



THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY  
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT  
POLICY

Required Report - public distribution

**Date:** 12/29/2017

**GAIN Report Number:** PA1707

## **Panama**

### **Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Certification**

### **2017 FAIRS Export Certificates Report**

**Approved By:**

Anita Katial, Agricultural Counselor

**Prepared By:**

Arlene Villalaz, Agricultural Specialist

**Report Highlights:**

The U.S-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA) entered into force on October 31, 2012. As outlined in the TPA, Panama issued special regulations that apply to imports of food and feed products from the United States. Due to certain sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and technical standards affecting trade in agricultural products, Panama recognizes the certificates and standards of the U.S. regulatory and sanitary inspection system.

## Section I. List of All Export Certificates Required By Government (Matrix) :

The U.S-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA) entered into force on October 31, 2012. As outlined in the TPA, Panama issued special regulations that apply to imports of food and feed products from the United States. Due to certain sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and technical standards affecting trade in agricultural products, Panama recognizes the certificates and standards of the U.S. regulatory and sanitary inspection system.

A copy of the *United States – Panama Agreement regarding certain sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical standards affecting trade in agricultural products*, can be downloaded from the website of the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in the following hyperlinks:

[December 2006 SPS Letter Exchange](#)

[Feb/Mar 2013 SPS Letter Exchange](#)

[June 2014 SPS Letter Exchange](#)

The certificates required by the Government of Panama, Panamanian Food Safety Authority (known as AUPSA in Spanish) that must accompany the shipments from the United States are:

Products	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Authority
Meats and poultry	FSIS Export Certificate of Wholesomeness (FSIS form 9060-5)	Certifies that exported meats or poultry products come from approved establishments by USDA/FSIS, meet veterinary sanitary requirements and are fit for human consumption.	Food Safety	AUPSA
Egg products	FSIS Egg Product Export Certificate of Wholesomeness (FSIS Form 9060-5EP)	Certifies that exported egg products come from approved establishments by USDA/FSIS, meet veterinary sanitary requirements and are fit for human consumption.	Food Safety	AUPSA
Fresh vegetables and fresh fruits, grains in bulk loads or in bags	APHIS Phytosanitary Certificate (PPQ Form 577)	Certifies that exported vegetables, fruits or grains are inspected by USDA/APHIS/PPQ inspectors, meet phytosanitary import requirements and are free of quarantine pests, it varies by product.	Phytosanitary	AUPSA
Seafood and fishery products	NOAA's Export Health Certificate for fishery products	Certifies that exported seafood or fishery products come from approved establishments by NOAA, meet veterinary sanitary requirements and are fit for human consumption.	Food Safety and Animal Health	AUPSA

Dairy products	Certificate of Free Sale of the product, or any other certificate issued by any U.S. federal or state or local authority, such as a Sanitary Certificate issued by your State authority (Agriculture or Health); or USDA/AMS Sanitary Certificate for Exports; or, USDA/APHIS Export Certificate for Animal Products (VS Form 16-4)	<p>A Certificate of Free Sale of the product, or any other certificate issued by any U.S. federal or state or local authority within the last 12 months, such as a Sanitary Certificate issued by your State authority (Agriculture or Health), in which certifies that the product is fit for human consumption and complies with the Sanitary regulations in your State. A list of States authorities can be found at: <a href="http://www.nasda.org/6467.aspx">http://www.nasda.org/6467.aspx</a></p> <p>Also, for dairy products the USDA/AMS Sanitary Certificate for Exports or, the USDA/APHIS Export Certificate for Animal Products (VS Form 16-4) can be used.</p>	Food Safety	AUPSA
Fresh shell eggs for human consumption	USDA/AMS Disease Free Certification Statements for Panama; and USDA/AMS Fresh Shell eggs Grading Certificate for consumption (AMS Form PY-210S).	USDA/AMS has a specific Disease Free Certification Statements for Panama for avian influenza and New Castle disease; and the AMS grading certificate will state the grading, volume, and physical characteristics of the fresh shell eggs.	Food Safety, Animal Health and Quality requirements.	AUPSA
All processed food products for retail, bottled or packaged in some form	A Certificate of Free Sale of the product; or Any other certificate issued by any U.S. federal or state or local	Certifies that the exported product is fit for human consumption and complies with the Sanitary regulations in your State; the Supplier or Manufacturer declaration must be on company letterhead, stating that the product is fit for	Food Safety	AUPSA

with given name and brand	authority, such as a Sanitary Certificate issued by your State authority (Agriculture or Health); or A Supplier or Manufacturer's Declaration.	human consumption.		
Pet Food	USDA/APHIS Export Certificate for Animal Products (VS Form 16-4)	<p>Additional certification statements on USDA APHIS export certificates that accompany U.S. shipments of pet food containing animal origin ingredients to Panama are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The products may be freely sold in the United States as pet food.</li> <li>2. Dry, semi-moist, and dehydrated pet food products were subjected during processing to a heat temperature designed to ensure the destruction of pathogenic agents harmful to animals.</li> <li>3. Canned pet food products have been treated in hermetically sealed containers with an F0 of 3.0 or more.</li> <li>4. The product has been hygienically handled and packed in clean containers made of impermeable, hermetic, and strong materials that are sufficient to protect the product from environmental contamination and safeguard commercial sterility obtained during thermal processing.</li> </ol>	Animal Health	AUPSA

## Section II. Purpose of Specific Export Certificate(s)

The purposes of the above certificates are intended for food safety, animal health and phytosanitary requirements, depending on the type of product. The Panamanian Food Safety Authority (known as AUPSA in Spanish) is the competent authority to require all the above certificates for food and feed imports into Panama.

