

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Required Report - public distribution

Date: 2/22/2017

GAIN Report Number: JO160015

Jordan

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative

FAIRS Country Report

Approved By:

Orestes Vasquez

Prepared By:

Mohamed Khraishy

Report Highlights:

This report contains changes in Section VIII: Slaughterhouse registration; Dairy products—ban on partially hydrogenated oils in processed dairy products; Preserved food—ban of tartrazine as a coloring in pickled preparations.

SECTION I: GENERAL FOOD LAWS

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Its accession to the WTO (April 11, 2000) coincides with economic and legislative structural reforms, bringing it in line with international standards and requirements. Jordan's food control regime is governed by two laws:

- The Agriculture Law 44 (2002)
- Jordan Food Law 30 (2015), replacing the Jordanian Food Control Law 32 (2003)

The new food law was enacted in May 2015 by the King and his Cabinet after passing through the upper and lower houses of Parliament. It entered into force within 30 days after being published in the official journal, at the end of June, 2015.

The law gave the Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA) control of food safety issues and food quality. The statute was designed to ease the processed food importation and eliminate the deleterious effect of multi-agency territorial disputes. The impact of the unification of the regulatory authority has been positive. Under the new food law, pertinent regulations are being revised, updated, and drafted by JFDA.

According to Agriculture Law 44, importation of raw food items is also subject to an advance approval of import license from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). The reasons for the up-front approval are to ensure compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements, and for record or statistical tracking. Preliminary approval may be denied to protect domestic producer interests.

Prior to the new food law, the Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization (JSMO) delegated product testing responsibilities for food and agricultural products to the JFDA. The former however retains responsibility for the development of standards (including for food) and ensuring conformity with standards. It also supervises the national meteorology system in addition to granting Jordanian Quality Marks (voluntary) and accrediting testing and calibration laboratories.

Exporters of US products are strongly advised to review the standards of any item they intend to ship to Jordan, well in advance of shipment. The importer can purchase printed standards from JSMO for a nominal fee. JFDA and other Government of Jordan (GoJ) authorities have very low tolerance for food standard violations. Any consignment not meeting the official standard will be rejected and either destroyed or re-exported at the expense of the importer.

Jordanian drug and pharmaceutical product importers, including vaccines for human use, must comply with Ministry of Health (MoH) regulations. However, the MoA regulates the import of veterinary drugs and animal vaccines, pesticides, meat and meat products, animal feed, and seedlings.

Food processing and processed food is under the sole mandate of JFDA; this role was strengthened by the new food law. MoA officials claim responsibility for food control sporadically, based on unfounded or historical traditions. Any food or feed including grains may appear to be within the jurisdiction of MoA, but JFDA has the final say. In the absence of a local standard, Jordan applies internationally recognized standards.

SECTION II: FOOD ADDITIVE REGULATIONS

Food additives are jointly regulated by the JSMO and JFDA; the latter, however, has ultimate responsibility for regulatory enforcement. Jordan maintains a list of approved additives and permissible concentration levels largely conforming to *Codex alimentarius* (Codex). Jordan refers primarily to Codex standard 192 for food additive issues. It will refer to European Union (EU) regulations in the absence of a Codex standard. The USG is working closely with GoJ to adopt US regulations whenever there is a contradiction between the US and EU standards.

SECTION III: PESTICIDES AND OTHER CONTAMINATES

The Ministry of Agriculture's Plant Protection Directorate (PPD) / Pesticides Division regulates pesticides. Imported agricultural pesticides must conform to the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO) specifications. Standards regarding pesticide use and human health are required to conform to World Health Organization (WHO) [standards](#). Pesticides are analyzed according to the CIPAC handbook, issued by Collaborative International Pesticides Analytical Council.

Food samples are sent to food safety laboratories where pesticide residues and contaminants are analyzed by the official method of analysis of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists, EU pesticides database of the European Commission.

