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Honduras

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative

FAIRS Country Report 2017

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Report Highlights:

On July 20, 2017 the Honduran Government launched its new sanitary regulatory agency (Agencia de Regulacion Sanitaria – ARSA). The agency is responsible for sanitary registration, surveillance, and inspection of food products approved to be sold at the retail and wholesale level. ARSA has eliminated the requirement of a laboratory test prior to issuing the sanitary registration. Updated Sections: Section I. Food Laws and Section VII. Other Specific Standards.

Section I. Food Laws:

The Honduran Government (GOH) main regulatory agency responsible for food and agricultural imports and exports is the National Plant, Animal Health and Food Safety Service (SENASA). SENASA establishes regulations, procedures, and oversees compliance regarding plant and animal health, and food safety of agricultural products. SENASA is governed through the Phytosanitary and Zoosanitary Law (Congressional Decree 157-94, modified via Decree 344-2005) and its implementing regulations.

SENASA issues import permits for plant, animal, processed, consumer ready food products, agricultural chemicals, veterinary products, and inputs used in food processing for human or animal consumption that enter Honduras.

On May 19, 2017, the GOH created a new Sanitary Regulation Agency (Agencia de Regulacion Sanitaria – ARSA). ARSA was created through Decree PCM-032-2017 as a decentralized agency, with legal status, technical, and administrative independence. The previous responsibilities of the Ministry of Health office were assigned to ARSA. On July 20, ARSA started issuing licenses, sanitary registrations, and other sanitary authorizations for food and beverages, medicines, natural products, cosmetics, medical devices and hygiene products.

ARSA oversees supervision, review, control, surveillance and inspection of products sold at the retail and wholesale level. ARSA verifies the product and the establishment's compliance with sanitary regulations. ARSA grants, renews, modifies, suspends or cancels licenses, sanitary registrations, and other sanitary authorization for the products listed.

To expedite sanitary authorizations (licenses, registers and others), ARSA eliminated the laboratory test requirement. This requirement was substituted by an affidavit signed by the legal representative of the company. The laboratory analysis will be done during the surveillance stage, when the products are in the market. This action allows ARSA to reduce the time to grant licenses, sanitary registrations, and other sanitary authorizations, while allowing them to focus on surveillance to provide protection for consumers.

ARSA inherited more than 13,000 files pending sanitary authorizations. Since July 2017, ARSA has granted more than 9,000 sanitary authorizations, close to 70% of the backlog.

ARSA applies the following regulations in order of precedence:

1. Constitution of the Republic of Honduras
2. Regulations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and World Trade Organization (WTO)
3. Free Trade Agreements such as CAFTA-DR and others
4. Central America Customs Union (CACU) Regulations
5. Health Code: Regulation for the Sanitary Control of Products, Services, and Establishments of Sanitary Interest.

Article 9: Foods: Products, Additives, Pre-Packed and Labeling

Article 10: Honduran Technical Regulations for Food Establishments

6. CODEX Alimentarius Regulations
7. The U.S. Federal Code (U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations).
8. Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) guidelines

The aforementioned food and agricultural imports legislations and regulations are geared towards: consumer health, and avoiding fraud in transactions which deal with food and agricultural products. The Consumer Protection Law address food safety issues to some extent.

The scope of the food laws and regulations in Honduras are also developed by the Central American Customs Union (CACU). The major objectives of CACU are the harmonization of the rules of origin of goods, tariff harmonization, and sanitary registration regionally. These objectives are reaffirmed by the Presidents of the CACU countries during their Summits; and developed by the Ministers Council of Economic Integration (COMIECO). They issue Resolutions to approve or modify Central America Technical Regulations (RTCA in Spanish), which are agreed upon unanimously by member countries. COMIECO is composed of the Ministers of Economy of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama.

RTCAs are developed according to guidelines provided in COMIECO’s Resolution No. 162-2006 - Procedures to Develop, Adopt and Approve Technical Regulations and Evaluation Processes. The Resolution can be found at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=796>

As is the case with limited resources, enforcement of existing laws and regulations for the GOH is challenging. At times, there is a lack of basic infrastructure, necessary human and economic resources to adequately enforce its regulations, particularly, in legal compliance during commercialization.

