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Required Report - public distribution

Date: 2/24/2015

GAIN Report Number:

Lithuania

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative

FAIRS Country Report

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Report Highlights:

Report Sections updated: All sections were updated. The EU Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) report for EU-28, prepared by the US Mission to the EU in Brussels should be reviewed in conjunction with this report. Since accession into the European Union Lithuania has modified national laws and brought food and agricultural regulations and standards into full concordance with EU regulations and standards. Internet links identified in this report are intended to

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

Section I. Food Laws:

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Warsaw, Poland for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers before any goods are shipped. FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.

In 2004, Lithuania joined the European Union and since then, has implemented regulations to harmonize Lithuanian laws with EU regulations and standards. Lithuania adopted its national food law, "[Food of the Republic of Lithuania Law](#)," in 2000 (04/04/2000, No. VIII-1608, National Gazette 2000), consolidated version of the document of May 15, 2014:

[Law on Food](#)

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

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

The government of the Republic of Lithuania establishes a legal basis for food and market surveillance in Lithuania. The Ministry of Agriculture, State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS), Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Economy are institutions involved in development and enforcement of legislative normative acts and regulations in Lithuania. The Ministry of Agriculture develops the guidelines and requirements designed to access the quality of food products (raw and processed), plants, and ecological foods. State Food and Veterinary Service implements adapted food laws and regulations for the food (raw and processed, foodstuffs) control and monitoring. SFVS ensures the safety of supplied foods to Lithuania and free movement throughout EU territory by ensuring quality, standards, labeling and other requirements in compliance with EU and Lithuanian laws and regulations.

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

is regulated by the Ministry of Economy. Food Safety and Quality for exported and imported foods to Lithuania can be [accessed](#) online in Lithuanian language.

Other Relevant Food Laws of the Republic of Lithuania:

1. [Law on Veterinary Activities](#) with its amendments (17.12. 1991, No.I-2110) (Official Gazette, 1992, No2-15; 1999-2639; 200. No.61-1804).
2. [Law on Welfare and Protection of Animals](#) (3 October 2012 No XI-2271)
3. [Law on Product Safety](#) (June 1, 1999, No. 64-2324, consolidated version: May 07, 2001).
4. [Law on Consumer Protection](#) (November 10, 1994, No. I-657, consolidated version: October12, 2009).
5. [Law on Seed Cultivation](#) (November15, 2001, No IX-602, consolidated version: December 10, 2004).
6. [Law on Plant Protection](#) (October 19, 1995, No I-1069, consolidated version: April 06,1998),
7. [Law on Alcohol](#) (April 18, 1995, No I-857, consolidated version: February 07, 2013)
8. [Law on Environmental Protection](#) (January 21,1992, No. I-2223, consolidated version May 28, 2010).

Section II. Labeling Requirements:

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

EU [Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 2168/2004](#) of 17 December 2004 adapted Regulation (EEC) No 2037/93 by reason of the accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia,

Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, and Slovakia (OJ L371, 18.12.2004, page 12)

[Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 2167/2004](#) of 17 December 2004 adapted Regulation (EEC) No 1848/93 by reason of the accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, **Lithuania**, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia (OJ L371, 18.12.2004, page 8) [*relates to certificates of specific character for agricultural products and foodstuffs within - TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED category*]

Compulsory Information

On December 13, 2014, the EU's "Food Information to Consumers" (FIC) regulation 1169/2011 became applicable. It introduced new obligations and changes to the existing rules set out in Directive 2000/13/EC.

