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POLICY

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Veterinary-Sanitary Controls on the Approval of Establishments

Report Categories:

Livestock and Products

Poultry and Products

Dairy and Products

Fishery Products

Honey

FAIRS Subject Report

Sanitary/Phytopsanitary/Food Safety

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

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Report Highlights:

This report contains an unofficial translation of MinAg's Order on its methods of veterinary-sanitary control in respect to granting health approvals to establishments producing, processing, or packing products of animal-origin. Tunisia's annual imports of such products are \$175 million, with \$1-3 million currently sourced from the United States. While the regulation was amended in 2014 to include reference to such imported products within its legal basis, the text did not specifically include reference to foreign establishments.

Order of the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources dated May 26, 2006 fixing the methods of the veterinary-sanitary control, the conditions and procedures of granting health approval of the establishments of production, processing and conditioning of animal origin products (as completed and amended by the Order of the Minister of Agriculture dated January 27, 2014)

OGRT #44 of May 26, 2006 and OGRT #18 of March 4, 2014

The Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources,

Having regard to the Constitutive Act 2011-6 of 16 December 2011 on the provisional organization of public authorities,

Having regard to the Law n ° 99-24 of March 9, 1999, relating to the veterinary-sanitary controls during imports and exports,

Having regard to Law No. 2005-95 of October 18, 2005 on animal husbandry and animal products, and in particular Article 31 thereof,

Having regard to Decree No. 95-1474 of August 14, 1995, appointing the competent authority for technical control of imports and exports of fishery products and approval of premises.

Having regard to Decree No 2001-419 of 13 February 2001 laying down the powers of the Ministry of Agriculture,

Having regard to Decree No. 2001-420 of February 13, 2001, on the organization of the Ministry of Agriculture, all the texts that have modified or completed it, including the last Decree No. 2011-1560 of September 5, 2011,

Considering the Decree n ° 2013-1372 of March 15th, 2013, appointing the members of the government,

Given the Order of the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources of May 26, 2006, setting the terms of veterinary-sanitary control, the conditions and procedures for granting sanitary approval of production, processing and packaging establishments animal products,

Having regard to the Order of the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources and the Minister of Public Health of 9 July 2009, fixing the list of products authorized for the manufacture of animal feed,

Given the opinion of the Competition Council.

ORDER:

FIRST CHAPTER

General Provisions

First article. - This Order lays down the procedures for veterinary-sanitary control, the conditions and procedures for granting sanitary approval to establishments producing, preparing, processing and packaging foods of animal origin **and mineral premixes**.

Art. 2. - For the purposes of this Order, the following terms mean:

- **Food of animal origin:** food intended for human consumption consisting partly or wholly of products of animal origin.
- ~~Establishment operating in the foodstuffs of animal origin sector:~~ any public or private establishment carrying out one or more activities in the field of production, preparation, processing and packaging of foodstuffs of animal origin and hereinafter referred to as: **establishment.** **Establishment operating in the sector of foodstuffs of animal origin and mineral premixes:** any public or private establishment, having one or more activities in the field of production, preparation, processing, and the conditioning of food of animal origin and mineral premixes and hereinafter referred to: **establishment.**
- **Operator of an establishment:** the person legally responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of this Decree in the establishment.
- **Sanitary measures and conditions of foodstuffs of animal origin and mineral premixes:** the special conditions for protection against hazards and the safety of foodstuffs intended for human consumption, taking into account their intended use.
- **Safety of food of animal origin and mineral premixes:** ensuring that foodstuffs are free of elements harmful to the health of the consumer.
- **Danger:** any biological, chemical or physical agent capable of threatening the safety of foodstuffs intended for human consumption.
- **Mineral premixes:** are the raw materials authorized for the manufacture of animal feed.

CHAPTER TWO

Veterinary-Sanitary Control

Art. 3. - The establishment is subject to a veterinary-sanitary control on the health and safety conditions of food of animal origin **and mineral premixes**.

Art. 4. - The veterinary-sanitary control is carried out in a regular way or in case of suspicion of non-compliance with sanitary conditions. It includes all the stages through which production passes including the transport of foodstuffs.

Veterinary-sanitary control operations are carried out without prior notice.

Art. 5. - The veterinary-sanitary control consists of one or more of the following operations in accordance with the conditions provided for in Articles 7 and 8 of this Order and depending on the research envisaged:

1. Inspection.
2. Sampling and submission of samples to laboratory analyzes.
3. Recognition of the application of the self-monitoring program: review of the monitoring and verification systems of the results obtained.
4. Finding written documents: manual of procedures, instructions and recordings.
5. Checking the documents concerning the hygiene of the personnel handling the operations of production, processing and packaging of foods of animal origin **and mineral premixes**.

Art. 6. - The inspection of the veterinary-sanitary control concerns the verification of:

1. The condition and use of the premises and their environment, equipment, and means of transport.
2. The safety of raw materials, ingredients and other products used for the production, processing and packaging of foodstuffs.
3. The safety of products during the production and processing stages and the safety of finished products.
4. The components of the materials, equipment, and used materials.
5. The processes used for the production, preparation, processing and packaging of food of animal origin **and mineral premixes**.
6. Cleaning and disinfection processes of premises, equipment, and materials used in the establishment.
7. Pest control procedures and the products used in the establishment.
8. Means of preservation and storage of foodstuffs.
9. The processes used for the traceability of the products within the establishment if it has one.
10. Labeling and displaying of foodstuffs.

Art. 7. - Veterinary-sanitary control officers under the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources may take samples of foodstuffs and waste on the premises and equipment for the production, processing, and packaging of the concerned foodstuffs for analysis in official laboratories.