Section II. Labeling Requirements:

A. General Requirements

The National Plant, Animal Health and Food Safety Service (SENASA) requests and enforces that the products display the production and expiration date, as well as the lot number on the shipping carton(s) upon arrival at the port. The dates must be provided in the Day/Month/Year format. If the products do not comply with this requirement, they are not allowed entry and must be returned.

ARSA’s requirement in order to issue the sanitary registration is that labels must comply with the following Central America Technical Regulations (RTCA):

COMIECO’s Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
280-2012	General Labeling for Pre-packed Foods	67.01.07:10

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 280-2012 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=657>

A general guide for labeling requirements of pre-packed foods provided in the RTCA 67.01.07:10 is provided below:

- a) Name of the product, which is normally specific, must indicate the true nature of the product. The name of the product should not mislead the buyer or consumer. For example, the label should indicate if the product is dehydrated, concentrated, reconstituted, smoked or pasteurized among others.
- b) List of ingredients. The list should be clearly marked and must be in descending order by initial weight at the time the product was manufactured. Foodstuffs must declare ingredients assessed as potential allergens from the following list: cereals that contain gluten, shellfish, eggs, fish, soy, peanuts, milk (lactose), nuts and sulfite in concentrations of 10 mg. The list must specify if water had been added, except in cases when water is part of an ingredient such as brine, syrup or broth.
- c) Net content. The net content must be specified in units using the International System of Units (metric system) in the following manner: volume for liquid food products, weight for solid food products, and either weight or volume for semi-solid or viscous food products.
- d) Sanitary Registration Number (SRN). The registration number should be provided by the competent authority. The steps needed to obtain a SRN are described in Section VII: Product Registration.
- e) Name and address of the manufacturer or distributor of the product.
- f) Country of origin of the product.
- g) Lot number. This number must be engraved or printed in a permanent manner and may be placed on any external surface of the package.
- h) Expiration date. The dates must appear in Spanish on the shipping carton(s). The dates must be written in the Day/Month/Year format (DD/MM/YYYY). The manufacturer must ensure that the dates are displayed with indelible ink and it must be printed in such a way that it cannot be erased or easily changed. The expiration date must be easy for consumers to read. The order of day and month can be changed only when written in letters or month abbreviations.

Nutritional Labeling:

Nutritional Labeling is required in Honduras. The standard U.S. nutritional fact panel is acceptable. ARSA uses the guidelines stated in CODEX and the following RTCAs:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
281-2012 and 277-2011	Nutritional Labeling of Pre-Packed Foods for Human Consumption of Population over Three Years Old	67.01.60:10

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolutions 281-2012 and 277-2011 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=655>

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=662>

When a product contains enriched nutritious substances such as vitamins, mineral salts, and proteins the label should read: “Enriched Food Product” or “Enriched Artificial Food Product,” whichever the case may be. The label should also specify the name and the content per serving or consumption unit.

ARSA takes special care in ensuring that products that are widely used by the population, and that require added ingredients to increase their nutritional value, are properly labeled as fortified such as:

- Sugar for human consumption must be fortified with vitamin A.
- Salt must be fortified with iodine.
- Wheat flour with iron, folic acid, vitamins B1 and B2, and niacin.

Additional Labeling Requirements:

1. Labels may be made of paper or any other material that can be attached or permanently printed on the package.
2. All writing on labels has to be clear and legible, and should not fade under normal use.
3. Labels that are attached to a container may have text on the reverse side as long as it is clearly visible through the container.
4. When the product requires refrigeration, it must be labeled accordingly.

5.

When the product is easily contaminated and requires refrigeration after opening or must be consumed immediately, the label must state either: "For immediate consumption after opening" or "Refrigerate after opening", whichever the case may be.

