

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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POLICY

Voluntary - Public

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Germany

Post: Berlin

Labeling Alert for U.S. Meat Exporters Shipping to EU

Report Categories:

SP2 - Prevent or Resolve Barriers to Trade that Hinder U.S. Food and Agricultural Exports

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Report Highlights:

In November 2018, FAS Berlin secured the release of two containers of high value product from the U.S. destined for the German market. The shipment was held at the port due to labeling issues, namely, the discrepancy between the establishment number listed on the export certificate and the packaging label. With Post's intervention these issues were resolved and the two containers of frozen products, valued at over USD \$250,000, were released. However, port officials say they will not make similar accommodations in the future and will strongly enforce their interpretation of the regulations regarding establishment number.

General Information:

In October 2018, a U.S. exporter contacted the Foreign Agricultural Service in Berlin, asking for assistance in releasing two containers of frozen high-value products destined for Germany. The shipment was held at port due to labeling issues, namely, the discrepancy between the establishment number listed on the export certificate and the packaging label. From the EU standpoint, the establishment number listed on both the export paperwork and the packaging label should exactly match the establishment number specified in the “EU approved plant list.” In this particular case, the letter “M” preceding the establishment number was missing on the packaging labels.

After long and quite challenging negotiations with port officials, and a series of explanation letters issued by food safety authorities, Post was able to find a solution and release the shipment worth over US\$250,000.

Port officials specifically informed Post that they will not make any more exceptions, and will reject all incoming shipments that have such discrepancies in the future.

Therefore, in order to avoid problems at the German ports of entry and significant additional demurrage costs, **Post would highly recommend the U.S. exporters to make sure that the establishment number on both on the Export Certificate and the packaging labels are listed exactly as in the “EU approved plant list”**, which can be viewed here:

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/sanco/traces/output/non_eu_listsPerCountry_en.htm#