

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Germany

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Report

FAIRS Export Certificate Report

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Report Highlights:

Germany is a Member State of the European Union (EU) and applies the certification requirements described in the EU-28 Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) Certification 2018 Report. Products not yet harmonized are subject to German national rules.

Disclaimer

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Berlin, Germany 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.

Germany is a Member State of the European Union (EU) and adheres to all food import and certification requirements that are harmonized throughout the EU. We therefore recommend that this report on the certification requirements for exports to Germany is read in conjunction with the [EU-28 Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Certification Report](#), which references all existing certificates that are valid for export to all 28 countries of the European Union. In addition, it provides links to U.S. agencies or organizations which issue certificates.

The few products not yet harmonized are subject to German national regulations. The competent German authority needs to be consulted on a case-by-case basis to address requirements for non-harmonized products.

Imported products must meet existing EU and Member State requirements and products must be accompanied by the proper certification at port of arrival. In general, health certificates are required for all imported products of animal origin and phytosanitary certificates are needed for all plant products that could introduce pests into the EU. In Germany, food safety is the primary responsibility of the federal states (*Bundeslaender*). Official surveillance is co-ordinated by the respective state ministries or, in city-states, by the respective senate administration department.

Export certificates must be in the official language of Germany, which is German. Certified translations of the certificates into German may be used.

The import of special products like blood, blood products, and material containing epizootic pathogens must be approved by the competent authority of the respective federal state. Usually the importer¹ applies to the authority with all relevant details. There is no set form for this kind of application.

¹ Theoretically, the exporter can also apply for the import permit. However, due to the language barrier and time difference we recommend to leave the application to the importer.

Import Derogation for Product Samples

Under EU legislation, food samples sent to Germany with the intention to be consumed are considered foods for human consumption and are subject to the same listing and certification requirements as regular commercial shipments.

Sample shipments of food products that are intended for machine testing and/or contain meat, poultry or cheese from plants that are not approved for export to the EU require a derogation (special import permit) from the (state) veterinary authority at the first port of entry into the European Union. For shipments to Germany, this is often Frankfurt Airport. Frankfurt Airport is located in the State of Hesse; thus, the veterinary office in the Hessian capital Wiesbaden is responsible for issuing the import permit.

Hessisches Ministerium fuer Umwelt, Klimaschutz, Landwirtschaft und Verbraucherschutz
(Ministry of Environment, Climate Protection, Agriculture, and Consumer Protection of the State of Hesse)

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The request for derogation can be made informally by e-mail stating

- the quantity,
- country of origin,
- production plant
- composition (e.g. raw or cooked meat) of the product;
- the intended purpose (machinery testing, trade show display, product competition, etc.),
- undergone treatment (e.g. heating) if applicable,
- registration number of recipient company.

Based on this information the veterinary office will issue an import permit that specifies the veterinary certificates required in that particular case.

The import permit is in German and the veterinary office charges a small fee. Because of language and time difference, it is recommended that the German recipient of the product handle the application for the import permit, wherever feasible. If the point of entry is different from Frankfurt, please contact FAS Berlin for information on the applicable veterinary office.

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