Key changes introduced by the FIC regulation include:

- Nutrition labeling becomes mandatory on December 13, 2016 (see "Transitional Measures"),
- Minimum font size for printing mandatory information is established,
- New format for allergen labeling is set out: allergens must be highlighted in the list of

ingredients – “allergen boxes” are no longer allowed,

- Voluntary front-of-pack labeling must follow a new set format,
- Country of origin labeling is extended to more products (see “Checklist”),
- Durability date AND “frozen on” date must be indicated on frozen products,
- “Use by date” must be indicated on individual pre-packed portions,
- Specific treatments such as “refrozen”, “concentrated”, “smoked”, powdered” must be added to the product name,
- Presence of engineered nanomaterials must be indicated,
- Alcoholic strength by volume for beverages containing more than 1.2 percent of alcohol by volume must appear in the same field of vision as the product name,
- Proteins added to meat products that are of a different animal origin must be declared in the list of ingredients,
- Presence of added water must be declared on meat and fishery products if the added water makes up more than 5 percent of the finished product,
- Vegetable origin of oils and fats must be indicated in the list of ingredients.

The legislation update deals with the issues of label visibility, font size, font and background contrast, and regulates the obligation to inform about allergens, such as peanuts or dairy on product packaging. According to the new Regulation, the obligation of country of origin labeling is extended to fresh meat: pork, poultry, goat, and sheep. The Regulation additionally requires nutrition information for processed foodstuffs. The new Regulation will allow consumers to more easily distinguish products that are similar to other products but that are produced from different ingredients, e.g. cheese-like products.

Foodstuffs intended for sale to the final consumer, for restaurants, hospitals and other mass caterers must comply with the labeling legislation. The labeling, presentation, and advertising of foodstuffs must not mislead the consumer about the foodstuff’s characteristics or effects, or attribute properties for the prevention, treatment, or cure of a human illness to a foodstuff.

Flavorings

Annex III to the labeling directive describes the way of designating flavorings in the list of ingredients. Specific requirements for the use of the term “natural” to describe a flavoring are set out in Article 16 of European Parliament and Council Regulation 1334/2008. For more information see Section IV “Food Additive Regulations.”

Additional information concerning new EU food labeling can be found Brussels USEU report “How to Comply with the EU’s New Food Labeling Rules” – available via “Attache Reports” link at fas.usda.gov

Organic Labeling

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

Organic Wine: EU organic legislation now also covers wine. Commission Implementing Regulation 203/2012, applicable since August 1, 2012, allows the use of the term “organic wine” where before the label could only mention “wine made from organic grapes.” Regulation 203/2012 sets out the conditions to label wine as organic. Sorbic acid and desulfuration are not allowed and the level of sulfites must be at least 30-50 mg per liter lower than their conventional equivalent. As Regulation 203/2012 was only published in March 2012, a month after the U.S. and the EU signed the Equivalency Arrangement, organic wine was not included in the deal.

Commission Implementing Regulation 508/2012, published in June 2012, includes U.S. organic wines in Annex III to Regulation 1235/2008. Until a joint U.S.-EU working group concludes its examination of the equivalence of organic wine making rules, U.S. organic wine certified to comply with the EU’s organic wine making rules can be imported into the EU.

Wine Labeling

Wine: Commission Regulation 607/2009, as amended by Commission Implementing 1185/2012, lays down detailed rules on protected designations of origin and geographical indications, traditional terms and labeling.

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

Chapter III of Regulation 607/2009 sets out rules on the use of traditional terms. The “E-Bacchus” database lists the traditional terms that are protected in the EU. The use of expressions such as “style”, “type”, “method”, “as produced in”, “imitation”, “flavor”, “like” or similar, accompanied by a traditional term included in the E-Bacchus database is not allowed. Third countries may use traditional terms not listed in the database. Since Regulation 607/2009 became applicable, the European Commission received several applications from third countries – most of which came from the United States - to use EU protected traditional terms. Commission Implementing Regulation 723/2012 allows the use of the traditional term “Cream” on U.S. grapevine products. Allowing the use of the traditional terms “Chateau” on U.S. grapevine products is still under consideration by the European Commission.

Chapter IV of Regulation 607/2009 sets out rules for the indication of compulsory and optional

information on wine labels. The mandatory information must appear in the same field of vision on the container, in such a way that all the information (except the lot number) is readable without having to turn the container. The mandatory information must be clearly distinguishable from surrounding text or graphics.

