



**Food Safety and Inspection Service
United States Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-3700**

Export Library

Sarev17--09/17/2004

Export Requirements for Saudi Arabia

Eligible/Ineligible Products

A. Eligible

1. Fresh/frozen red meat and further processed red meat products.
 - a. Male cattle not over 5 years old must be in cuts not smaller than quarters. Sheep not over 3 years old must be shipped in whole carcasses.
 - b. Each carcass (side or quarter if cattle) must:
 - (1) Bear legible U.S. inspection legend.
 - (2) Be free from any preservatives.
 - (3) Have kidneys removed.
 - (4) Be wrapped in clean white cloth.
 - c. The carcass shall be eviscerated and free from head, feet and kidney fat. A part of the tail may be left to identify the animal type.
 - d. No preservatives, antibiotics or coloring material, except the stamping ink, shall be used.
2. Offal products
3. Poultry and poultry products (See restriction in B)

B. Ineligible

1. Restrictions on poultry and poultry products originating from birds raised or processed in the State of Texas are no longer in effect.*

Labeling Requirements

- A. All products - Storage temperature must be placed with the refrigeration statement on the boxes to fully clarify the type of product being handled. (EXAMPLE: "*KEEP FROZEN - store at or below ___°C; KEEP CHILLED (OR REFRIGERATE) - STORE BETWEEN ___°C AND ___°C.* ")
- B. Fresh/frozen meat and poultry. In addition to the labeling features mandatory in the United States, precut/processed and packaged meat and poultry must bear the following features:
1. Bilingual labels - The Arabic language must be one of the languages used for declaration.
 2. A Statement must be included on the label that Halal product has been slaughtered according to Islamic principles.
 3. Metric net weight:
 - a. Poultry - Chilled whole bird weights can range from 550-1800 g. Weight classes (grades) shall be divided by a difference of at least 100 g between the classes. There is a tolerance of 50 g within a class.
 - b. Frozen poultry - Individual birds (units) within each box or carton shall be uniform in size and weight, with a tolerance not exceeding 10%.
 4. For production (slaughtering or freezing) and expiration dates, spell out or abbreviate the name of the month. (EXAMPLE: JAN. or JANUARY, 1985. Dates may also be expressed 27/4/87 or 27 APR 87 in English and Arabic.) Calendar strips may be preprinted on the label allowing the designation of calendar dates with the literal translation:
 - a. Production (slaughtering or freezing) date must be accompanied by the statement "*Production good for _____ months from date of production.*"
 - b. The expiration date for frozen poultry is calculated from the date the product was first frozen. The expiration date for fresh/frozen beef, veal, buffalo, mutton, goat and fresh poultry is calculated from the slaughter date.
 5. The use of the terminology "*Keep Refrigerated*" is not acceptable on labels for frozen product.
 6. The following labeling methods may be used as alternatives to comply with Labeling Requirements (Section B):
 - a. Stickers - Must not interfere with label terminology and be self destructive on removal. Stickers covering existing labeling information are in violation.
 - b. Inserts - Must be accompanied by production and expiration dates.

- c. Ink stamp - Ink must be indelible and legible. (Ink stamps are the least desirable labeling method.)

C. Processed meat and poultry

1. Features required on processed meat and poultry labels:

- a. bilingual labels with labeling features mandatory in the United States,
- b. metric net weights,
- c. identification of pork products (including lard), and
- d. production and expiration dates (See OTHER REQUIREMENTS, section C -- Product Arrival and Expiration Date.)

2. A Certificate of Islamic Slaughter is not required for processed meat and poultry products. If processed products are labeled with Halal claims, then origin raw materials must be from Muslim-approved operations and be accompanied with appropriate certificates supporting Islamic Slaughter.

D. Prepackaged processed meat and poultry product requires the following:

1. Provide production date (packaging or freezing) and expiration date (See OTHER REQUIREMENTS, section C -- Product Arrival and Expiration Date), and
2. Provide net weight.

