

COLLATION OF THE SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO 2010 APEC SURVEY

Lori Tortora
U.S. Dept of Agriculture
April 2012



Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation



FSCF Food Safety
Cooperation Forum
PTIN Partnership Training
Institute Network

COMMODITIES COVERED

- Some of the responses were applicable only to a specific commodity rather than across a whole range of commodities. Although responses may cover additional products, the following were specifically indicated in member's responses:
- Meat and poultry, fish, dairy, **processed food**, seafood (including puffer fish, oysters), and fresh produce (fruit and vegetables).

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF OFFICIAL EXPORT CERTIFICATES

Countries were asked to describe the purpose and/or objective of the type of certification required to be presented for food imported into their economy. The responses indicated the following:

- Animal pest and disease quarantine issues
- Certification of halal
- Food safety/meeting importing country food safety requirements
- Phytosanitary
- Food quality/food composition
- EU Catch Certificate/to enable the importing country to attest to the legality of the seafood they export to the EU
- Meat – absence of BSE, hormones, and growth promoters

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF OFFICIAL EXPORT CERTIFICATES

Other types of certification are required to ensure that product complies with consumer protection, food quality and religious requirements. There were several responses focused on requirements to supply export catch certificates and health certificates for imported fish and fishery products that will be re-processed for export of the EU.

LEGISLATIVE BASIS FOR REQUIRING OFFICIAL CERTIFICATES

All survey respondents indicated that there was a legislative basis for export certificate requirements, although the legislative basis cited in some cases was that of the EU (seafood catch certificates).

PRESCRIBED CERTIFICATE FORMATS

Are there prescribed formats for certificates that are required to be issued by the competent authority of the exporting country?

Yes – 6 responses

No – 7 responses

OFFICIAL CERTIFICATES

Does your country/department/ministry require the export certificates to be official certificates (i.e., signed by the competent authority of the exporting country or a body recognized by that authority)?

Yes – 12 Economies

No – 0 Economies

TYPES OF ATTESTATIONS

The CCFICS Generic Model Official Certificate provides explanatory notes for each of the fields on the certificate . In regards to the certification required by your APEC Member Economy, please describe the types of attestations required by the competent authority of the exporting country or a body recognized by that authority, including the rationale/purpose of each attestation? (e.g., food safety, fraud prevention; legislative requirement)

TYPES OF ATTESTATIONS

Animal health

- Country disease freedom – animal health status for diseases and/or pest of quarantine concern.
- Individual animal health – general disease signs including ante and post mortem inspection and clinically healthy animals e.g. dairy products.
- Processing – including heat treatments, pH etc.
- Tissue type – removal of specified risk materials.
- The meat was derived from animals originating from an area which was free from notifiable, contagious, infectious and parasitic diseases and not under any restrictive measures;

TYPES OF ATTESTATIONS

Food Safety (including inspection & freedom from contamination)

- Packaging – clean and new wrapping, no cross contamination etc.
- The official certificate deals with public health, food safety, animal health as well as consumer protection requirements and serves as legislative requirement and fraud protection as well.
- Animals and products have been inspected and quarantined by the competent authority and not found any pathogenic bacteria, harmful substances and foreign substances regulated in the exporting country and importing country;

TYPES OF ATTESTATIONS

Food Safety (including inspection & freedom from contamination)

- Animals or products meet veterinary sanitary requirements and are fit for human consumption. etc.
- Attesting that meat and poultry products have been slaughtered, dressed, feather-removed, eviscerated, processed and inspected in accordance with the requirements which are equivalent to the importing country regulations.
- **Compliance to the national food safety requirement as well as that of the importing country.**

TYPES OF ATTESTATIONS

Country of Origin

- Attestation regarding the foreign establishment coming from an approved list in the country of origin.

Residue Status

- Attestation regarding the product meeting certain requirements (Drug products were not used, products were tested and no residues were found).

TYPES OF ATTESTATIONS

Other Requirements

- Compliance to other relevant /applicable legislation as may be required (legality, CITES/OIE/rules/fraud-free)
- **The Certificate of Free Sale attests that the product, or its equivalent, that “the food product is feely sold” in the country of origin. The certificate is required to determine the safe consumption of the products in the country of origin.**
- Phytosanitary.
- To attest that product meets halal standards.
- Certificate of Analysis (laboratory test report or report of analysis) showing the substances and levels of fortification for every shipment that will enter the importing country market.

PROBLEMS IN REQUIRING CERTIFICATES

What problems does your country/department/ministry encounter in requiring such export certificates from exporting countries? (countries were asked to identify no more than four problems).

PROBLEMS IN REQUIRING CERTIFICATES

- **Incomplete/inconsistent Certificates**
- Shipment by shipment certification
- Some countries prefer to use their own electronic generated forms for export which creates inconsistency.

PROBLEMS IN ISSUING CERTIFICATES

What problems does your country/department/ministry encounter in preparing and issuing official export certificates to fulfill the export certification requirements of other countries? (no more than four problems, please).

PROBLEMS IN ISSUING CERTIFICATES

-
- **Lack of harmonization of certificates**
- **Requirement for paper certificates instead of more secure methods of transmission**
- **Attestations for requirements that are not related to sanitary requirements for food safety**
- **Attestations relating to animal health status for countries that are recognized free from certain diseases**
- **Lack of recognition of equivalence of systems**
- **Attestations that are not verifiable from a technical point of view, i.e., absence of radioactivity or absence of dioxins**
- **Language – requiring certificates in language other than English (costly and time consuming)**

ALTERNATIVES TO OFFICIAL CERTIFICATES

Are there other arrangements in place for imported food that does not involve the issuance of certification by the exporting country competent authority?

ALTERNATIVES TO OFFICIAL CERTIFICATES

A risk-based border inspection program with higher risk foods subjected to a higher examination/testing/verification rate.

- Programs may be implemented on a fee for service basis where the importer bears the cost of inspection and testing.
- The establishment/maintenance of list of approved facilities eligible to export to the importing country.
- Other types of 'mutual recognition arrangements' are negotiated to minimize the need for lot by lot certificates.

ALTERNATIVES TO OFFICIAL CERTIFICATES

A risk-based border inspection program with higher risk foods subjected to a higher examination/testing/verification rate.

-Meat: There are some meat products that are exempted from Meat Inspection Act and Regulations and accordingly, do not require an issuance of an official certificate. However, it may require other documentation based on animal health requirements.

-DAIRY: Cheese import license: all cheese importers must have a valid license in order to import cheese into Canada. A separate certificate is not needed at the point of entry but the license number must be stated on the import declaration and the request for release approval.

ALTERNATIVES TO OFFICIAL CERTIFICATES

A risk-based border inspection program with higher risk foods subjected to a higher examination/testing/verification rate.

-When foods are imported without certification issued by the exporting country, consignments are under laboratory analysis including meeting the importing country's standards and specifications.

-For certain food items, the only requirement may be a laboratory report instead of an export certificate.

INQUIRIES / QUESTIONS

Lori Tortora

International Trade Specialist

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Foreign Agricultural Service

Office of Agreements and Scientific Affairs

Processed Products and Technical Regulations Division

lori.tortora@fas.usda.gov



Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation



FSCF Food Safety
Cooperation Forum
PTIN Partnership Training
Institute Network