Jordan has one laboratory capable of testing for pesticide residues in fresh fruits and vegetables. The testing laboratory's normal turnaround time is two weeks, making it difficult to test perishables prior to consumption. Jordan tests non-perishables to a far greater extent, requiring that residue levels not exceed Codex maximum and European standard [residue levels](#) (MRL). USDA is working closely with MoA and JFDA to establish and widen the scope and capability of JFDA and MoA laboratories to improve testing methodology for pesticide MRLs.

SECTION IV: PACKAGING AND CONTAINER REQUIREMENTS

Packaging requirements are being used as a barrier to trade in poultry parts. The maximum package size for poultry parts is set to 2.5 kg in an attempt to protect local producers from US poultry part suppliers. Additionally, a 2 kg maximum weight limit on honey packaging is imposed on imports, which is also used to protect the local industry by preventing wholesale imports used for repackaging.

SECTION V: LABELING REQUIREMENTS

- a) **Labeling Requirements:** The Jordan Standards and Meteorology Organization sets labeling requirements. Requirements are fairly standard. A statement of ingredients in order of preponderance is not required. All labels must be in Arabic; alternatively, an Arabic language stick-on label is acceptable. A label at minimum must contain:
- Product name
 - The manufacturer's name and address
 - Net weight
 - Fortifying matter (e.g., added vitamins and minerals to powdered milk)
 - Lot number and a "use before" or "best by" date.

Jordan's labeling requirements do not include Recommended Daily Intake (RDIs) levels. Nutritional labeling nevertheless is mandatory for certain food categories (e.g., infant formula and food for dietary use). Shelf-life labeling has been replaced by the "best before" standard. Nonetheless, JSMO interprets "best before" as a product's expiry date; no product is authorized for sale beyond this date. Jordan will scrutinize product labels at border crossing points. Current legislation holds the importer accountable for a product's content as specified on the label. Jordanian officials are known for rejecting shipments due to labeling ambiguities and printing errors.

b) Nutritional Labeling Requirements: This labeling is mandatory for infant formula and food for dietary use.

SECTION VI: OTHER SPECIFIC STANDARDS

Being the country's standard setting body, JSMO: 1) Prepares, approves, revises, and amends mandatory and voluntary standards and monitors their application; 2) Adopts and approves other countries, regional and international organizations' (Arabic or English language) standards, and; 3) Cooperates and coordinates standardization and metrology issues with regional and international institutions. It is also the Codex enquiry point, as well as a corresponding member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Organization for Legal Metrology (IOLM).

Since 2003, JSMO has maintained a voluntary pre-shipment inspection program for food and agricultural product imports. Jordan does not require import licenses for all food and agricultural products; however, the MoA does require import licenses for beef, fruits, fish, and vegetables and a number of other food and agricultural products such as powdered milk. Imported food and agriculture products are required to conform to JSMO's Codex-based standards. Alcoholic beverage imports are permissible, but high duty tariffs (50-200 percent) limit imports.

SECTION VII: FACILITY AND PRODUCT REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

A few specific products require registration prior to import to Jordan. Most notably, seeds for planting and products making special dietary claims require prior registration. Exporters are encouraged to work closely with Jordanian importers in fulfilling these requirements.

Exporters of dairy products are required to register their facilities with the Jordanian FDA prior to shipment. This registration is a simple verification of the exporting firm's HACCP certification. It requires that the Jordanian importer provide a copy of the exporter's HACCP certificate with a completed application to the JFDA.

A new requirement being implemented in 2017 will require US slaughterhouses to register prior to export to Jordan. This requirement does not require inspection, if the plant is under US federal inspection. The registration is only required once per facility, though it is yet unclear for how long the registration will be valid. Exporters are encouraged to contact the Jordanian Ministry of Agriculture or FAS Amman for updates, prior to shipment.

SECTION VIII: OTHER REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

Slaughterhouse registration: The MoA implemented a new requirement, demanding that any slaughterhouses exporting to Jordan for the first time must register with it. The following documentation

is required:

1. Slaughter house license certificate from a federal government/ or any local agency endorsed by the US embassy in Jordan.
2. Registration code.
3. Quality assurance certificate ISO 22000 or HACCAP.

