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Report Name: Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards
Export Certificate Report

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Report Highlights:

This report provides examples for the major export certificates and other documents required by the government of El Salvador for U.S. exports of food and agricultural products. El Salvador's import requirements change frequently, and are often subject to discretionary decisions at point of entry.

Disclaimer:

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in San Salvador, El Salvador, 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, 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 PRODUCT ENTRY.

Executive Summary

El Salvador has strict quarantine requirements for imported food and agricultural products. Often, import requirements are duplicated in different government institutions and additional mandatory pest free declarations and excessive fumigations cause delays, added costs, and reduced product shelf life.

The Ministries of Agriculture and of Health are charged with food product import oversight. However, Customs also plays a role in the import process and often adds additional delays and costs to the process.

El Salvador has been streamlining import procedures to facilitate trade and has created a one-stop-window (CIEX), located at the Salvadoran Central Bank, for import processing. The Millennium Challenge Corporation's Fomilenio II program, as well as a USAID trade facilitation program, have been helping the government of El Salvador to reduce bureaucratic barriers by upgrading their import software platforms.

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

The following table contains a list of official export certificates required for imported products.

Product (s)	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Ministry
Dairy	Health and Origin	None	Health Certificate	Agriculture

Red Meat (Beef) 1/	Zoosanitary, Health and Origin	<p>Beef and beef products - Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5, Meat and Poultry Export Certificate of Wholesomeness. The following statements must be included in the "Remarks" section of FSIS Form 9060-5 or on an FSIS Letterhead Certificate:</p> <p>The beef and beef products were derived from animals that were born and raised in the United States or were legally imported in accordance with U.S. import regulations.</p> <p>1. The beef and beef products were not derived from the following specified risk materials: the brain, skull, eyes, trigeminal ganglia, spinal cord, vertebral column (excluding the vertebrae of the tail, the transverse processes of the thoracic and lumbar vertebrae, and the wings of the sacrum) and dorsal root ganglia of cattle 30 months of age and older, and the tonsils and distal ileum of the small intestine of any cattle regardless of age.</p> <p>2. The feeding of ruminants with ruminant origin meat-and-bone meal and greaves is prohibited in the United States.</p> <p>3. The cattle from which the beef and beef products were obtained were not subjected to a stunning process with a device injecting compressed air or gas into the cranial cavity, or to a pithing process.</p> <p>4. The beef/beef products were produced and handled in a manner which ensures that</p>	Health Certificate	Agriculture
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		<p>such products do not contain and are not contaminated with mechanically separated meat from the skull and vertebral column of cattle.</p> <p>Signature on certificates - All required forms and supplementary statements must be signed by a veterinarian. The name and degree must be included (DVM or equivalent).</p>		
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Red Meat (Pork)	Zoosanitary, Health and Origin	None	Health Certificate	Agriculture
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Poultry	Zoosanitary, Health and Origin	<p>Official zoosanitary certificate must include: “1. The meat derives from birds raised in the USA. 2. The product was derived from birds originating from a zone free of exotic Newcastle disease and highly pathogenic notifiable avian influenza (HPNAI) for at least 21 days prior to slaughter, and from birds subjected to ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections for NAI with favorable results. 3. The birds, their products and sub-products, come from farms and establishments authorized by APHIS and FSIS to export to El Salvador. 4. The birds are the progeny of farms and flocks participating in the National Poultry Improvement Plan which are routinely monitored and free from Salmonella Pullorum and Gallinarum. 5. The poultry meat derives from farms which have a sanitary and production program under supervision of the animal health authorities in the U.S. The birds from which the products were derived were not under official veterinary quarantine for poultry diseases transmissible through the meat. 6. There have been no clinical outbreaks of serious poultry diseases transmissible through poultry meat on the premises of origin, notifiable in the U.S., for at least 90 days prior to shipment. 7. The slaughter establishment where the birds were processed was under</p>	Health Certificate	Agriculture
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		<p>official inspection and is authorized to export poultry meat. 8. The product was inspected and passed and found fit for human consumption. 9. The poultry meat was produced under mandatory HACCP regulations that require testing for Salmonella and Escherichia coli and was found to be in compliance. 10. The poultry meat was produced in accordance with the U.S. National Residue Program”.</p>		
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Seafood	Health and Origin	None	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Grains	Phytosanitary and Origin	“Product has been inspected and is free of pests”.	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Flours	Phytosanitary and Origin	“Product has been inspected and is free of pests”.	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Vegetables (Processed, Frozen or Preserved)	Phytosanitary, Origin and Free Sale	None None	Health Certificate Food Safety	Agriculture Health
Vegetables/Fruits (Fresh), Flowers and Foliage	Phytosanitary and Origin	“Product has been inspected and is free of pests. Product originates from areas free of <i>Maconelicoccus hirsutus</i> and <i>Thrips palmi</i> ”. For grapes from California: “Product is free of pink mealy bug”.	Plant Health	Agriculture
Ornamental Plants	Phytosanitary and Origin	“Plants have been inspected and are free of pests. Plants are free of soil residues or are packed using inert substance”.	Plant Health	Agriculture