6. When the product is artificial, it must be labeled accordingly.
7. Labels are not permitted on the internal part of a package or container where they would come into contact with the product itself.
8. Required labeling information should not be displayed on strips, bands, lids, tops, covers, caps, or any other part of the package which is used to open the product.
9. All food products which have been treated with radiation (ionizing energy) must have specified on the label (close to the name of the product) the nature of the treatment. When a radiated product is used as an ingredient in another product, it must be specified in the list of ingredients.

Further requirements are provided in the RTCAs listed above, and summarized as follows:

General Labeling for Pre-packed Foods:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=657>

Nutritional Labeling of Pre-Packed Foods for Human Consumption of Population over Three Years Old:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=655>

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=662>

B. Requirements for Other Specific Labeling

Liquor:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
332-2013	Liquor. Labeling Requirements.	67.01.05:11 67.01.06:11

The RTCAs can be found in the Annex of Resolution 332-2013 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=3488>

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=3491>

The following products are excluded from specifying the expiration date:

- Alcoholic beverages containing 10 percent or more of alcohol by volume
- Bakery products, which due to their nature, are generally consumed within 24 hours of the time they were produced (it is, however, common practice for bakeries to put an expiration date on products)
- Vinegar, chewing gum, and fresh fruits and vegetables

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations:

Containers can be of plastic, metal, glass, cardboard or any other materials which comply with requirements to maintain the quality and safety of the product. The packaging materials or containers should not absorb or transfer to the product components which will change the stability or quality of the product, or might cause content loss.

The quality control of the materials in contact with the food products is applied on a case-by-case basis. New or unusual packaging/containers are usually analyzed prior to product registration. The amount of product in pre-packed foods is regulated by the following regulation:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
291-2012	Modification to Resolution 168-2006. Amount of product in pre-packed foods	01.01.11:06

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 291-2012 at:
<http://www.sieca.int/Portal/Pagina.aspx?PaginaId=1041&q=RTCA%2001.01.11:06>

Section IV. Food Additives Regulations:

Honduras's regulatory authorities recognize the guidelines stated in CODEX, FDA and the following regulation:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
283-2012	Processed Food and Beverages: Food Additives	67.04.54:10

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 283-2012 at:
<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=651>

When a product contains preservatives, coloring, emulsifiers and other type of food additives the label must specify the generic name or international code, purpose, and concentration of each.

ARSA accepts as safe the following seven colorings in foods:

Yellow #5 Yellow #6 Red #2 Red #3
Blue #1 Blue #2 Red #40

U.S. exporters can obtain further information (in Spanish) on permitted or prohibited food additives at the following ARSA's e-mail: alimentos@arsa.gob.hn or contact the USDA/FAS Tegucigalpa Office at AgTegucigalpa@fas.usda.gov.

Section V. Pesticides and Other Contaminants:

Pesticides and veterinary drugs are regulated by SENASA's Plant and Animal Health Sub-Directorates. Ministerial Decree No.642-98 establishes the requirements for registration, importation, manufacturing, formulation, re-packaging, re-bottling, transportation, storage, sale, use and management.

SENASA uses a list of pesticides approved for use in Honduras and applies the maximum residue levels (MRLs) for imported food products set forth by CODEX. If the tolerance levels are not covered by CODEX, SENASA applies the MRLs from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The importer and the pesticide must be registered with SENASA's Plant Health Sub-Directorate. SENASA follows international regulations for its registration process. An application for pesticide registration must be submitted with documents such as: Certificate of a Registered Pesticide Product issued by EPA or USDA and Certificate of Qualitative and Quantitative Composition issued by the producer or manufacturing company of the product.

In addition, other documents required are toxicological and ecotoxicological studies. After the product and the importer are registered with SENASA, the importer requests a permit from SENASA to import the product. Among the data required for the import permit are: Pro-form invoice, location and name of the manufacturer, lot number of the product and amount to import.

In order to regulate pesticide residue in foodstuffs, SENASA has acquired equipment via USDA's Food for Progress Program for analysis. SENASA's Personnel has been trained. The mass gas chromatography equipment began to be used on July 1, 2017, and they are monitoring around 90 pesticides.

