

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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:** 12/7/2017

**GAIN Report Number:**

## **Nicaragua**

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

### **FAIRS Export Certificate Report**

**Approved By:**

**Prepared By:**

Jimmy Bolaños

#### **Report Highlights:**

This report lists Nicaragua import requirements for export certification and import permits for agrochemicals, veterinary products, feedstuffs, and food products for human consumption.

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

**Disclaimer:** This report was prepared by the office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Managua, Nicaragua for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in 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 product is subject to the importing country's rules and regulations as interpreted by border officials at the time of the product entry.**

The Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Protection and Health (IPSA) and the Ministry of Health (MINSA) in Nicaragua require registration of imported products prior to issuing import permits except for plants and animals. IPSA is responsible for the inspection of agricultural products, including fresh produce, grains, processed foods, animal feeds, agrochemicals and seeds at the borders while MINSA regulates processed food products registration. The first requirement for importers is to request an import permit from IPSA or MINSA (Please refer to attachments to see format of import permits). Importers must provide a copy of the commercial invoice, certificate of origin, and a Health or Phytosanitary certificate attached to the permits.

The following certificates are requested by IPSA when the products have already been registered (except for plants and animals) and arrive at the border and/or port of entry. Please refer to following table. Note: For more information about the products registration procedures please refer to the FAIRS Narrative report. :

Product (s)	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Ministry
Agrochemicals, Veterinary Products	Sanitary-Phytosanitary Import Permit  Certificate of Origin  Certificate of Qualitative-Quantitative Analysis  Copy of the Commercial Invoice	Certificates must be issued by a competent Government Authority	Traceability	IPSA

Feedstuffs	Sanitary-Phytosanitary Import permits  Certificate of Origin  Sanitary Certificate  Copy of the commercial Invoice	Certificate must be issued by a competent government authority, except for the certificate of chemical analysis, must issue certificate.	Traceability	IPSA
Plant Products and Sub-Products	Sanitary-Phytosanitary Import permit  Certificate of origin  Phytosanitary Certificate  Certificate of chemical Treatment (when applicable).  Copy of the Commercial invoice	Certificate must be issued by a competent government authority	Traceability	IPSA
Animal Products and Sub-Products	Sanitary-Phytosanitary Import permit  Sanitary Certificate  Certificate of origin  Copy of the commercial	Certificate must be issued by a competent government authority	Traceability	IPSA

	invoice			
Processed Food	Sanitary- Import Permit  Certificate of origin  Sanitary or Phytosanitary certificate  Copy of the Commercial Invoice	Certificates must be issued by a competent government authority	Traceability	The sanitary import permit is requested at the Ministry Health (MINSa).  The other certificates are required by IPSA at the port or border of entry.

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

### **Sanitary and Phytosanitary Import Permit:**

The sanitary and phytosanitary import permit is the official document that authorizes the import of any product into Nicaragua. For processed foods, importers must request the import permit from MINSa and for agricultural products, a permit from IPSA. IPSA or MINSa will review the application to ensure the product is eligible to enter the Nicaraguan market and that it complies with all of the sanitary and phytosanitary requirements established by Nicaragua. An import permit is valid for one shipment.

If the import permit is not used within thirty days, the importer may request a renewal from Government of Nicaragua authorities. All other certificates, including the certificate of origin, phytosanitary certificate, sanitary certificate, commercial invoice, etc., do not have an expiration date.

### **Certificate of Origin:**

The Certificate of Origin is submitted to Customs to certify the country of origin of the goods. The minimum information a certificate of origin should contain is: name of issuer and contact information, customs tariff and description of the merchandise, information to support a product of origin and date of the certificate. The Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Protection and Health (IPSA) requests certificates of origin issued by chambers of commerce. In addition, the importer must present the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) certificate of origin to Customs authorities to benefit from free trade preferences, if applicable.

### **Phytosanitary Certificate:**

A Phytosanitary certificate is used to attest that consignments meet phytosanitary import requirements

and is undertaken by a National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO). A phytosanitary certificate for export or re-export can be issued only by a public officer who is technically qualified and duly authorized by an NPPO. In the United States, the USDA/ Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Plant Protection and Quarantine maintains the export program for the U.S. exports and foreign-origin agricultural commodities.

### **Sanitary Certificate:**

IPSA requires sanitary or health certificates for animals and animal sub-products. USDA/APHIS is the head of veterinary services, which would provide these certificates. Please refer to APHIS' import and [export matrix](#) for a list of plant or animal export protocols already negotiated between USDA and the Ministry of Agriculture (MAGFOR).

### **Commercial Invoice:**

A commercial invoice is a bill for the goods from the seller to the buyer. These invoices are often used by governments to determine the true value of goods when assessing customs duties. Governments that use the commercial invoice to control imports will often specify its form, content, and number of copies, language to be used, and other characteristics.

### **Certificate of Free Sale:**

The certificate of free sale, which states that goods such as food items, cosmetics, biologics, or medical devices are legally sold or distributed in the open market, freely without restriction, and approved by the regulatory authorities in the country of origin, is requested by MINSA for product registry.

### **Certificate of Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis:**

IPSA requires a certificate of quantitative and qualitative analysis for agrochemicals. The certificate provides information about active components of the product and is issued by the manufacturer. Please refer to the FAIRS Narrative report for more information.

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

A competent government authority from the exporting country has to issue all required certificates and the products (agrochemicals, animal feeds, food products, etc.) must be first registered in Nicaragua. Please refer to the FAIRS narrative report to see registration requirements for different products.

The certificate of free sale required by MINSA for product registration must state that the product is of "free sale" in the country of origin and that the product is apt for human consumption. IPSA requires specific attestations regarding an animal or plant health condition from the exporting country. In such cases, IPSA will provide importers with a detailed outline of the attestation for the export/SPS certificates.

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

IPSA or MINSA must issue an import permit prior to each importation. The importer requests the import permit with supporting information, including of a copy of an SPS certificate, certificate of origin, and a commercial invoice. Consistent information such as amount, description, origin, and point of shipping must be stated in the request form. MINSA requires that processed food products be registered in Nicaragua prior to importation. Food samples are allowed one entry without registration but they must be accompanied by a certificate of free sale.

SPS technical officers review the supporting documents (original import permit, original SPS certificate or certificate of origin and a copy of the commercial invoice) and inspect a product at the time of entry.

An import permit is valid for one shipment. If the import permit is not used within thirty days, the importer may request a renewal from Government of Nicaragua authorities. MAGFOR and MINSA will accept only certificates issued by the competent government authorities of the exporting country. When shipments do not meet Government of Nicaragua import requirements, products are normally detained at the port of entry for sampling. Samples are subject to laboratory analysis to determine their physical and chemical characteristics. A product may be confiscated for destruction or re-exported, depending on its condition, as determined by government authorities.

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

Currently, there are no additional import requirements that apply or are associated with plant, animal or processed food products being certified in conformance with Nicaragua's laws.

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

Please see attached the following documents:

1. Technical Norm 11 005-08 Import requirements for plant products and Plant- Sub-products.
2. Sanitary-Phytosanitary Import Permit.
3. Sanitary certificate.
4. Phytosanitary certificate.
5. DR- CAFTA certificate of origin.
6. Certificate of origin issued by a chamber of commerce.
7. Commercial Invoice