Pet Food	Zoosanitary, Health and Origin	<p>The export of pet food to El Salvador requires a valid import permit.</p> <p>The following certification statements, as applicable, should be provided on a VS Form 16-4 for the export of canned, extruded (pelleted or biscuits), or semi-moist pet foods containing animal origin ingredients. Product description (product box on VS Form 16-4) should include the species of origin for all animal origin ingredients, as well as the nature of the product. Certification statements should be given in English and in Spanish; El Salvador may require a separate official translation</p> <p>The Area office has on file a notarized affidavit from [company name] verifying the accuracy of the statements below:</p> <p>1. The product is freely sold in the United States as pet food. The product has been manufactured in plants authorized by the official competent authority of the United States.</p> <p>2. The product has been manufactured in accordance with U.S. laws and regulations designed to validate microbial, physiochemical, and compositional quality.</p> <p>3. All animal-origin</p>	Health Certificate	Agriculture
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		<p>ingredients in dry, semi moist, and dehydrated pet food products have been heated to a minimum internal temperature of 70°C. Finished products (except for hermetically sealed containers) were processed to assure the destruction of harmful pathogens as demonstrated by the fact that finished products were found in compliance with the most updated regulations on pathogens. Canned pet food products have been treated in hermetically sealed containers with an F0 of 3.0 or more.</p> <p>4. The pet food products described herein are unlikely to disseminate agents of infectious diseases of domestic animals, including foot-and-mouth disease, avian influenza Newcastle disease and classical swine fever. Precautions have been taken to avoid contamination of the product with pathogenic agents after heat treatment.</p> <p>5. Precautions have been taken during processing and storage of cat food products to prevent any commingling or cross-contamination with prohibited ruminant-origin materials.</p>		
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Planting Seeds	Phytosanitary and Origin	“Seeds have received chemical treatment and are duly certified.”	Plan Health	Agriculture
Tallow	Zoosanitary, Health and Origin	A. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5, Meat and Poultry Export Certificate of Wholesomeness. The following statement must be provided in the Remarks section: <i>"That the maximum content of insoluble impurities of the tallow does not exceed 0.15 percent of its weight".</i>	Health Certificate	Agriculture

1/Current beef protocol for U.S. beef conforms to the Negligible Risk Status for BSE granted by the OIE.

Section II. Purpose of Specific Export Certificate(s)

The Ministry of Agriculture’s (MAG) Livestock Division (DGG) awards import permits for animal products and the Plant Health Division awards permits for plant products. In addition, all imported processed products must be registered at the Ministry of Health’s (MINSAL) Environmental Safety Division (DSA).

In general, most products are subject to lab tests during initial registration and routine controls. MINSAL only accepts third-party lab analysis for product registration during official holidays. At all other times all lab analysis must be conducted at MINSAL labs. The GOES requires importers to register with MINSAL. Importers must also register each product to be imported with MINSAL to ensure the product is fit for human consumption. A product that is registered undergoes physical, chemical, microbiological, and other related tests to determine that it meets minimum health and sanitary standards. Product registration usually takes two to three weeks. Once granted, registrations are valid for five years. On March 23, 2017, MINSAL, in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy, launched the product registration online service called SISAM (Environmental Health Information System) to facilitate trade. This service can be accessed through the following MINSAL website link <http://usam.salud.gob.sv/index.php/servicios/en-linea/guia-de-servicios-gaisa> through the SISAM icon. In this same website MINSAL provides information about all the services provided for imported product registration and import permits.

On June 16, 2017 the SISAM website was also linked to the Salvadoran Central Bank (BCR) so that product registration payments can be made electronically, considerably reducing the time it takes to register a product. Payment can be made at the Central Bank's Import/Export online service window at the website link <http://www.ciexelsalvador.gob.sv/registroSIMP/index.php/importadores>.

