

**DOCUMENT REFERENCE**

Code :PHL1000

Date :15/06/10

Page :1/7

**This table summarises the general requirements and standards for food and agricultural imports into Philippines.**

<b>Certification/Other Requirements</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
License to Operate (LTO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Issued by the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD)</li><li>• A prerequisite for the registration of any food product</li><li>• The importer is required to obtain from the exporter and submit to BFAD the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) a copy of the Foreign Agency Agreement</li><li>(2) a Certificate of Status of Manufacture by the exporter issued by the Government Health Agency of the country of manufacture</li></ul></li><li>• Both (1) and (2) should be authenticated by the Philippine Consulate in the country of origin</li></ul>
Certificate of Product Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administrative Order No. 37 s. 1979 provides that imported food products are required to be registered with BFAD prior to their distribution in the domestic market</li><li>• Advance copies of the labels of the products are required<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The content of such labels is scrutinized to establish whether it is acceptable under CODEX and BFAD requirements.</li><li>- Nutritional and medical claims made on such labels are one of the factors considered by BFAD when evaluating applications to register foreign products for import into the Philippines, especially Category II products such as food supplements, infant foods and special dietary foods. Products that have labels, which make claims that cannot be easily substantiated, can be banned from entry into the country.</li></ul></li><li>• Registration of imported products may only be undertaken by a Philippine entity, although some documentation and, for certain types of products, samples need to be provided by the exporter.</li><li>• Products have been divided into two categories with distinct sets of registration requirements and procedures.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Category I includes: bakery &amp; bakery related products; non-alcoholic beverages &amp; beverage mixes; candies &amp; confectionery products; cocoa &amp; cocoa related products; coffee, tea &amp; non-dairy creamer; condiments, sauces &amp; seasonings; culinary products; gelatin, dessert preparation &amp; mixes; dairy products; dressings &amp; spreads; flour/flour mixes &amp; starch; fish &amp; other marine products; fruits, vegetable &amp; edible fungi (prepared); meat and poultry products (prepared); noodles, pastas &amp; pastry wrapper; nut &amp; nut products; native delicacies; oils, fats &amp; shortening; snack foods &amp; breakfast cereals and; sugar &amp; other related products.</li></ul></li></ul>

## DOCUMENT REFERENCE

Code :PHL1000

Date :15/06/10

Page :2/7

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Category II includes: alcoholic beverages; food supplements; tea (herbal); bottled drinking water; food for infants and children; foods for special dietary use; transgenic food products (use of genetic engineering/biotechnology) and; ethnic food products with indigenous ingredient(s) not common in the Philippines.</li><li>• More information available at <a href="http://www.bfad.gov.ph/">http://www.bfad.gov.ph/</a> (Navigations&gt; Application requirements &gt; Product Registration)</li></ul>
Certificate of Free Sale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Issued by the regulatory agency of the exporting country</li><li>• Refer to BFAD issued Bureau Circular No. 6-A (2007)</li></ul>
International Health Certificate for fishery/aquatic products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Required for all fish and fishery/aquatic products imported into the Philippines intended for distribution and further processing</li><li>• Issued by the authorized or competent regulatory agency from the country of origin, on the basis that the following requirements have been met:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fish and fishery/aquatic products meet the quality of fresh fish prior to freezing shall be graded accordingly to size.</li><li>- The fishery products must be handled and processed hygienically in processing plants and/or freezer vessels.</li><li>- Frozen fishery products must be kept and maintained at -18°C or lower during transport.</li><li>- Fish and fishery/aquatic products must be subject to visual inspection for parasite check.</li><li>- Fish infested with parasites, must be removed from the batch.</li></ul></li><li>• Shall be supported with the following laboratory test results, which shall not exceed for the indicator organisms, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Total viable count 10/gram</li><li>- E. coli 10 to 100/gram</li><li>- Salmonella absent in 25 gram sample</li><li>- Shigella absent</li><li>- Vibrio cholerae absent</li></ul></li></ul>
Veterinary Quarantine Clearance (VQC) certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Required for the importation of meat and meat products, which is regulated by the DA issued Administrative Order No. 26 (AO 26) available at <a href="http://www.da.gov.ph/agrilaws/ao_2005/ao_26.pdf">http://www.da.gov.ph/agrilaws/ao_2005/ao_26.pdf</a></li><li>• For live animals – obtain from BAI</li></ul>
Quarantine Clearances/ Import Licenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quarantine clearances serve as import licenses</li><li>• Required prior to the importation of fresh fruits and vegetables (from BPI), meat and meat products (including animal feed ingredients and pet food), commodities entering duty-free or subject to an in-quota tariff such as frozen pork, frozen poultry, fresh/chilled potatoes,</li></ul>