Halal: Jordanian authorities stipulate that all meat products are halal as defined by the Jordanian government. The Jordanian halal requirements include:

- The animal was slaughtered in observance of the Islamic traditions in the presence of a Muslim male accredited by any Islamic association within that country.
- The product is free of pork products.
- The product is free from alcohol. This is also applicable to non-animal food.

GMOs: No food item with a GMO label is allowed to enter Jordan.

Radiation: Whenever there is a radiation leak reported internationally, Jordan imposes a mandatory radiation level inspection on food from countries that could be impacted by that leak. As an example, Japanese products were required to be inspected in the wake of the disaster at Fukushima.

Dairy Products: [A 2016 standard banned the use of partially hydrogenated oils \(PHOs\) in processed dairy products. As such, processed cheeses, or other products that replace milk fat with any other fat, must not use PHOs.](#) Exporters are encouraged to clearly mark the oil used any products that could potentially contain PHOs. New to market dairy products should expect an increased level of scrutiny by customs officials.

Preserved food: The color Tartrazine E102 is no longer permitted as a coloring in pickled preparations. This regulation is in line with EU and Codex standards, Category 4.2.2 and 4.2.2.3 respectively.

SECTION IX: IMPORT PROCEDURES

Jordan maintains a three-tier inspection rate system for imported food products based on the product's health risk. A document review is mandatory regardless of the level of inspection.

- High risk products, 80-100 percent inspection rate.
- Medium risk products, 25-50 percent inspection rate.
- Low risk products, 5-10 percent inspection rate.

Jordanian importers are required to ensure that imported food and agricultural products do not pose a potential threat to public health (i.e., must be free of microbial, parasite, and fungal contamination). At the same time, the Government of Jordan routinely tests inbound consignments for radiation levels and chemical contaminants, as well as for heavy metals, food additives, animal growth promotants

(hormones), and veterinary drug residues. Jordan tests less frequently for pesticides residues. For cheese, if the facility is exporting for the first time, a certificate of free sale is required.

Tariffs: As part of its WTO accession agreement, Jordan set a reduced tariff rate ceiling of 0-30 percent for most imported products. Nonetheless, it maintains tariff rates of 180-200 percent for certain alcoholic products, as well as a 150-200 percent tariff rate for tobacco and tobacco products. Under the terms of the US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (FTA), import duties and other trade barriers were phased out in 2010, except for alcoholic beverages and tobacco products.

Jordan launched its Customs Integrated Tariff System (CITS) in August 2005. The system allows importers to access import requirements, as well as evaluate tariff and trade agreement information. Data is provided in both Arabic and English.

Customs Law 114 (2004): Jordanian and foreign trading companies must obtain an importer card from the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT) for customs clearance purposes. Foreign companies not domiciled in Jordan are exempt from this requirement. Bonded goods, temporary imports, and imports entering under the provisions of [Jordan's Investment Promotion Law](#) do not require import licenses. Banks and other non-trading entities such as hospitals, hotels, and GoJ ministries must obtain a more limited MoIT importer card that authorizes the import of goods specific to the entity's activities.

Import / Export Documentation: As per Article 31 of the Customs Law of 1998 and its amendments, all customs declarations must include the following (Jordanian customs reserves the right to request additional documentation):

- A maritime or airway bill of lading.
- A commercial invoice indicating the value, weight, and freight and insurance charges. All invoices require Jordanian diplomatic/consular approval. In the absence of Jordanian diplomatic/consular approval, Jordan's Customs Director is empowered to accept the country of export's chamber of commerce certification.
- Commercial invoices are required to describe the product in Arabic.
- A notarized certificate of origin issued by the competent authority in the export country.
- A value declaration form for shipments exceeding JD 2,000 (1JD= \$1.4).

Customs Valuation: Jordan's Custom Law (1999) as amended in March 2000 now includes WTO-compliant criteria for customs valuation, based on certified commercial invoices. Increased transparency restricts the recourse to arbitrary valuation, but does favor undervaluation.

