcoholic beverages.

It is expected that the new law will aid small producers in selling their products legally. Previously, the registration and conditions for producing strong alcoholic beverages were relatively complicated and burdensome, so most individuals did not complete the whole process. Reportedly, the law also will facilitate the registration and regulation of geographic indications and improve the intellectual property protections in this area.

*The Law on Wine* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 41/09) and the Law on Amendments on Changes to the Law on Wine ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 41/09 and 93/12) regulate various aspects of production and sales of wine. The regulations cover winemaking practices, classification and labeling, wine-production potential, documentation of wine industry activities and the duties of the enforcement agencies/inspections.

*The Law on Ethanol* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 41/09) regulates ethanol production, marketing, export, and import. The law introduced the E.U.'s standards and regulatory framework to facilitate ethanol exports to the E.U. and the regional market. The regulation governs quality control and was intended to facilitate usage of Serbian ethanol across various industries (food processing, alcohol beverages production, medical, pharmaceutical cosmetics etc.), as well as attract new investment in

ethanol production and trade. The law prescribes methods of registering production, packaging, marketing, quality controls, and the responsibilities of controlling agencies/inspections. Several by-laws are still needed to more precisely regulate the technical aspects of ethanol production and trade and market conditions.

*The Law on Beer* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 30/10) is a legal framework for regulating beer production and sales and is intended to make Serbia's beer industry more export competitive. The law allows only registered breweries to produce beer. Serbia's MAFWM maintains a public register of breweries and data on annual production, consumption of raw materials, and production of final products.

### **Section VIII. Trademarks, Brand Names, and Intellectual Property Rights:**

Serbia is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and signatory to several conventions such as the Paris Convention Treaty on Patent Cooperation and the Madrid Agreement on International Registration of Marks. In 2018, Serbia adopted a new Amended Law on Geographical Indications of Origin ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 18/10 and 44/18). This law regulates the registration and legal protection of geographical indications of origin (G.I.s). G.I.s in the Republic of Serbia is registered based on the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration (The Lisbon Agreement [https://www.wipo.int/treaties/en/registration/lisbon/summary\\_lisbon.html](https://www.wipo.int/treaties/en/registration/lisbon/summary_lisbon.html)). G.I.s can be used to mark natural, agricultural, food, and industrial products, traditional handicrafts, and even services.

Trade or service marks receive protection for a 10-year term from the filing date, with the opportunity for the time to be extended. Serbia applies the Law on Trademarks ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 104/09, 99/11, 119/12, 29/16, 66/19 and 123/21) governing the manner of acquisition and the protection of rights concerning marks used in the trade of goods and/or services. The Law on Patents ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 99/11, 113/17, 95/18, and 66/19) legally protects and regulates the patents and rights of the inventors. In contrast, the Law on Copyrights ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 104/09, 99/11, 119/12, and 29/16) regulates copyright matters. Domestic and foreign applications must be submitted to the Intellectual Property Office (see Appendix II).

As a part of its E.U. and WTO harmonization efforts, Serbia adopted the *Law on Protection of Plant Breeder's Rights/UPOV* ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 41/09) and the Law on Amendments on Changes of Law on Protection of Plant Breeders' Rights/UPOV ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 88/11). Both laws regulate the protection of intellectual property rights of plant variety breeders, conditions for domestic breeders to register new plant varieties, conditions for the safe circulation of foreign protected varieties in the domestic market. The law improved the availability of new domestic and foreign plant varieties, which should positively affect agricultural production. Adopting the law was necessary to harmonize Serbia's legal environment with the Convention of the Union for Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) and represented a precondition for membership of Serbia in UPOV. Serbia became a full member of UPOV in 2013, and it adopted all the required legislation. This law is also important for harmonizing with E.U. legislation and with the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) of the WTO.

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

Foreign suppliers can export food products to Serbia using a locally registered office or a local company, shipping agent, or forwarding agent registered for import activities. It is common for agents to help with food import regulations. Import approvals for agricultural commodities should be obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Management (MAFWM). Import approvals are required for live animals, products of animal origin with more than 2 percent of an animal component, genetics, veterinary drugs, seeds, and planting materials or pesticides. Prior approval is not required for other food products.

Standard documents such as a customs declaration, commercial invoice, bill of lading, and import approval (for the products mentioned above) must accompany all shipments as well as the relevant health certificates issued by the competent authority in the country of origin (e.g., a veterinary certificate for meat and meat products, a phytosanitary certificate for fruits, vegetables, seeds, planting material). Import documents can be in English and customs clearance usually takes 3-7 days. In addition to a document check, veterinary and phytosanitary inspections are conducted at select border crossing points. Foods of animal origin and veterinary drugs must have prior import approvals from the Veterinary Department of the Serbian MAFWM. Forms for import notification are available online at the Ministry of Agriculture's website or obtained from the Ministry's Veterinary Department or the Department for International Trade and Collaboration (please see Appendix I).