### **Section III. Specific Attestations Required on Export Certificate(s)**

AUPSA requires an additional declaration under the Phytosanitary Export Certificate (issued by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for specific pests depending on the vegetable or grain product that is going to be exported to Panama; or a sprout inhibitor application on shipments of U.S. table stock potatoes. In order to meet this requirement for table stock potatoes, APHIS recommends that as part of the shipping documents the shipper provide a "Packer Affidavit" stating that a sprout inhibitor application on shipments of U.S. table stock potatoes has been given.

Potatoes must be free of the following pests: *Ditylenchus destructor*, *Ditylenchus dispaci*, *Phthorimaea operculella*, *Pratylenchus penetrans* and *Tylenchorhynchus claytoni*. In addition, potatoes must be produced in a free area of potato purple top or apply anti sprout fumigation, except for the State of Washington.

For the Importation of rice (*Oryza sativa* L.) milled, packaged or re-packaged for human consumption and /or for processing originating in Asia, coming from the United States of America, the shipment must be accompanied by a phytosanitary export or re-export certificate, issued by USDA-APHIS with the following additional declarations:

1. The rice has undergone a process of inspection and sampling, and during the storage period in the United States of America, the grains were not exposed to the risk of pest infestation or infection or pollutants.
2. The rice comes free of live insects of any kind, as well as other biologicals, chemicals and physical contaminants, including soils.
3. The phytosanitary export or re-export certificate must include an additional declaration certifying that the rice free of *Trogoderma granarium*.

### **Section IV. Government Certificate's Legal Entry Requirements**

AUPSA is the Government of Panama agency created to oversee all aspects of food importation. In compliance with the bilateral SPS agreement, they receive requests for food and feed products sanitary registration and provide answers within 24 hours. This procedure can be made online, and it cost is free of charges. The submission of documentation as indicated in this section may be through AUPSA's website: [www.aupsa.gob.pa](http://www.aupsa.gob.pa), which is user friendly but, it is in the Spanish language only.

According to Article 54 of Law Decree 11 of February 22, 2006, all processed food products for retail, bottled or packaged in some form with given name and brand, must be registered at the Panamanian Food Safety Authority (AUPSA), prior to importation. This means that all food products intended for retail as a final product for direct consumption should be registered before import, sale or trade. i.e.

alcohol beverages, snacks, canned food, among others.

Excluded from the above are raw materials such as fresh meats (which are not packed and ready for retail, used for food service or food processing), fresh vegetables and fresh fruits, grains in bulk loads or in bags, dairy product in bulk loads or in bags for further processing, ingredients and additives for the process of a final food product.

For the Food Product Registration, the Importer or the Exporter must send the following information:

1. Product Name
2. Name and address of the product manufacturer, packager, or distributor, as specified on the label.
3. Product description as stated on the label.
4. Product ingredients (in descending order by weight) as stated on the label.
5. For U.S. food products either:
  - a. A **Certificate of Free Sale** of the product, or any other certificate issued by any U.S. federal or state or local authority within the last 12 months, such as a Sanitary Certificate issued by your State authority (Agriculture or Health), in which certifies that the product is fit for human consumption and complies with the Sanitary regulations in your State. This Certificate of Free Sale can be used for multiply shipments of the same products.
  - b. A **Supplier or Manufacturer's Declaration**, on company letterhead, stating that the product is fit for human consumption.

In addition, so AUPSA may corroborate the above information, it is necessary to send the legible scanned copy of the label and bar code.

The originals of such documents shall be presented at the AUPSA's Registry office, within a period of time of 30 working days.

The Food Product Registration shall remain in effect as long as the information provided remains unchanged.

## **Section V. Other Certification/Accreditation Requirements**

To import any agricultural food or feed into Panama, an importer must present upon arrival of the shipment at the Point of Entry into the country, the following documentation:

- a) Import notification form, made online at <http://www.aupsa.gob.pa/notificaciones/> (this prior notification has to be made 48 hours prior to the arrival of the shipment at the Port of Entry)
- b) Certificate issued by the official authority of the United States, according to the type of food, as listed in Section I of this report.
- c) Product's Certificate of Origin
- d) Copy of the product's Commercial Invoice

e) Pre-customs or customs declaration.

As stated above on section IV, Panama has an online Sanitary Registration process for statistical purposes in AUPSA, for all processed food products for retail, bottled or packaged in some form with given name and brand.

All U.S. Exporting or Manufacturer facilities seeking to export food or feed to Panama shall ensure to comply specifically with the Technical Regulations for the following products:

- Cereals, Wheat flour
- Ethylic alcohol for alcoholic beverages
- Rum (local)
- Fruit and Vegetable juices
- Fruit nectars
- Tomato juice
- Orange juice concentrate
- Orange juice
- Milk and Dairy Products
- Vegetable oils
- Animal fats
- Sugar
- Onions
- Table salt
- Additives
- Colors
- Fish, frozen
- Fishmeal
- Beef and products
- Poultry and products
- Eggs and egg products

Complete information (in Spanish language) may be accessed at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry website for [Technical Regulations](#).

All U.S. federally inspected establishments for meats and poultry are eligible to export to Panama. The list of these can be found at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/inspection/mpi-directory/>. Panama does not have Plant by Plant approval requirements for the United States as was agreed in [article 8](#) of the *United States – Panama Agreement regarding certain sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical standards affecting trade in agricultural products*, of December 20, 2006.

## **Appendix I. Electronic Copy or Outline of Each Export Certificate**

- Attachments of the certificates listed in section I.

