Choosing The Right Certificate For The Right Reasons

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Certificates - Why have them?

- Attests to
  - Food safety and phytosanitary condition of the product
    - Regulated products (meat, dairy, eggs, fish, etc)
    - Non-regulated products
  - Sanitary condition of the shipment
    - Containers, packaging, pallets
  - Financial parameters
    - Customs documents
Food safety certificates

- Regulated products
  - Certification process is formal and requires management of the details

- Improvement
  - Standardise as much as possible, wording, layout, content, approval(s)
Food safety certificates

- Non-regulated products
  - Required or not?
  - “Don’t expect what you don’t inspect”
    - “To help ensure hygienic standards of food, importers are encouraged to obtain health certificates issued by health authorities of countries of origin to accompany their imports certifying that the food products concerned are fit for human consumption.”

Reference: Hong Kong
- Centre for Food Safety - Imported Food Control - Guide to import
Food safety certificates

- Approvals from multiple authorities
  - Current proforma certificates are rarely suitable and generally not set up for this
  - In practice it is hard to coordinate authorities
  - Separate certificates usually work best
Sanitary Condition (example)

- When booking a container with the nominated shipping line/agent, can you please request a ‘Food Quality Container’

- Before the container is loaded please check off the following ‘Food Quality Container’ requirements
  - No internal rust visible
  - Free from oil and other residue
  - No holes (wind and water tight)
  - No odours
Packing declaration
- Submitted by the exporter
- Approved by an authorised company representative
- Onus is with the exporting company for compliance
Information and Guides

• Most web-sites are actually not user friendly

• Standardise APEC requirements where possible

• Broadly regulate for food safety and phytosanitary outcomes and eliminate unnecessary documentation

• Recognise what does not need any certificate

• Keep it simple