Sampling is systematic and during all phases of production to ensure the proper implementation of the institution's self-control program.

Art. 8. - In addition to the provisions for compulsory medical examinations, the staff of the establishment are subject to a check on their general state of health, cleanliness and that of their dress.

Art. 9. - The veterinary-sanitary control officers referred to in Article 7 above may consult the documents and written files held by the persons in charge of the establishment and relating to all that relates to the activities of the establishment. They can also take copies of these documents.

These agents are bound by professional secrecy.

Art. 10. - Operators of the establishment must put in place and apply permanent procedures with the following objectives:

1. To identify any danger that must be eliminated, avoided or reduced to an acceptable level.
2. Identify the critical points which control is essential to eliminate or avoid the food danger or reduce it to an acceptable level.
3. Establish, at critical points, critical limits that differ the acceptability of unacceptability for the prevention, elimination or reduction of identified hazards.
4. Establish and implement effective critical point monitoring procedures.
5. Establish the corrective actions to be implemented when the surveillance reveals that a critical point is not controlled.

Art. 11. - The operators of the establishment shall establish procedures to verify the effectiveness of the measures provided for in Article 10 referred above.

Veterinary-sanitary control procedures shall be carried out periodically and whenever there is any change in the establishment's activities, which may have a negative effect on the safety of foods of animal origin **and mineral premixes**.

Art. 12. - The operators of the establishment shall draw up written documents and files to prove the effective application of the measures indicated in Articles 10 and 11 of this Order and to facilitate the execution of veterinary-sanitary control operations.

Operators keep these documents for at least two years for all foodstuffs and five years for canned foods of animal origin **and mineral premixes**.

CHAPTER THREE

Veterinary-Sanitary Approval

Art. 13. - The sanitary approval is granted to the establishment in conformity with the veterinary-sanitary conditions relating to their installation, their equipment and their operation.

However, where the establishment has not complied with veterinary-sanitary conditions, the approval granted may be suspended or withdrawn.

Veterinary-sanitary control officers issue a certificate proving the safety of the product.

Art. 14. - Applications for veterinary-sanitary approval shall be submitted to the veterinary services under the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources accompanied by the following two dossiers:

A. An administrative file including:

1. Identification of the applicant:

- The identity and domicile of the applicant for persons.
- The company name, the registered office, the quality of the signatory and the identity of the head of the establishment for corporations.

2. The nature of the activity: production, processing and packaging.

B. A technical file including:

1. A detailed list of the products used and their composition.

2. A 1/1000 scale plan indicating the ins and outs of the establishment, its boundaries, sources of drinking water and, where applicable, non-potable water, as well as the wastewater disposal.

3. A plan of the establishment at the scale 1/1000 to 1/3000 according to an area of the establishment indicating the conditions of development of the work premises and premises for the use of staff.

4. A detailed description of the premises assigned to the reception and storage of raw materials, the space reserved for the storage of packaging materials and the premises for production, preparation, processing, packaging and storage of finished products.

5. A detailed description of the equipment and materials used.

6. A description of the working methods of the establishment.

7. The storage capacity of raw materials and finished products as well as the expected daily production tonnage.

8. The system of water distribution circuits in the establishment and all the procedures of its control.

9. The cleaning and disinfection program of the establishment and its equipment.
10. The pest control program in the establishment.
11. The staff training program.
12. Analysis of the main critical points of the establishment.

In addition and depending on the specific requirements of each activity category, the provision of additional documents may be required.

Art. 15. - The application must be renewed when any modification of the list of products to be produced, processed and conditioned, any modification in the installation of the premises, their installation, their equipment or their assignment as well as during a change of the operator or the address of the establishment.

Art. 16. - Any establishment operating in the foods of animal origin **and mineral premixes** sector shall be granted a unique identifier consisting, in addition to the serial number of the establishment, of the codification of the nature of the activity and a codification number of the governorate concerned set out in Annexes I and II to this Order.

The unique identifier of any establishment is as follows:

		-			-		
order number			governorate code			activity code	

Art. 17. - After obtaining veterinary-sanitary approval, production, processing and packaging establishments may distribute their food of animal origin **and mineral premixes**.

Art. 18. - The health authorizations issued before the entry into force of this Order remain valid. However, these establishments must comply with the provisions of this Order within a period not exceeding two years from the date of publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia.

Art. 19. – This Order will be published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia.

Tunis, May 26, 2006.

ANNEX I
Codification of Governorate

Governorate	Code
Tunis, Ariana, Ben Arous, Manouba	01
Bizerte	02
Nabeul	03
Sfax	04
Sousse	05
Monastir	06
Mahdia	07
Jendouba	08
Gabes	09
Medenine	10
Zaghouan	11
Siliana	12
Beja	13
Le Kef	14
Kairouan	15
Kasserine	16
Sidi Bouzid	17
Gafsa	18
Tozeur	19
Kebili	20
Tataouine	21

ANNEX 2
Codification of the Nature of the Activities

Activities	Code
Clams purification center	PU
Fish products	PP
Products based on meat and offal	PV
Dairy and milk products	PV
Poultry slaughterhouse	AV
Animal slaughterhouses	AB
Earth snail	ET
Canned fish production plant	CP
Milk collection centers	CC
Eggs and egg products	OV
Honey and derivatives	AP
Central kitchens	CC
Products based on poultry meat	PA
Products based on wild game	PG
Other foods of animal origin	DA
Mineral premixes	PM

Amendments in Order of the Minister of Agriculture dated January 27, 2014, are denoted in red and ~~strike through~~.