U.S. exporters can obtain information on approved pesticides and allowed MRLs at SENASA's Plant Health Sub-Director's Office. Aflatoxin levels for corn in Honduras can be obtained at SENASA's Food Safety Sub-Directorate. Honduras defers to CODEX standards for aflatoxin levels on food products. Please contact SENASA, listed in Appendix II.

Pesticides are regulated by SENASA's Plant Health Sub-Directorate and the following regulations:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
346-2014	Botanical Pesticides for Agricultural Use. Requirements for Registration	65.05.62.11

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 346-2014 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Portal/Pagina.aspx?PaginaId=1041&q=RTCA%2065.05.62.11>

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
297-2012	Microbiological Pesticides for Agricultural Use. Requirements for Registration	65.05.61:11

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 297-2012 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=3099>

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
258-2010	Pesticides. Pesticides for Domestic and Professional Use. Registration Requirements. Procedure to Recognize Registration	65.03.44:07

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 258-2010 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=1954>

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
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273-2011	Pesticides. Pesticides for Domestic and Professional Use. Labeling Requirements	65.03.57:10
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The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 273-2011 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=672>

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
118-2004	Various procedures, forms and requirements to register and use of pesticides	Annexes: 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10

The Annexes can be found at:

Annex No.3 Commercial Registration of Botanical Pesticides:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=2029>

Annex No.4 – Procedure to include an active ingredient to the harmonized list of prohibited pesticides:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=2030>

Annexes 6, 7 and 8 - Forms to certify the registration and technical grade active ingredient; registration and free sale certificates of agricultural pesticides:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=2032>

Annex No.10 - Technical requirements for the commercial registration of microbiological pesticides for agricultural use:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=2033>

Veterinary drugs:

Veterinary drugs are regulated by SENASA's Animal Health Sub-Directorate and the following regulations:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
257-2010 326-2013 362-2015	Veterinary Medicines and Related Products. Requirements for Sanitary Registration and Control	65.05.51:08

The RTCAs can be found in the Annexes of Resolutions 257-2010, 326-2013 and 362-2015 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=696>

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=3480>

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=5185>

Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements:

Honduras does not require any inspection procedures or testing of products prior to shipment. The official certificates or special documents that must accompany shipments can be found on the following GAIN Reports for Honduras: Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) – Export Certificate Report Number HO1707, and Exporter Guide Report Number HO1708.

Products are monitored at the retail/wholesale distribution levels by ARSA. ARSA’s Inspectors check if the expiration date of the product is displayed, if it is not expired, the lot number and the organoleptic conditions of the product, among others.

General Food and Beverages regulations are the following:

COMIECO’s Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
243-2009	Food. Microbiological Criteria for Food Safety	67.04.50:08

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 243-2009 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=1498>

In reference to RTCA 67.04.50:08 Microbiological Criteria for Food Safety above mentioned, please note that poultry was excluded from the Resolution. Each Central American country applies its national regulation, while the CACU countries reach an agreement.

COMIECO’s Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
176-2006	Processed Food and Beverages Industry. Good Manufacturing Practices	67.01.33:06

The RTCA can be found in the Annex 4 of Resolution 176-2006 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=1981>

COMIECO’s Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
226-2008	Processed Food and Beverages. Fruit Nectars	67.04.48:08

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 226-2008 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Portal/Pagina.aspx?PaginaId=1041&q=RTCA%2067.04.48:08>

Dairy products are regulated by the following CACU’s regulations:

COMIECO’s Resolution Number	Title	RTCA
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		Number
312-2013	Use of Dairy Glossary	67.04.65:12

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 312-2013 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=3347>

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
337-2014	Pasteurized Milk	67.04.66:12

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 337-2014 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Portal/Pagina.aspx?PaginaId=1041&q=RTCA%2067.04.66:12>

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
366-2015	Dairy Products. Cheeses. Specifications	67.04.70:14

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 366-2015 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Portal/Pagina.aspx?PaginaId=1041&q=RTCA%2067.04.70:14>

Agricultural inputs such as seeds are regulated by the following regulation:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
259-2010	Agricultural Inputs. Requirements for the Production and Commercialization of Certified Basic Grain and Soy Seeds.	65.05.53:10

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 259-2010 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=1953>