The indication of the wine grape variety on the label is optional. For third country wines, the wine grape variety must be included in at least one of the lists established by the “international Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV), the “Union for the Protection of Plant Varieties (UPOV)” or the “International Board for Plant Genetic Resources (IBPGR).” Terms such as “barrel matured”, “barrel aged” (listed in Annex XVI to Regulation 607/2009) may not be used on wines produced with the aid of oak chips. The use of the term “alcohol free wine” is not allowed in several Member States.

Prepackaged Foods Labeling – use of stickers

Specific rules on the use of stickers to provide mandatory labeling information are not included in FIC regulation 1169/2011. On this issue, the European Commission refers to point 2.1.1 of their Questions and Answers on the Application of Regulation 1169/2011 document which says that “labels should not be easily removable so as to jeopardize the availability or the accessibility of the mandatory food information to the consumer.”

Nutritional and Health Claims

The Annex to Nutrition & Health Claims Regulation 1924/2006 lists the EU authorized nutrition claims and their U.S. Exporters should be aware that different pieces of legislation may apply to single product conditions of use. The use of nutrition claims not included in the annex is not allowed.

Health Claims

<http://www.usda-eu.org/trade-with-the-eu/eu-import-rules/nutrition-health-claims/>

Rules on the use of health claims are set out in [Nutrition & Health Claims Regulation 1924/2006](#). Regulation [432/2012](#) establishes the EU positive list of functional health claims and their conditions of use. Any producer can use the permitted health claims provided the conditions set out in Regulation 432/2012 are met. The EU’s online “[Register of Nutrition and Health Claims](#)” lists the authorized health claims as well as some of the more rejected claims and the reasons for their non-authorization. Health claims referring to botanical substances have been put on hold because the Commission and the Member States are still discussing the potential conflict of the Health Claims Regulation with the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive. Since December 14, 2012, all claims that are not authorized and not on hold or under consideration are prohibited. Food products carrying claims must comply with the provisions of the EU’s “[Food Information to Consumers](#) (FIC)” regulation 1169/2011. [Commission Implementing Decision 2013/63](#) sets out guidelines for national control authorities as regards the implementation of specific conditions for permitted health claims.

The list of permitted functional health claims is different from the individual applications for health claims relating to disease risk reduction and claims referring to the health and development of children which require an authorization on a case-by-case basis, following the submission of a scientific dossier

to EFSA. A simplified authorization procedure has been established for health claims based on new scientific data.

[Regulation 353/2008](#) sets out implementing rules for applications for the authorization of health claims as provided for in Article 15 of Regulation 1924/2006. [GAIN Report E48055](#) describes how application dossiers for authorization of health claims should be prepared and presented. A guidance document on how companies can apply for health claim authorizations can be downloaded from EFSA's website at <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/nda/ndaclaims.htm>.

[Commission Regulation 907/2013](#) establishes rules for the use of “generic descriptors” which could be interpreted by consumers as health claims. Generic descriptors such as “digestive biscuits” and “cough drops” would normally be banned under Regulation 1924/2006 because they suggest a beneficial effect on health but the implied health benefit has not been evaluated scientifically by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

For more information see GAIN report “[Health Claims – New EU Regulation on Generic Descriptors.](#)”

Trademarks and brand names that suggest health and/or nutritional benefits but do not comply with the new rules must be entirely removed from the EU market by January 19, 2022.

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations:

The requirements on packaging and container regulations in Lithuania are in accordance with the EU standards and regulations. Packaging requirements specified in the Framework [Regulation \(EC\) 1935/2004 \(L338/4\)](#) are associated with the use of safe food contact materials, inability to transfer food components and impact consumer's health, and alter food composition, taste and aroma of food products.

Commission [Regulation \(EC\) No. 1935/2004](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food repealed Directives [80/590/EEC](#) and [89/109/EEC](#).

Commission [Regulation \(EC\) No 450/2009](#) of 29 May 2009 addresses active and intelligent materials and articles intended to come into contact with food. Updated information on plastic material intended to come in contact with the food is described in Commission [Regulation \(EU\) No. 10/2011](#) of 14 January 2011 (OJ L12, 15.1.2011, page 1). Commission Regulation (EU) 10/2011 lists 21 permitted substances (plastic materials and articles) that may come into contact with foodstuffs.