MAG has an online import permit system called Agricultural Safety Integration (SISA). Through SISA, importers can complete import permit requests online and expedite their import procedure. The system can be accessed through the website link <http://oas.mag.gob.sv/sisa/tramites.jsp>.

Certificates of Free Sale are required for imported products. A certificate of free sale, ideally, is a certificate from an official public health agency that states that the product to be imported meets all health and sanitary requirements of that agency and it is freely sold and consumed in the country of origin. The certificate can include more than one product and is valid for one year. The certificate must be in Spanish or be accompanied by a copy of an official translation that can be provided by the importer. FAS negotiated with the Ministry of Health the acceptance of the Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) 9060-5 certificate for meat and meat products in lieu of the Certificate of Free Sale (CFS). Also, both MAG and MINSAL accept FDA's new "Certificate to a Foreign Government" in lieu of the CFS. The FDA certificates are valid for two years from date of issuance. To apply for FDA export certificates, please visit [Online Applications for Export Certificates for Food](#).

Food groups such as baby food, diet foods, and health foods are subject to the same regulations as other products. In the case of meat, sanitary regulations are required. These regulations are enforced by DGG through the Law for Sanitary Inspection of Meat (Executive Decree # 39, 07/13/71). Meat and meat products can be imported from any country whose meat inspection system is equivalent to El Salvador's system. Under CAFTA-DR, El Salvador recognized the U.S. meat inspection system, including poultry, as equivalent. Shell eggs are not included in the equivalency recognition and at this time imports require an on-site plant inspection. However, FAS, in collaboration with the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), continues working with the Ministry of Agriculture to get them to recognize the U.S. egg inspection system as equivalent and reach an agreement on an import protocol for this product.

Each shipment that contains meat and meat products from a foreign country must include an official certificate of meat inspection from the country of origin in Spanish. In addition, to obtain the import permit, meat-processing plants must be inspected and certified by a DGG inspector and the importer must present a lab analysis for pesticide residue and heavy metals. MAG has updated beef import regulations in accordance with the new OIE status for the United States as a negligible risk country for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). FAS and APHIS have also negotiated a protocol for pet food that would reflect the U.S. negligible risk status. Dairy products also must contain a microbiological lab analysis. There are no special packaging or container size requirements in El Salvador.

MINSAL is enforcing the product registration requirement and does not allow any imported food product into the country without having fulfilled this requirement. Meats (fresh or frozen) do not require a registration. The cost for product registration at MINSAL is \$35. In addition, microbiological analysis must be conducted for every food product that needs to be registered. The cost for this analysis ranges from \$50 to \$100 per product.

According to the Health Authorities in El Salvador, an application must be filed at the DSA of MINSAL (Environmental Safety Division/Ministry of Health), which shall include the following information:

- Petitioner's name and address.
- Description of the product.
- Name, address and telephone number of the establishment or factory where the product is manufactured.
- Use that the product will have.
- Name, address and telephone of the supplier in El Salvador.

This application must be filed with the following documents:

- Power of attorney granted in favor of the Salvadoran attorneys or the company representative in the country, duly notarized at the nearest Consulate of El Salvador in the U.S. or by Apostille.
- The Environmental Safety Division requires 3 samples of solid products, weighing 200 grams each.
- For liquid products, the Ministry of Health requires 3 samples of 200 milliliters each.
- A Certificate of Free Sale of the product, issued by the official health authorities of the country of origin, duly notarized at the nearest Salvadoran Consulate or by Apostille. It must contain the product's registration number and the manufacturing state of the country.
- Functioning license of the local warehouse where the product will be stored (usually the local distributor obtains this license).
- Two original labels of the product to verify that they conform to the requirements established by the Salvadoran Body for Technical Conformity (OSARTEC) for mandatory Salvadoran Norm (NSO): General Norm for labeling of pre-packaged food products: R-UAC 67.01.02:02.
- Ingredient list in decreasing order according to product formulation. Only the following must be quantified: flavoring, colorants, emulsifiers, preservers, sweetener, and any other ingredients according to national or international norms. All other ingredients must be described in a qualitative manner.

A representative or local distributor generally does the product registration procedure.

For additional information on food import regulations please refer to El Salvador's Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Narrative report (ES2020-0015) at www.fas.usda.gov under Attaché Reports.

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

Please refer to Section I.