**DOCUMENT REFERENCE**

Code :PHL1000

Date :15/06/10

Page :3/7

	<p>coffee beans, corn and coffee extract.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In all cases, imported meat, fish or produce requires that a registered importer be the receiver of the shipment. Consequently, the importer would have to be knowledgeable about the regulations associated with the particular commodity being imported.</li> </ul>
<b>Labelling</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The following information is required to be on the labels of imported food products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name of the food</li> <li>List of ingredients used in the product (in decreasing order of proportion), including additives, flavorings and preservatives used</li> <li>Net contents and drained weight</li> <li>Name and address of manufacturer/packer or distributor</li> <li>Name and the address of Philippine importer/distributor</li> <li>Country of origin</li> <li>Lot identification</li> </ul> </li> <li>Additional information on food labeling contained in BFAD AO No. 88-B (1994) may be obtained from <a href="http://www.bfad.gov.ph">www.bfad.gov.ph</a>.</li> </ul>
Biotechnology/Organic Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No labelling requirements currently</li> </ul>
Product Specific Labelling Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These include bottled water and prepackaged processed meats, which are covered by specific labeling regulations that have been developed by BFAD</li> <li>E.g. AO 18-A s. 1993 Standards of Quality and Requirements for the Processing, Packaging and Labeling of Bottled Drinking Water</li> <li>BC 9 s. 1999: Labeling of Prepackaged Processed Meat Products</li> <li>MC 25 s. 1992: Additional Labeling Requirement for Food Supplements</li> </ul>
<b>Other Information</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Food laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Republic Act No. 9711 otherwise known as the Food and Drug Administration Act of 2009,</li> </ul>
Food standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National microbiological standards for food have not yet been established.</li> <li>Philippines food regulations are thus generally patterned after CODEX , FDA and similar regulatory bodies in other countries</li> <li>Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD, DOH) and the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS, DA) develop and enforce food safety standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAD: processed food products</li> <li>BAFPS: fresh and primary agricultural and fisheries products</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## DOCUMENT REFERENCE

