

Enclosure 2

PART 2: Labeling Compliance (08/07/2008)

Section 2: Label Compliance for Imported Meat and Poultry Products

Handling Duplicate Shipping Marks Applied to Imported Meat and Poultry Shipments

I. Requirements for shipping mark

Foreign countries eligible to export meat or poultry products to the United States are required to certify shipments to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) that the product complies with requirements equivalent to those in the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) or the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA). This certification includes identification of the unique shipping marks (alpha-numeric characters) that are applied to each shipment (shipping containers) which links the product with the foreign health certificate.

Each country eligible to ship meat and poultry to the United States has been advised that the shipping marks cannot be repeated from the same foreign establishment within a calendar year. When presented for reinspection at the port of entry, the shipping mark is entered into the Automated Import Information System (AIIS). The AIIS is designed to block the inspection assignments for any shipment that is presented with shipping marks (duplicate) that have already been used.

II. Duplicate Shipping Mark Identified

- A. When a duplicate shipping mark is identified upon initial entry into the AIIS, import inspection personnel will:
 1. Ensure the duplication is not due to an initial entry data error before proceeding. Accurate entry of the shipping mark, country, and foreign establishment is essential. If a data entry error occurred on initial entry, inspection personnel must contact IID-HQ to correct the shipping mark prior to proceeding with the inspection. If no data entry error occurred, inspection personnel will proceed to paragraph 2.
 2. Query the AIIS by using the Find Lot screen and search for the shipping mark to determine which import establishment the shipping mark was originally entered for. For Canadian shipments, the import establishment number the shipping mark was originally entered for must be verified. Amendments of the designated import establishment for Canadian shipments are only allowed in specific circumstances (see Part 4, Section 1, Enclosure 2 of the Import Manual). If the shipping mark is found in the AIIS, inspection personnel will proceed to paragraph 3. If the shipping mark is not found, inspection personnel will proceed to paragraph 5.
 3. Contact import inspection personnel at the import establishment where the shipping mark was originally entered to verify that the shipping mark was entered correctly and to determine what the date (year) is on the health certificate. If the shipping mark was entered in error, inspection personnel with the incorrect entry will contact IID-HQ to have the shipping mark changed. If no entry error occurred and both health certificates are dated within the same calendar year, inspection personnel will proceed to paragraph 4. If no entry error occurred and the health certificates are certified (dated) two different years, inspection personnel will refer to 4.c. below for guidance.
 4. Import inspection personnel will notify import establishment management that the shipment is

marked incorrectly and provide the options outlined in the Import Manual of Procedures (Part 2, Section 2, V., C and D). *The foreign government must re-mark the product and issue a replacement health certificate or other suitable documentation that the product certified on the original health certificate has been re-marked to reflect the new shipping marks.* If the importer is not able to have the shipping mark corrected, the shipment will be **rejected**, unless one of the following apply:

- a. Products containing fresh meat and poultry products, as well as processed meat and/or poultry products are certified with separate health certificates (except for Canada). If these products arrive in the same consignment, bearing the same shipping mark, import inspection personnel should use the **Add Lot** feature in the initial entry screen to enable the AIIS system to generate an assignment.
 - b. Product arriving in the same shipment, bearing the same shipping mark, may have separate health certificates issued to separate the various types of products. Import inspection personnel should use the **Add Lot** feature in the initial entry screen to enable the AIIS to generate an assignment.
 - c. Shipments with the shipping mark duplicated from one year to the next which may be carried over per calendar year due to delayed shipping. If inspection personnel can verify the duplication is from a health certificate issued the previous year, they must add the current calendar year at the end of the shipping mark to differentiate it from the previous entry.
5. Import inspection personnel **will notify IID-HQ** of any shipment with a duplicate shipping mark that does not qualify for one of the above exemptions. No certificate guarantee will be issued in the case of duplicate shipping marks. Shipment details, including the foreign country, the foreign establishment number, the AIIS Lot ID number, the foreign health certificate number, and the shipping mark must be e-mailed to (ImportInspection@fsis.usda.gov).
6. If this is the first occurrence for a duplicate shipping mark for the **foreign country**, the foreign country is given the opportunity to take corrective actions in-country. IID-HQ will advise the importer/broker/foreign country's embassy of this option after being notified by the import inspector. If IID-HQ receives written assurances from the foreign inspection system that corrective actions are being taken in the foreign country, IID-HQ may grant an exemption to the duplicate shipping marks restriction. This exemption is applied to the country, regardless of which foreign establishment has duplicated shipping marks within the same calendar year. IID-HQ will maintain a record of the date the exemption is granted for tracking purposes.
- a. If an exemption is granted by IID-HQ, import inspection personnel will be instructed to proceed with reinspection on the shipment(s) identified by the foreign inspection service as potential shipping mark duplications. Import inspection personnel will enter the foreign establishment number as an addendum at the end of the shipping mark during entry into the AIIS. This will enable the AIIS to issue an inspection assignment.
 - b. If the country has already received an exemption, IID-HQ will notify the foreign inspection service that the shipping marks must be corrected. The foreign inspection service may appeal the decision to the Director of IID. The decision will be communicated through the RIFO to import inspection personnel.