Additional regulations are the following:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
201-2007	Flours. Fortified Wheat Flour. Specifications	67.01.15:07

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 201-2007 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Portal/Pagina.aspx?PaginaId=1041&q=RTCA%2067.01.15:07#>

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
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215-2007	Prepared Food and Beverages. Oils and Fats. Specifications	67.04.40:07
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The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 215-2007 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=1968>

Section VII. Other Specific Standards:

Facility Registration:

U.S. facilities do not need to be registered with a Honduran regulatory authority prior to export. Under the United States-Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), Honduras recognizes the U.S. inspection services as equivalent. This equivalence eliminates the requirement of a certification by Honduras of the U.S. plant to export to the Honduran market.

Product Registration:

The procedures to register products produced or processed in Central America have been officially codified within Honduras with the following regulation:

COMIECO's Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
325-2013	Processed Food. Procedure to Grant Sanitary Registration and Sanitary Inscription	67.01.31.07

The RTCA can be found in the Annex of Resolution 325-2013 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=3479>

The RTCA above provides the regulation for issuing a Sanitary Registration Number (SRN) for processed foods to be sold at the retail and wholesale level. Processed products must have the SRN requested by the importer and issued by ARSA. Shipments of food inputs waiting to be processed or repacked, do not need SRNs.

As part of the registration process, ARSA reviews the product's technical and legal aspects, and in accordance with the compliance of the requirements, ARSA assigns a registration number. The procedure for registration of a product can be done by the legal representative of the company who imports or distributes the products. It is not necessary to have a legal representative.

ARSA has established new procedures to expedite the assignment of a product registration number. The following information and documents must be submitted with the request of sanitary registration to ARSA for the registration process:

- **Applicant’s information:** The applicant is the legal representative of the company. The information needed for the applicant is: Name and ID number, address, phone number, fax, e-mail. In addition, the address, phone number, fax, and email of the warehouse or distributor should be submitted. Signature of the applicant.
- **Manufacturer’s information:** Name of the factory (as it is shown in the sanitary license). Indicate if it is national or foreign. License or permit number and validity of the license or permit of the factory or warehouse. Exact address of the factory, phone number, fax, and e-mail.
- **Product Information:** Name of product to be registered, product trademark, type of product, net content, sanitary registration number for renewals, and country of origin.
- **Copy of Sanitary License or Operating Permit:** A document which certifies a business to store or process food.
- **Certificate of Free Sale (CFS).** The certificate indicates that the exporter has permit to produce, manufacture, distribute and pack food products for human consumption. It also certifies that the products are freely sold and consumed in the United States, as well as exported. ARSA reviews that the information in the CFS such as the product’s name, trademark, manufacturer and country of origin is the same information provided in the request for sanitary registration and in the label. The certificate is issued by the appropriate state-level health authorities or Chambers of Commerce.
- **Original label of the imported product.** If the label is not in Spanish, the label must be translated into Spanish with the same information that is given in the foreign language label. The labels are reviewed by ARSA, following the technical and legal requirements of the RTCA 67.01.07:10. ARSA checks that the information in the label matches the description in the foreign language.

Complementary Labeling. Stick-on labels are allowed to comply fully with labeling requirements on product information, but not to indicate the manufacturing or expiration date. The label must be translated into Spanish with the same information that is given in the foreign language label.

ARSA has eliminated for registration purposes the following requirements:

- Submit a sample of the product for laboratory analysis to issue the product’s sanitary registration. ARSA will check the food safety of the product at the market.
- Submit an endorsement (Apostille or an “*Autentica*” – notarized document) of the signatures that appear on the CFS. (Still pending confirmation at time of publishing)

The importer’s representative should regularly check ARSA’s website to review if their sanitary

registration number for foods has been already processed. ARSA publishes the sanitary registrations issued once a week. The authorizations can be found at:

<http://www.arsa.gob.hn/autorizaciones.html> under “Registro Alimentos”

The importer will need to pay about US\$10.00 per product for the sanitary registration number. The tariff is under review and it is expected to change for 2018.