For more information on specific substances, check out the European Commission's Food contact materials database.

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

Section IV. Food Additives Regulations:

The EU's “Package on Food Improvement Agents” includes four Regulations: Regulation 1331/2008 establishing a common authorization procedure for food additives, food enzymes and food flavorings,

Regulation 1332/2008 on food enzymes, Regulation 1333/2008 on food additives and Regulation 1334/2008 on flavorings.

Regulation 1331/2008 establishes a common authorization procedure for food additives, food enzymes and food flavorings based on safety evaluations carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The implementing rules are laid down in Commission Regulation 234/2011, explaining the content of an application and all the data both administrative and technical that have to be submitted to the Commission. The Commission will then request EFSA to verify the suitability of the data. An application consists of a letter, a technical dossier and a summary of the dossier.

Additives that are authorized in food and their conditions of use are listed in Annex II to the Food Additives Regulation 1333/2008. The authorized uses of additives are listed according to the category of food to which they may be added. Annex I to regulation 1333/2008 lists the definitions of 26 different categories of food additives. Only additives included in the EU's positive list are authorized under specific conditions.

The use of flour bleaching agents chlorine, bromates and peroxides is not allowed in the EU.

Additional information on regulations pertaining to food additives laws in the EU can be obtained at <http://www.usda-eu.org/trade-with-the-eu/eu-import-rules/food-additives/>

Section V. Pesticides and Other Contaminants:

European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 1107/2009 set out rules for the authorization of plant protection products (PPPs) and replaces Directive 91/414/EEC related to the presence of pesticide and other contaminants in food and foodstuffs. It entered into force at the end of December 2009 and became fully applicable on June 14, 2011. This Regulation establishes a list of approved active substances. Only PPPs containing active substances included in the list may be authorized for use in the EU. Member States can approve PPPs containing the active substances. According to the new Regulation, the EU is divided into three different zones. Once a Member State approves the PPP, it can be mutually recognized and thus authorized within the same EU zone as set out in Annex I of the Regulation.

The EU implemented special import conditions on testing almonds supplied to the EU Member States. Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1152/2009 imposes special regulations for importing of almonds to EU from third countries due to the aflatoxin contamination.

Commission Regulation (EU) No 178/2010 of 2 March 2010 amended Regulation (EC) No 401/2006 relates to groundnuts (peanuts), other oilseeds, tree nuts, apricot kernels, liquorices and vegetable oil (OJ L52, 3.3.2010, page 32) [*Sampling procedures for contaminants*]

Commission Regulation (EU) No. 165/2010 of 26 February 2010 amended Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 sets maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs with regards to aflatoxins (OJ L50, 27.2.2010, page 8).

Maximum Residue Limits

Since September 2008 all MRLs in the EU have been harmonized by European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 396/2005 on food or feed of plant and animal origin. Pesticide MRLs for processed or composite products are based on the MRLs of the raw agricultural ingredients. See DG SANCO's webpage for the latest updates.

Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements:

In 2004 Lithuania joined the EU and adapted regulation and standards of the European Union. The Integrated Tariff of the Community (TARIC, Tarif Intégré de la Communauté) describes regulations carried out by the EU. The Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 282/2011 of 15 March 2011 describes implementing measures for the Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax (recast) Council implementing Regulation No 2011/282/EU.

Customs duty is required to be paid by natural persons and legal entities when importing goods into the EU. The EU duties are imposed on the cost, insurance, and freight value of the product imported by the Custom Department. Common Custom Tariff (CCT) is applied on imported products in Lithuania. Type and origin of imported products influence product's duty rate. Article 12 of the Custom Code establishes classification of goods.