Code :PHL1000

Date :15/06/10

Page :4/7

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standards are available at the Bureau of Product Standards website (<a href="http://www.bps.dti.gov.ph">http://www.bps.dti.gov.ph</a>)</li></ul>
Regulatory/Enforcement Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Food and Drug Administration (FDA)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- under the Department of Health (DOH)</li><li>- previously known as BFDA</li><li>- regulates food, drugs, cosmetic, and device establishments and products</li><li>- conducts spot checks on establishments for compliance</li><li>- collects and inspects samples of health products prior to the issuance of appropriate certificates</li><li>- responsible for the safety of processed food products</li></ul></li><li>• Department of Agriculture (DA)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS: <a href="http://www.bafps.da.gov.ph">http://www.bafps.da.gov.ph</a>)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Responsible for fresh and primary agricultural and fisheries products</li><li>▪ National Enquiry Point for Codex Alimentarius and other food safety and standards regulatory bodies.</li><li>▪ Monitors and disseminates information on international developments in food safety</li></ul></li><li>- Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ prescribe standards for quality of livestock, poultry, meat products, dairy products and animal feeds and veterinary supplies</li><li>▪ Regulates the flow of animals and animal products in Philippines to prevent, control, contain and eradicate communicable animal disease</li></ul></li><li>- National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS: <a href="http://nmis.gov.ph/Home.php">http://nmis.gov.ph/Home.php</a>)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ implements policies and procedures governing post production flow of livestock, meat and meat products both locally produced and imported through the various stages of marketing</li><li>▪ supervises the operations of abattoirs and meat establishments and conducts ante- and post-mortem inspections of meat</li><li>▪ plays a key role in the enforcement of the regulations over fresh, chilled and frozen meat and poultry imports</li><li>▪ The Meat Import/Export Services of the NMIS ensures that imported or exportable meat and meat products are produced under acceptable conditions and systems.</li></ul></li><li>- Bureau of Fisheries &amp; Aquatic Resources (BFAR: <a href="http://www.bfar.da.gov.ph/">www.bfar.da.gov.ph/</a> )<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Given the administrative responsibility to control fish and other marine products.</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>

**DOCUMENT REFERENCE**

Code :PHL1000

Date :15/06/10

Page :5/7

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Fisheries Post-Harvest Technology Division (FPHTD) of BFAR issues commodity clearances (i.e., import permits) and other requirements for the import of fish and fishery products.</li><li>- Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI: <a href="http://bpi.da.gov.ph/">http://bpi.da.gov.ph/</a>)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ promotes the development of plant industries through research and development, crop production and protection and effective technology promotion and transfer</li><li>▪ carries out inspection and certification and/or treatment activities on imported and exportable plant products such as fruits and vegetables</li><li>▪ prevents the introduction of exotic pests into the country, to prevent further spread of existing plant pests and to enforce phytosanitary measures for the export of plants, plant products and regulated articles</li></ul></li></ul>
Nutritional and Health Claims and Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The label of food that is marketed for special dietary uses, e.g., diabetic foods, must include information concerning its vitamin, mineral and other dietary properties as required by the BFAD, and in a manner that fully informs purchasers of the product's intrinsic value in terms of its special use.</li><li>• BFAD has the authority to prescribe general standards and guidelines for food advertisements.</li><li>• BFAD is also responsible for monitoring and ascertaining the veracity of nutritional and medicinal claims in food advertisements in the various media.</li><li>• Please refer to the Bureau Circulars "Guidelines in the Use of Nutrition and Health Claims in Food", published on 23 Jan 2007 and available at <a href="http://www.bfad.gov.ph">http://www.bfad.gov.ph</a></li></ul>
Packaging and Container Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Philippines regulations pertaining to good manufacturing practices and suitability of packaging materials for food use are based on Codex and USFDA regulations</li></ul>
Food Additives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regulated by the Philippine Food Act and the regulations that have been established by the BFAD for such products.</li><li>• Relevant regulations, available on BFAD website (under Laws and Regulations&gt;Food):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Bureau Circular 2006-016: Updated List of Food Additives</li><li>- Administrative Order 112 s. 1985: Regulations Governing Importation of Food Color Additives</li><li>- Administrative Order 123 s. 1970: General Regulation for Labeling Artificial Sweeteners in the Dietary Management of Disease in Man, Prohibited Artificial Sweeteners (B-6.2 Food Additives Preservation)</li></ul></li></ul>
Pesticides and Other Contaminants:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) is the designated national authority for registration matters. FPA licenses pesticide distributors and dealers and issues import</li></ul>