Customs utilizes cost-insurance-freight (CIF) prices for valuation purposes. Commercial invoice values are converted into Jordanian dinars at the official rate. In some cases, Jordan's Customs will factor into its valuation calculations exporter discounts. Imported products, as well as locally produced goods are subject to a 16 percent value-added tax (VAT).

Imported products are subject to a VAT based on the CIF value. Agricultural and pharmaceutical products are exempt from the 16 percent sales tax. [Jordan's General Sales Tax Department](#) levies a special sales tax on specific items such as tobacco products and alcoholic beverages. These are subject to a 13 percent general sales tax in addition to the special sales tax. Non-basic foodstuffs are subject to a 4 percent general sales tax.

Special Import Provisions: Pre-import clearance is required for certain commodities. The clearance, once obtained, acts as an import license. The Ministries of Agriculture, Industry and Trade, and Health are the three import license issuing entities. Rejected shipments may be appealed.

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for issuing pre-import clearances for live animals, fresh/chilled/frozen beef and beef products, embalmed wild animals, frozen animal semen, milk products. The Ministry of Industry and Trade oversees the issuing of pre-import clearances for barley, rice, wheat, flour, sugar, and corn. The Ministry of Health issues pre-import clearances for medications and antibiotics, athletic food supplements, potassium bromide, food dyes, ice cream, and baby food.

Inspection and Clearance: Jordan maintains the ASYCUDA computerized customs clearance system. This platform has been implemented at border crossings with the intent of simplifying customs clearance procedures. The [Ministry of Agriculture](#) (MoA) along with the [Jordan Food and Drug Administration](#) (JFDA) and the [Jordan Customs Authority](#) form the border committee that inspects inbound food and agricultural product shipments.

SECTION X: COPYRIGHT AND TRADEMARK LAWS

Jordan's legal system protects the acquisition and disposition of intellectual property rights. Prior to its WTO accession, Jordan passed a series of laws strengthening the protection of intellectual property rights for patents, copyrights, and trademarks. Jordan in the past has enforced foreign copyrights and trademarks despite it not requiring prior registration.

Jordan has now enacted Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) consistent legislation, requiring that patents, copyrights, and trademarks be registered. Patents and trademarks are registered with the Ministry of Industry and Trade's (MoIT) Registrar of Patents and Trademarks; while copyrights are registered with the Ministry of Culture's National Library.

Jordan is seeking to become a contracting state to the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the protocol relating to the Madrid Agreement (registration of marks). It is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).

APPENDIX I: GOVERNMENT REGULATORY KEY CONTACTS

Ministry of Agriculture

Veterinary Services Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate

Tel: (962-6) 568-6151 · Fax: (962-6) 568-6310 · Web-site: www.moa.gov.jo

Ministry of Environment

Tel: (962-6) 556-0113 · Fax: (962-6) 556-0288 · Web-site: www.moenv.gov.jo

Ministry of Industry and Trade

Tel: (962-6) 560-7191/566-3774 · Fax: (962-6) 560-4691 · Web-site: www.mit.gov.jo

Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization

Tel: (962-6) 568-0139 · Fax: (962-6) 568-1099 · Web-site: www.jsmo.gov.jo

Jordan Food and Drug Directorate

Tel: (962-6) 461-2663 · Fax: (962-6) 461-2663 · Web-site: www.jfda.jo

Jordan Customs Authority

P.O. Box 90, Amman, Jordan

Tel: (962-6) 462-3186/8; 462-4394/6 · Fax: (962-6) 464-7791 · E-mail: Customs@Customs.gov.jo

Web-site: www.customs.gov.jo

Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority

P.O. Box 2565, Aqaba 77110, Jordan

Tel: (962-6) 3 203 5757/8 · Fax: (962-6) 3 203-0912 · Web-site: www.aqabazone.com

APPENDIX II: OTHER IMPORT SPECIALIST TECHNICAL CONTACTS

USDA\FAS - Office of Agricultural Affairs, U.S. Embassy Amman

P.O. Box 354, Amman, Jordan

Tel: (962-6) 590-6056 · Fax: (962-6) 592-0146 · E-mail: Mohamed.khraishy@usda.gov