Documentation Requirements

Certification Requirements

A. Beef and mutton

1. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5, Meat and Poultry Certificate of Wholesomeness.
2. The following statements must be provided as an FSIS [Letterhead Certificate](#):
 - a. *The meat is from animals of an average age of ____ and is subject to veterinary examination not more than 12 hours prior to and immediately after slaughter and found free of disease and suitable for human consumption.*
 - b. *The animals originated from herds under State supervision for the diseases regulated by the State or the United States Department of Agriculture.*

- c. *The animals for slaughter were given careful veterinary inspection and found free from clinical signs of infectious and contagious disease.*
- d. *The United States has been free of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) since 1929.*
- e. *The product was prepared, handled, stored and transported under hygienic conditions.*
- f. *The product is in conformity with pertinent United States regulations concerning production, storage, and transport.*
- g. *There have been no outbreaks of vesicular stomatitis, rinderpest, peste des petis ruminants, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, lumpy skin disease, Rift Valley Fever, bluetongue, sheep pox, goat pox, theileriosis hemorrhagic septicemia (Asian-type), bovine brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis, bovine babesiosis, contagious agalactia and contagious caprine pleuropneumonia in the State of origin in the 3 months prior to slaughter.*
- h. *The product has not been stored with products that have not passed inspection.*
- i. *The feeding of ruminant protein (meat meal and bone meal) to ruminants is prohibited in the United States.*
- j. *Based on a national residue program, the product does not contain harmful residues of substances with hormonal effect.*

Note: The meat letterhead certification statements have been discussed with Saudi import officials and are believed to meet the Saudi certification requirements.

B. Poultry and Poultry product

1. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5--FSIS Meat and Poultry Certificate of Wholesomeness.
2. The following statements must be provided as an FSIS [Letterhead Certificate](#):
 - a. *The birds were subject to veterinary examination not more than 12 hours prior to and immediately after slaughter and found free from disease and suitable for human consumption.*
 - b. *The birds originated from flocks under State supervision for the diseases regulated by the State or the United States Department of Agriculture.*
 - c. *The birds for slaughter were given careful veterinary inspection and found free from clinical signs of infectious and contagious disease.*
 - d. *The product was prepared, handled, stored and transported under hygienic conditions.*

- e. *The product is in conformity with pertinent United States regulations concerning production, storage, and transport.*
- f. *There have been no outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (fowl plaque), lethal-type Newcastle disease, fowl typhoid and pullorum disease in the State of origin in the 3 months prior to slaughter.*
- g. *The product has not been stored with products that have not passed inspection.*
- h. *The poultry has not been fed with animal-protein, animal fats, or animal by-products.*
- i. *The United States Food and Drug Administration prohibits the use of growth-stimulating hormones in poultry feeds.*

Notes:

1) The poultry letterhead certification statements have been discussed with Saudi import officials and are believed to meet the Saudi certification requirements.

2) Poultry meat and further processed poultry products must be derived from birds that have not been fed animal protein, animal fats, or animal by-products. To be eligible for export to Saudi Arabia, poultry must be produced under an Animal Protein-Free Certification Program for Poultry administered by the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Information about this program can be obtained from the AMS National Supervisor for Poultry Grading at (202) 720-4411.

C. Islamic Slaughter Certification

1. In addition to FSIS certification, the exporter must obtain a Certificate of Islamic (Halal) Slaughter from a member of an Islamic Center or Islamic organization. Products bearing Halal label claims must be accompanied by an appropriate Halal certification or a written assurance from the exporter that an appropriate Halal certificate will be supplied to accompany that shipment before it reaches its destination. However, FSIS is not responsible for certifying that products intended for export to Muslim countries meets appropriate requirements for religious slaughter. A Certificate of Islamic Slaughter is a certificate issued by a member of a Moslem organization recognized by the importing country to provide this service; the certificate states that animals were slaughtered according to Moslem religious requirements. Procedures for export certification do not include agency oversight of the Halal process or review of the authenticity of the Halal certificate. Processed products with Halal claims should also be accompanied by an appropriate Halal certificate. The certificate must be endorsed by the Arabian-American Chamber of Commerce or by Arabian Consul and must accompany all shipments. The telephone numbers of the Arabian-

American Chambers of Commerce are listed at the end of these requirements.