Sanitary Inscription:

The Sanitary Inscription is the authorization granted to an importer or distributor of a previously registered product. The sanitary registration number assigned will be the same registration number of the distributor who initially registered it.

Validity Period. The Sanitary Registration Number is valid for five years.

ARSA has published in their website the requirements for the issuance of a sanitary registration found in document eight at:

https://arsa.gob.hn/descargas/Tramites_Alimentos.pdf

The link also provides requirements for sanitary license, inscription, mutual recognition, renewal of sanitary license, registration, inscription, requirements for food donations, and other ones related to food and beverages.

Central America Mutual Recognition

CACU members agreed that for the products produced or processed in a CACU country, when a product obtains a SRN, it does not need to be registered in another. Products produced in the United States are not eligible for the registration exemption. It is important to note that the origin of the product is considered to be a CACU country if the product is processed in a CACU country, even if the raw material is not from a CACU member country.

In order to receive this benefit, the only procedure that a CACU country has to carry out is to request a “Registration Acknowledgment” which is the same throughout Central America excluding Costa Rica. The acknowledgment lasts the length of time that the product is registered, which is five years.

Processed food for exhibition and tasting is regulated by the following regulation:

COMIECO’s Resolution Number	Title	RTCA Number
176-2006	Requirements for Import of Processed Food for Exhibition and Tasting	67.01.32:06

The RTCA can be found in the Annex 3 of Resolution 176-2006 at:

<http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentosMostrar.aspx?SegmentoId=2&DocumentoId=1980>

Section VIII. Copyright and/or Trademark Laws:

The GOH has taken actions to improve intellectual property rights (IPR). Historically, well-known trademarks were subject to infringement, and protection under local law did not approach international standards. However, in 1993 Honduras passed a comprehensive IPR law. The GOH has since complied with the requirements of this legislation by creating an IPR Office within the Economic Development Secretariat.

As a signatory to the Uruguay Round agreements and member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Honduras has accepted the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) standard. In addition, Honduras has signed CAFTA-DR, which contains a chapter on IPR. To be protected under Honduran Law, trademarks must be registered with the Economic Development Secretariat. Trademark registrations are valid for 10 years starting from the registration date. “Notorious marks” are protected under the Pan-American Convention (1917) of which Honduras is a member. Illegal registration of a notorious mark, however, must be contested in court by the original holder.

Section IX. Import Procedures:

- 1.** SENASA requires that prior to issuing an import permit, the importer that handles and stores food products of animal origin must first be registered with SENASA’s Food Safety Sub-Directorate (known as SGIA). SGIA has a registry of Honduran import establishments, which they have inspected and have made eligible for the importation of these products. The Honduran import establishments must comply with all the requirements to keep the product under food safety conditions.
- 2.** The importers of food products of animal origin should submit the import permit request with copy of the following documents to SENASA: Zoosanitary Certificate, Certificate of Origin and Pro-form Commercial Invoice. Further information can be found at the Honduras GAIN Report: Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) – Export Certificate Report Number H01707.
- 3.** Importers of plant products do not need to register their facilities with SENASA’s SGIA. The import permit request must be submitted only with the Pro-form Commercial Invoice. However, when the product arrives to the port of entry in Honduras the original Phytosanitary Certificate, Certificate of Origin and invoice are required for the inspection.
- 4.** The above mentioned documents and the import request must be clear, with consistent information about the importer and exporter, amounts, product description, origin and point of shipping. SENASA requires that the certificates be filled out completely with the name, date and signature of the official issuing the certificate.
- 5.** The importer can obtain the permit application form at the SENASA office. The import permit process in SENASA takes from 24 to 48 hours if all documents are in order. The permit is applied to one shipment and is valid for 30 days. In case the permit is not used within 30 days of issuance, the

importer should request a renewal five days before or five days after the expiration date of the import's permit. SENASA will renew the import permit for an additional 30 days. However, after five days of the expiration date the importer has to submit a new import permit application.

SENASA is working towards the use of the electronic signatures for authorizing the import permits on-line. However, the law is pending for approval.