The Law regulates imports of seeds and planting materials into Serbia on Seeds ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 45/05 and 30/10), the Law on Planting Material of Fruits, Wine and Hops ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 18/05 and 30/10), and the Law on Protection of Plant Breeders' Rights ("Official Gazette R.S." No. 41/09 and No. 88/11). Seed imports currently must be accompanied by a bill of lading, phytosanitary certificate, a variety of seed certificates (OECD), and a seed quality certificate (ISTA). Imported seeds must have a declaration issued by the relevant institution in the country of origin when they enter the Serbian market. For the import of seeds, the U.S. exporter must check with the local importer about import requirements for seeds. Seeds are subject to field trials as part of the registration process, and prior to being allowed to circulate on the market, they must be included in the national register of the MAFWM (please see Appendix I, #8).

## **Section X. Trade Facilitation:**

Customs clearance for food products, if all documents are in order and no tests are pending, can be done in one day. Inspection fees are charged by the state veterinary and phytosanitary inspectors that are common for all border inspection posts. For the list of fees, please contact FAS Office Belgrade or check at the official web pages of the Veterinary Directorate <https://www.vet.minpolj.gov.rs/sr> and the Phytosanitary Directorate <https://uzb.minpolj.gov.rs>.

Serbia, as an E.U. accession country, is a member of Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) [https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/traces\\_en](https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/traces_en) the European Commission's multilingual online platform for sanitary and phytosanitary certification required for the importation of animals, animal products, food, and feed of non-animal origin, and plants into the European Union, and the intra-EU trade and E.U.

exports of animals and certain animal products, TRACES. Serbia is also exchanging certificates through the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) ePhyto Solutions <https://www.ippc.int/en/ephyto/>.

The respective U.S. government agencies must issue electronic certificates for goods entering Serbia. In the absence of electronic documents, paper certificates must satisfy the regulations for an original certificate with an ink signature.

Preclearance program is allowed only for products from certain countries (not U.S.), with which Serbia has agreement. Truck shipments with agriculture products are often facing delays at the border, since the procedure is taking too long.

Inspections on imported foods are conducted at the Serbian borders. Once goods have passed inspection and customs duties are paid, they can move freely throughout Serbia. However, official controls remain possible at any stage of distribution within the country.

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

### **1. Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management**

Phone: + 381 11 260 7960

E-mail: [office@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:office@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/>

### **2. Ministry of Environmental Protection**

Phone: + 381 11 311 0271

E-mail: [kabinet@ekologija.gov.rs](mailto:kabinet@ekologija.gov.rs)

Web page: [www.ekologija.gov.rs](http://www.ekologija.gov.rs)

### **3. Serbian Ministry of Internal and Foreign Trade**

Phone: +381 11 3633 721

E-mail: [kabinet@must.gov.rs](mailto:kabinet@must.gov.rs)

Web page: <https://must.gov.rs>

### **4. Serbian Ministry of Health**

Phone: + 381 11 3616 596

E-mail: [kabinet@zdravlje.gov.rs](mailto:kabinet@zdravlje.gov.rs)

Web page: [www.zdravlje.gov.rs](http://www.zdravlje.gov.rs)

### **5. Serbian Ministry of Economy**

Phone: + 381 11 36 42 700

E-mail: [kabinet@privreda.gov.rs](mailto:kabinet@privreda.gov.rs)

Web page: [http://www.privreda.gov.rs/?change\\_lang=en](http://www.privreda.gov.rs/?change_lang=en)

### **6. Serbian Ministry of Finance**

Phone: + 381 11 361 32 45

E-mail: [kabinet@mfin.gov.rs](mailto:kabinet@mfin.gov.rs)

Web page: <http://www.mfin.gov.rs>

### **7. Import of live animals and products of animal origin, veterinary drugs**

Veterinary Department/International Trade and Certification

Phone: + 381 11 311 7734

E-mail: [vetuprava@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:vetuprava@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: [www.vet.minpolj.gov.rs](http://www.vet.minpolj.gov.rs)

### **8. Import of seeds and planting material**

Phytosanitary Department

Phone: + 381 11 311 7371

E-mail: [upravabilje@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:upravabilje@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: <https://uzb.minpolj.gov.rs/>

### **9. Import of pesticides and fertilizers**

Phytosanitary Department/Import and registration of pesticides

Phone: + 381 11 260 2329

E-mail: [upravabilje@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:upravabilje@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: <https://uzb.minpolj.gov.rs/>

### **10. GMO approvals and registrations**

Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Phone: + 381 11 311 7591

E-mail: [upravabilje@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:upravabilje@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: <https://uzb.minpolj.gov.rs/>

### **11. Approvals of plant varieties**

Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Phone: + 381 11 311 7317

E-mail: [upravabilje@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:upravabilje@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: <https://uzb.minpolj.gov.rs/>