Section IV. Government Certificate's Legal Entry Requirements

- Does the original certificate need to accompany the product at the time of entry?

Yes. However, an authenticated and Salvadoran consulate-approved copy will be accepted.

- How long is the certificate valid? Can the certificate be applied to multiple shipments?

If product is introduced through Acajutla Port the Phyto and Zoo sanitary certificates are valid for three months and for 30 days if introduced through any other official point of entry. Certificates for grains are valid for 6 months.

- Will the country accept a Suppliers or Manufacturers Export Declaration as proof of compliance?

No.

- Will El Salvador accept a U.S. State issued export certificate?

Yes, origin export certificates are accepted from U.S. State official institutions.

- Will the country derogate export certificates? Which certificates? How do you apply?

No.

Section V. Other Certification/Accreditation Requirements

Product	Sanitary Requirement
Dairy	Milk must come from establishments that have no sanitary restrictions. The plant must be authorized by DGG and approved for export by country of origin. The plant must base its activities on Codex Norms FAO-OMS and should include a program for microbiological control, physical-chemical, antibiotics, pesticides and heavy metals. Milk must be pasteurized or submitted to a 60 day maturation process indicating that it is safe for human consumption. Upon arrival at the port of entry, an approved disinfectant in the country of destination must be applied to the packing material. The product must carry a label that should contain at least the following characteristics: a) Product classification, b) Ingredients in decreasing order according to proportion, c) Additives list indicating function in the product, d) Expiration date in a visible place, e) Lot identification, as well as production year, month and day which could be in code in a visible place, f) Manufacturer's name and address, g) Must declare name of country where product was manufactured, h) Net content in units according to international measuring system, I) Corresponding registration number and j) Vehicles and containers used for transportation must meet all conditions necessary for the optimal maintenance of cold chain; must be washed and disinfected prior to shipment with products authorized by both exporting and importing country.