On March 10, 2006, the U.S. and EU have signed an agreement on trade of wine. The description of regulations and normative can be found in the Regulation (EC) No 606/2009 and accessed on line <http://www.ttb.gov/agreements/eu-wine-agreement.pdf>. Beer, wine, fermented beverages, and other than beer and wine (example: cider), intermediate products (example: port and sherry), and ethyl alcohol (i.e. spirit drinks) are subject to duties according to Council Directive 92/83/EEC. The Directive COM (2006) 486 presented on 8 September 2006 amended increase of minimum rates of excise duty due to inflation. The excise duty rates for the EU current as of 1 July 2013 can be found here.

Section VII. Other Specific Standards:

Specific standards are required when importing wine and spirits from third countries into the EU territory. An Import License must be supplied for the shipment of wine exceeding 3,000 liters. This license is issued by Lithuanian National Paying Agency (Nacionalinė mokėjimo agentūra). The declaration on foods from third countries is required by Lithuanian custom authorities. Single Administrative Document (SAD) must be supplied. More information can be found EC Commission Union and Taxation website. The export of wines from U.S. must also include a simplified export certificate or VII document.

Novel Foods Labeling

Use of GM ingredients, GMO foods require special labeling in concordance with the EU Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003.

Section VIII. Copyright and/or Trademark Laws:

Lithuania Copyright and Trademark Laws are in concordance with the EU requirements. Council Regulation (EC) No. 207/2009 establishes a unified Community registration of trademark for EU members.

Section IX. Import Procedures:

The EU Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2913/92 describing the EU custom code amended implementation of the custom code by Commission Regulation (EEC) No. 2454/93. Enhancement of security was implemented in the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1875/2006. Beginning in January, 2011, the security information on supplied goods by the trader must be transferred to EU custom authorities. Customs provides electronic information on current EU issues, trade laws, and regulations, access to administrative forms, custom consultation committees, restrictions, and prohibitions, and access to tariff regulations regarding foreign trade. More information can be found on Customs of the Republic of Lithuania website.

The Integrated Tariff of the Republic of Lithuania (LITAR) database provides electronic access to information resources on EU tariff and Lithuanian taxes, import, and export procedures and regulations. Information found on LITAR must be cross-referenced with EC legal regulations and Excise and VAT laws of Lithuania. European Union tariff and non-tariff requirements can be found online in TARIC database. More information on import and export procedures, regulations, and documentation can be found online at the Seima custom border. Supplemental information on free movement of goods in Lithuania can be found here.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts:

The Ministry of Agriculture

Gedimino av. 19 (J. Lelevelio 6)

LT-01103 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 239 1111

E-Mail: zum@zum.lt

Fax: +370 5 239 1212

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

State Food and Veterinary Service

Siesikų str. 19

LT-07170 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 240 4361

Email: vvt@vet.lt

Fax: +370 5 240 4362

<http://vmvt.lt/en>

Ministry of Health

Vilnius str. 33,

LT-01506 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 800 66 004; +370 5 268 5110

Email: ministerija@sam.lt<http://sena.sam.lt/en>

Fax: +370 5 266 1402

<http://www.sam.lt/go.php/lit/English>

Ministry of Economy

Gedimino Ave. 38 / Vasario 16-osios st. 2,

LT-01104 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 2625515; +370 5 262 6584

Email: kanc@ukmin.lt

Fax: +370 5 262 3974

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

Muitinės departamentas (Customs Department)

A. Jakšto g. 1/25

LT-01105 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 266 6111

E-mail: info@cust.lt

Fax: +370 5 266 6010

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

Nacionalinė mokėjimo agentūra (National Paying Agency)

Blindžių g. 17

LT-08111 Vilnius, Lithuania

Ph: +370 5 252 6703

E-mail: info@nma.lt

Fax: +370 5 252 6945

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

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts:

For additional information concerning market entry, other import requirements, and a current importer list, U.S. exporters of agricultural products and commodities contact:

Embassy of the United States of America

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

Warsaw, Poland

Dr. Piotr Rucinski – Agricultural Specialist

Ms. Mira Kobuszynska – Agricultural Specialist

Ms. Jolanta Figurska – Agricultural Marketing Specialist

Ph: (+48-22) 504 2336

E-mail: agwarsaw@usda.gov