## DOCUMENT REFERENCE

Code :PHL1000

Date :15/06/10

Page :6/7

	<p>certificates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) monitors the levels of pesticide and chemical residue in crops and by-products. It also determines and evaluates practices on the use of pesticides for possible modification.</li></ul>
Importing live animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires a Veterinary Quarantine Clearance (VQC) Certificate from BAI prior to the shipment of animals.</li><li>• Must be accompanied by a health certificate.</li><li>• Specific Philippine import requirements for live animals and animal products may be obtained from:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ncie/irecs/animals/rp.htm">http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ncie/irecs/animals/rp.htm</a></li></ul></li><li>• The DA also allows the importation of protein-free tallow with insoluble impurities below 0.15% in weight.</li><li>• Only beef products derived from beef from Australia or New Zealand is allowed. For collagen casings of bovine origin, the BAI requires additional certification that the product was prepared from hides and skins other than that coming from the head.</li></ul>
Import Regulations For Fish and Seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Republic Act 8550 (RA 8550) of 1998 known as the Fisheries Code implemented by the Department of Agriculture (available at <a href="http://www.bfar.da.gov.ph/legislation/irr_8550/ra8550.htm">http://www.bfar.da.gov.ph/legislation/irr_8550/ra8550.htm</a>)</li><li>• Must satisfy the HACCP standards as provided under Section 67 of RA 8550</li><li>• The importation of fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products is allowed only when certified as necessary by the Secretary of Agriculture in order to achieve food security taking into consideration public welfare and safety.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Except if these are used for canning and processing purposes or undertaken by institutional buyers</li></ul></li><li>• Fisheries Administrative Order No. 207, issued by the DA in 2001, banned the importation and culture of live shrimp and prawns in Philippines</li><li>• The following information should appear on the packaging and on the accompanying documents: the country of origin written out in full; species of fish/fishery products weight and content; address of supplier; and BFAR Inspection stamp mark.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Exemption: Frozen fishery/aquatic products imported in bulk intended for further processing</li></ul></li></ul>
Genetically Engineered Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regulated by the Rules and Regulations for the Importation and Release into the Environment of Plants and Plant Products Derived from the Use of Modern Biotechnology (AO8)</li></ul>

## DOCUMENT REFERENCE

Code :PHL1000

Date :15/06/10

Page :7/7

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Under AO8, all GE plant varieties ("regulated article") must be evaluated by a third party panel of Philippine scientists for food, feed and environmental safety prior to entering the Philippines.</li></ul>
Food Fortification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regulated by the Philippine Food Fortification Law of 2000 or RA 8976</li><li>• All staple foods -- rice, sugar, flour, salt and cooking oil -- will require fortification by law.</li><li>• The Philippine government has identified Vitamin A, iron, and iodine as the three most needed micronutrients in the country. The law aims to provide 50 percent or more of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of Vitamin A and iron among at-risk groups, particularly children below 6 years old and women of reproductive age.</li><li>• This law applies to all manufacturers or producers, importers, traders, tollees, retailers repackers of staple foods as well as restaurants and food service establishments.</li><li>• The Department of Health through BFAD and the National Nutrition Council are responsible for implementing and monitoring the program. BFAD is mandated to regularly monitor food fortification levels and shall see to it that the fortification process complies with DOH standards.</li></ul>

Reference: USDA FAS GAIN Report

*Rules and Regulation Governing the Labeling of Prepackaged of Food Products Distributed in the Philippines*, No. 88-B s. 1984, Bureau of Food and Drugs, Ministry of Health, Republic of the Philippines

*Importation and Registration of Imported Pre-packed Food Products*, BC 18 s. 1999, Bureau of Food and Drugs, Ministry of Health, Republic of the Philippines

### DISCLAIMER:

This document has been prepared by SPRING Singapore with the intention of assisting Singapore based exporters of food products. While every possible care has been taken in the preparation of this document, the information may not be completely accurate as policies may have changed or clear and consistent information on these policies were not available. They cannot be taken as the official interpretation of the regulations. It is highly recommended that Singapore based exporters verify the full set of certification and import requirements with the relevant authorities in importing country. **Please note that final import approval of any product is subject to the importing country's rules and regulations as interpreted by custom officials at the point of entry.**