Red Meat (Beef)	<p>Must proceed from establishments that have no sanitary restrictions. The slaughter facility must be approved for exports and officially recognized by the importing country, based on Codex Alimentarius FAO-OMS with relation to ante and postmortem. Must be certified by sanitary officials from the exporting country as being safe for human consumption and have official veterinary inspection. Adequate refrigeration and packaging with a seal of inspection and identification of the establishment of origin. Must present lab analysis results for pesticide residue, heavy metals and microbiology in accordance with a sampling program. Demonstrate the existence of a surveillance system that allows for identification of the herd where beef proceeds from, using a permanent tracking system that permits locating the mother and herd of origin. Proceed from cattle that have not been born from animals that are affected or supposedly affected by Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis (BSE), or that have been born after the prohibition of feeding with bone and beef meal. Proceed from cattle that have been born, raised and remained in herds where no BSE case has been confirmed within the last seven years. Cattle will be submitted to an ante mortem inspection. No air or compressed gas guns have been used to sacrifice the cattle. The beef and beef products were not derived from the following specified risk materials: the brain, skull, eyes, trigeminal ganglia, spinal cord, vertebral column (excluding the vertebrae of the tail, the transverse processes of the thoracic and lumbar vertebrae, and the wings of the sacrum) and dorsal root ganglia of cattle 30 months of age and older, and the tonsils and distal ileum of the small intestine of any cattle regardless of age. The beef and beef products were derived from animals that were born and raised in the United States or were legally imported in accordance with U.S. import regulations. Conditions for maintaining the cold chain must be met and sealed with a customhouse stamp that can only be removed by DGG inspectors. The Ministry of Agriculture's division Inspection of Animal Origin Products (IPOA) will inspect the product upon arrival at the destination country.</p> <p>Please refer to the Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) export library to view the updated U.S. beef and beef products regulations for El Salvador negotiated with the Ministry of Agriculture.</p>
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Red Meat (Pork)	<p>Animals must have been born, raised and exported in the exporting country. Farms must maintain a Zoosanitary control program under professional vet supervision. Farms must be free of: Aujeszky, Atrophic Rhinitis, Brucellosis, Transmissible Gastroenteritis, Digenesis and Respiratory Syndrome and Triquinelosis. Must proceed from slaughtering facilities that are authorized for exports by the country of origin and based on Codex Alimentarius FAO-OMS. Facility must be previously certified by DGG. Must be certified by sanitary officials from the exporting country as being safe for human consumption and have official veterinary inspection. Meat proceeds from healthy animals that were born, raised and fed in the exporting country. In the case that they proceed from third country animals, they must have remained in the country no less than 3 months. Must be packaged in food grade materials that are leak proof. Package must include product identification, facility where product was processed, authorization number awarded by official sanitary authority, lot number, production and expiration dates. Vehicles and containers used for transportation must meet all conditions necessary for the optimal maintenance of cold chain; must be washed and disinfected previous to shipment with products authorized by both exporting and importing country, and sealed with a customhouse stamp that can only be removed by DGG inspectors. Importation is only permitted from animals that originate in countries that are free of foot and mouth, classical swine fever, African swine fever, encephalomyelitis by enterovirus (Teschén) and vesicular stomatitis and other exotic diseases.</p>
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Poultry	<p>Imports are only allowed from countries or areas free of the following diseases: New Castle, Avian Influenza, Laryngotraqueitis and Pulorosis/Tifosis. Farms must have a zoosanitary control program under professional vet supervision and slaughter facility is free of the following diseases: s. pullorum, s. gallinarum, s. tiphimutium, s. enteritidis, s. gallisepticum and s. Sinoviae pasteurilla. The slaughter facility must be inspected and officially approved for exports by the importing and exporting country, based on Codex Alimentarius FAO-OMS with relation to ante and postmortem and sanitation of fresh meat. The birds from where the product proceeds are not subject to sanitary restrictions and have presented negative results to tests for: Newcastle isolation, hemoagglutination inhibition (hi) and/or immunodifusion in agar gel for avian influenza, rapid agglutination in plaque and isolation for avian sallmonelosis (s. pullorun and s. gallinarum) and ELISA for infectious avian laryngotraqueitis. Imports must proceed from birds raised in the country of origin. Must be certified by sanitary officials from the exporting country as being safe for human consumption. That have been packaged in new boxes made of carton or plastic, satisfying the disinfection requirements and that after this process were not exposed to contamination. Must exhibit clearly farm of origin identification, lot number, production date, and have an official seal that establishes that containers or transportation vehicles have been washed and disinfected using authorized products by the country of origin. Conditions for maintaining the cold chain must be met and sealed with a customhouse stamp that can only be removed by DGG inspectors. IPOA will inspect product upon arrival at the destination country.</p> <p>Please refer to the Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) export library to view the updated U.S. poultry regulations for El Salvador negotiated under the CAFTA-DR agreement.</p>
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Seafood	<p>Shrimp must proceed from an authorized facility in the country of origin. Facility must carry out its activities based on Codex Alimentarius FAO-OMS norms. Whenever DGG considers appropriate, a joint inspection and approval visit with the official sanitary authority in the country of origin will be conducted. Imports are allowed from countries or areas free of the following diseases: White spot, yellow head and TSV. Whenever MAG consider necessary, samples can be taken from each shipment for sanitary analysis, quarantine and toxic residues. Product must include in the package a label that includes at minimum the following characteristics: a) Product designation and classification, b) ingredient names in decreasing order according to proportion, c) Additives indicating function in the product, d) Expiration date in an appropriate and visible place, e) lot identification, manufacturing year/month/day which can be in code in an appropriate and visible place, f) Manufacturer's name or establishment under which the brand is sold, as well as the establishment's address, g) Manufacturing country, h) Net content in units of the international measuring system and I) Corresponding registration number. Conditions for maintaining the cold chain must be met and sealed with a customhouse stamp that can only be removed by DGG inspectors.</p> <p>For additional information or assistance with seafood import requirements please contact the U.S. Department of Commerce/NOAA.</p>
Grains	Quarantine treatment will be applied at origin and respective proof will be required. If during inspection at point of entry live pests are found, a new treatment will be applied.
Flours	Product will be inspected at point of entry and a quarantine treatment will be applied if live pests are found during inspection.
Vegetables/Fruits (Fresh), Flowers and Foliage	Product will be inspected at point of entry and a quarantine treatment will be applied if during inspection live pests are found.
Ornamental Plants	Product will be inspected at point of entry and a quarantine treatment will be applied if during inspection live pests are found. In some cases, the CITES certificate must be presented.
Planting Seeds	The variety, brand and lot number must be specified. Seed will be sampled at the warehouse before being commercialized. Biotech seeds are prohibited.

Appendix I. Electronic Copy or Outline of Each Export Certificate

Export certificates for processed products required by the Ministry of Health need to be signed by the official foreign government authority. For processed products containing more than 3 percent meat/poultry and eggs the certificate must be signed by FSIS.

Attachments:

No Attachments