- D. Frozen Product - The following statement must be placed in the "Remarks" section of FSIS Form 9060-5: *"Product was frozen 72 hours after slaughter."*
- E. Shipment for U.S. personnel. - The Certificate of Islamic Slaughter may be waived if products are shipped for consumption by U.S. personnel in Saudi Arabia. Such shipments require a written statement (filed with export certificate) that the shipment is so destined, and full responsibility is accepted by the exporter for possible problems in gaining entry of the shipment into Saudi Arabia as certified.
- F. All certificates must be dated and have the signature and title of an FSIS veterinarian.

Handling/Storage Requirements

Saudi Arabia requires that instructions for consumers concerning storage, preparation and other special handling requirements accompany all shipments.

Other Requirements

- A. Saudi Arabian Import Inspection
 - 1. Laboratory sampling - Random samples collected on all meat and poultry products entering Saudi Arabia are examined for:
 - a. Salmonellae - product rejected when more than 2 of 5 sub-samples are positive.
 - b. E. Coli - no tolerance in ground beef.
 - c. Growth bacteria - maximum 10,000,000/gm.
 - d. Volatile nitrogen - beef: maximum 20 mg./100 gm.; Poultry: maximum 50 gm./ 100 kg.
 - 2. Species identification tests for pork are routinely run on all product.
 - 3. When frozen poultry sample is thawed, the amount of water collected should not exceed 5 percent. Saudi Arabian officials recommend that U.S. industry run test prior to shipment to assure that product is not detained on arrival.
- B. Detained product - If product is detained, an appeal must be made in person by a Saudi Arabian broker or consignee to the Saudi Ministry of Commerce. Appeals are decided on a case-by-case basis.
- C. Product Arrival and Expiration Date

1. For frozen Poultry, the period elapsed from slaughtering until arrival in Saudi Arabia shall not be more than 3 months for frozen turkey, duck, goose and chicken. Frozen poultry shall be maintained at a temperature not more than -18°C , with an expiration date of 12 months from the slaughtering date.
2. For frozen red meats, the period elapsed from slaughtering and freezing until arrival in Saudi Arabia shall not be more than 4 months. Product shall be maintained frozen at a temperature not more than -18°C with an expiration date of 12 months from slaughter date for beef, buffalo, mutton, and goat; 9 months from freezing date for minced meat, hamburger, sausages, and livers.
3. For chilled red meats, the period elapsed from slaughtering until arrival to Saudi Arabia shall not be more than 10 days at a temperature not more than -2°C . with an expiration date of 4 weeks after slaughtering date.
4. For chilled poultry, the period elapsed from slaughtering until arrived to Saudi Arabia shall not be more than 7 days at a room temperature of -2°C .
5. For chilled vacuum meats and poultry, the period elapsed from slaughter until arrival in Saudi Arabia shall not be more than 40 days at a temperature not more than -2°C with an expiration date of 10 weeks after slaughtering date.
6. For canned meats, there is an expiration date of 24 months for meat and poultry products in sterilized, metallic containers.
7. Samples of meat and poultry products, regardless of the quantity, should comply with all labeling and other requirements. If samples are hand-carried, these requirements are often waived by the authorities upon entry.

D. Product transiting third country ports must be sealed with a USDA seal and the seal number and container number must be typed in the "Remarks" section of FSIS Form 9060-5.

Plants Eligible to Export

All Federally inspected plants are eligible to export to Saudi Arabia.

ARABIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

1. NATIONAL U.S.-ARAB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
1625 Eye Street NW Suite 902
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 331-8010
Fax (202) 331-8297
2. U.S.-ARAB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

135 South Lasalle Street Room 1020
Chicago, Illinois 60603
(312) 782-0320
Fax (312) 782-7379

3. U.S.-ARAB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
1231 Market Street
San Francisco, California 94101-7239
(415) 552-8202
(213) 646-1499 branch office in Los Angeles

For additional assistance regarding halal slaughter requirements:

The Embassy of Saudi Arabia
601 New Hampshire Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037
(202) 342-3800
Fax (202) 342-0271

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