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Date: 12/7/2015

GAIN Report Number: MX5521

Mexico

Post: Monterrey ATO

Mexico Proposed Amendments to NOM-144 -Wood Packaging Materials Regulation

Report Categories:

Wood Products

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

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Report Highlights:

On December 4, 2015, the Mexican Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) announced proposed modifications to NOM- 144-SEMARNAT-2012 which established phytosanitary measures for wood packaging materials. The regulation is proposed as Mexican Official Standard NOM- 144- SEMARNAT- 2015, which establishes phytosanitary measures and requirements for the internationally recognized mark for wood packaging materials used in international trade of goods and merchandise. These intend to align Mexico's NOM-144 with the International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures publication number 15 (ISPM 15)-Regulation of wood packaging material (WPM) in international trade.

General Information:

On December 4, 2015, the Mexican Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) announced in the Diario Oficial (Mexico's "Federal Register") proposed amendments/modifications to NOM- 144-SEMARNAT-2012 which established internationally recognized phytosanitary measures for wood packaging materials used in international trade of goods and merchandise. The new amendments proposed by SEMARNAT anticipate an ISPM 15 revision by the International Plant Protection Convention in 2016. A sixty day window to submit comments to SEMARNAT started on December 4, 2015. SEMARNAT will review general public comments in February 2016. SEMARNAT's final resolution to proposed modifications will be announced at the end of April or the first week of May 2016. According to government and Mexican industry sources, SEMARNAT's proposed amendments to NOM-144 will have no adverse effect on trade of US products exported into Mexico on wood packaging materials. Having said that, SEMARNAT's proposed amendments have the intent to align Mexico's NOM-144 with the updated International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM 15) that will be ratified in 2016, sometime in April or May (in particular to the use of Sulphuryl fluoride fumigation). With this in mind, the most relevant modifications proposed by SEMARNAT are the inclusion of two additional phytosanitary treatments for wood packaging materials:

- Dielectric heating with microwaves or radio waves. Treatment code for the mark is (DH).
- Sulphuryl fluoride fumigation. Treatment code for the mark is (SF).

The reader should note that dielectric heating is currently an approved treatment under ISPM 15, and that the inclusion of Sulphuryl fluoride fumigation is under review by the IPPC.

One more modification of interest, but that does not impose a threat to imports, is the elimination of the option to replace noncompliant wood packaging upon inspection. This means that noncompliant material will have to be fumigated. To read SEMARNAT's complete proposal please visit

http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5418666&fecha=04/12/2015

For USDA additional information on ISPM 15 visit APHIS [website](#)

Author Defined:

FAS ATO Monterrey has expert advice for exporters, customs agents, freight forwarders and Mexican importers about correct documentation procedures, and logistics to successfully export to Mexico. ATO Monterrey can be reached at: ato.monterrey@fas.usda.gov

Useful Mexican Web Sites: The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) which regulates imports of forestry products including seeds and wood products can be found at: www.semarnat.gob.mx. Mexico's Agency for Environmental Protection (PROFEPA), which also inspects imported wood products, can be found at www.profepa.gob.mx. These web sites are mentioned for the readers' convenience but USDA does NOT in any way endorse, guarantee the accuracy of, or necessarily concur with, the information contained on the mentioned sites.