### **12. Inspection on sanitary conformity**

Serbian Ministry of Health

Department for Sanitary Inspection

Phone: + 381 11 2607 874

E-mail: <https://www.zdravlje.gov.rs/#>

Web page: [www.zdravlje.gov.rs](http://www.zdravlje.gov.rs)

### **13. Market inspection**

Serbian Ministry of Trade, Telecommunication, and Tourism

Department for Market Inspection

Phone: + 381 11 361 4334

E-mail: [trzisnainspekcija@must.gov.rs](mailto:trzisnainspekcija@must.gov.rs)

Web page: <https://must.gov.rs/tekst/407/sektor-trzisne-inspekcije.php>

#### **14. Imports of Wine**

Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Phone: + 381 11 3617 595

E-mail: [jkuzmanovic@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:jkuzmanovic@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/>

#### **15. Imports of brandy, alcohol, and nonalcoholic beverages**

Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Phone: + 381 11 3617 701

E-mail: [kolinda@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:kolinda@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/>

#### **16. Directorate for National Reference Laboratories**

Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Phone: + 381 11 377 2070

E-mail: [vanja.petric@minpolj.gov.rs](mailto:vanja.petric@minpolj.gov.rs)

Web page: [http://www.dnrl.minpolj.gov.rs/?menu\\_id=100](http://www.dnrl.minpolj.gov.rs/?menu_id=100)

#### **17. Customs clearance:**

Serbian Custom Administration

Phone: + 381 11 2690 822

E-mail: [pr@carina.rs](mailto:pr@carina.rs)

Web page: <https://www.carina.rs/en.html>

#### **18. Institute for trademarks, patents, and intellectual property**

Intellectual Property Office

Phone: + 381 11 2025 800

E-mail: [zis@zis.gov.rs](mailto:zis@zis.gov.rs)

Web page: <https://www.zis.gov.rs/>

#### **19. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia**

Phone: +381 11 2412 922

E-mail: [stat@stat.gov.rs](mailto:stat@stat.gov.rs)

Web page: <https://www.stat.gov.rs/>

#### **20. Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia**

Phone: +381 11 3300-900

E-mail: [bis@pks.rs](mailto:bis@pks.rs)

Web page: <http://www.pks.rs/>

## **21. Serbian European Integration Office**

Phone: + 38111 3061-100

E-mail: [office@mei.gov.rs](mailto:office@mei.gov.rs)

Web page: <http://www.mei.gov.rs/eng/ministry/about-us/>

## **22. Serbian Government Official**

Web page: <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/>

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

### **1. Office of Agricultural Affairs (Foreign Agricultural Service)**

U.S. Embassy Belgrade

Bulevar kneza Aleksandra Karadjordjevica 92,

11000 Belgrade, Serbia

Phone: ++381 11 706 4158

Contact person: Tatjana Maslac, Agriculture Specialist

E-mail: [tatjana.maslac@usda.gov](mailto:tatjana.maslac@usda.gov)

Web page: <https://rs.usembassy.gov/foreign-agricultural-service>

### **2. University of Belgrade, Veterinary Faculty**

Phone: ++ 381 11 361 5436

Web page: <http://www.vet.bg.ac.rs/>

### **3. Institute of Meat Hygiene and Meat Technology**

Phone: ++ 381 11 2650 655

E-mail: [institut@inmes.rs](mailto:institut@inmes.rs)

Web page: <http://inmes.rs/>

### **4. National Laboratory for Seed Testing**

Phone: ++ 381 21 4898 100

E-mail: [institut@nsseme.com](mailto:institut@nsseme.com)

Web page: <http://www.nsseme.com/en/>

### **5. Institute for Public Health "Dr. Milan Jovanovic Batut"**

Phone: + 381 11 2684 566

E-mail: [kabinet@batut.org.rs](mailto:kabinet@batut.org.rs)

Web page: [www.batut.org.rs](http://www.batut.org.rs)

### **6. Institute for Science Application in Agriculture**

Phone: ++ 381 11 275 1622

E-mail: [admin@psss.rs](mailto:admin@psss.rs)

Web page: [www.psss.rs](http://www.psss.rs)

**7. Agriculture Faculty Belgrade**

Phone: ++ 381 11 2615 315

Web page: <http://www.agrif.bg.ac.rs/>

**8. Agriculture Faculty Novi Sad**

Phone: ++ 381 21 450 355

Web page: <http://polj.uns.ac.rs/>

**9. Institute for Molecular Genetics and Genetic Engineering**

Phone: ++ 381 11 3975 744

Web page: <http://www.imgge.bg.ac.rs>

**10. Accreditation Body of Serbia**

Phone: + 381 11 301 47 44

Web page: <http://www.ats.rs/en>

**11. BioSens Institut Novi Sad**

Web page : <https://biosens.rs/en>

**Attachments:**

No Attachments