Other Documents Required:

Shipping Documents. The documents that should accompany a shipment which are required at the port of entry are the original of the Bill of Lading, Commercial Invoice, Phyto or Zoosanitary Certificate and Packing list.

Photocopy of Import License. Importers of dairy products with the Harmonized Code from 04.01 to 04.06 and 1901.10.1, 1901.90.20 and 1901.90.90 must have an import license issued by the Secretariat of Economic Development (SDE). Importers will need to provide copy of their dairy importer registration and copy of the import permit from SENASA when submitting the request of the import license to the SDE.

The harmonized codes are for milk, cream, butter, yogurt, cheeses, baby formula and powdered milk. SDE has five working days to issue the import license. The license will have 60-day validity and can be extended at the request of the importer.

Import Process at Port of Entry:

SENASA delegated the responsibility of all quarantine inspections and treatments of agricultural imports to the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA). OIRSA's Plant and Animal Protection Service (SEPA) inspectors are located at the borders, ports, and airports. They follow SENASA's instructions to enforce the import requirements of raw animal and plant products, processed and consumer ready foods, as well as inputs used in food processing at the time of entry. DARA officials review that the invoice complies with the GOH's revenue tariff.

SEPA and inspectors from DARA are involved in clearing imports of food and agricultural products. They evaluate documents and conduct an inspection for the compliance of requirements indicated on the import permit and import documents such as:

- Original import permit approved by SENASA
- Original Phyto or Zoosanitary Certificate
- Certificate of Origin
- Commercial Invoice
- Additional Declarations requested are included in the Phyto or Zoosanitary Certificates, if the

country of origin of the product is the one authorized on the import permit; and if it is the same origin in the label of the product entering the country.

- Expiration date, lot number and production date appear in Spanish on the shipping carton(s). The dates must be provided in the Day/Month/Year format (DD/MM/YYYY). SENASA requested that FSIS meet this requirement in May 2015. If a first-time exporter does not comply with this requirement, the product is retained and SENASA/SEPA allows a label to be applied. However, if the exporter has not repeatedly had the required labels, the product is not allowed entry.
- Documents submitted for the import process are clear, filled out completely, with the name, date and signature of the official issuing the certificates. The information and names of the importer, exporter, shipment's content, amounts, product description, origin, point of shipping, are consistent across all documents. This help to streamline the entry process.
- A Suppliers or Manufacturers Export Declaration as proof of compliance is not accepted.
- Prior to granting customs clearance, the SEPA inspector conducts an inspection of the product. The entry of animal products and by-products depends on the food safety conditions of the product itself. It also depends on the exporting country's current animal health and pest's status.
- Product sampling is done randomly. It is taken from animal products origin, seeds that the import permit requires it, and when bacteria or fungi are found. Samples are submitted to laboratory analysis to check the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of the product. If the laboratory analysis indicates that the product does not meet acceptable standards, the product may be confiscated and later destroyed or re-exported depending on its condition and characteristics as determined by the authorities.
- In cases that a quarantine pest is found, a treatment will be applied prior allowing the product to enter the country. SENASA indicates that the exception is with pests that due to their biology could enter in a diapause stage, such as the Trogoderma Granadium and Trogoderma Glabrun. In this situation, the treatment is not applied and the product is returned to the country of origin.
- SENASA modified its Quarantine Procedures Manual through Resolution No. 250-14 in March 2014. The new Manual indicates that when a non-quarantine pest is found alive or dead, the quarantine treatment will not be applied. The modification saves importers time and money that would have been used on the treatment.
- In the case of the arrival of shipments that did not go through SENASA's import permit process, they are detained at the port of entry. The entrance is authorized until all the requirements of the import permit are completed and complied with.
- The customs clearance is usually granted within a short period of time; however, depending on the work load at the port and whether or not all of SENASA's requirements are complete, the time period can range from a few hours to five days.

- The new specialized container and cargo terminals in Puerto Cortes, took over the operations of loading and unloading cargo. The “Operadora Portuaria Centroamerica (OPC) loads and unloads containers in dock No.4. The “Terminal Especializada de Honduras” (T.E.H) manages the bulk cargo in dock No.3.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts:

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