



EU Import controls related to food, animal products and plant products

**Lebanon
2016**

The EU Market

The EU is a Success Story

- **60 years peace, shared values, compromise**
- **Single Market with 500 Million citizens**
- **Economic stability, 70% of trade intra-EU**
- **Harmonisation of rules and standards**

The EU is a nightmare

- **28 countries, 24 official Languages**
- **Diverse traditions, expectations and economies**
- **By far the biggest importer and exporter of food worldwide**

Risks must be managed

Risks to be managed:

- **Contagious animal and plant disease**
(FMD, Avian Flu, Citrus Canker)
- **Zoonoses (transmitted from the animals)**
(Salmonella, Listeria, BSE, Tuberculosis)
- **General hygiene**
- **Contaminants**
(Pharmaceuticals, pesticides, heavy metals)
- **Fraud**

How does it work?

- **Harmonized legal framework;**
- **Efficient risk management;**
- **Transparency, information exchange and constant evaluation/peer pressure;**
- **Scrutiny and market surveillance, border controls, audits.**

Legislative dimension

The food sector is one of the most regulated and harmonised at EU level
(almost 98%)

THE ENTIRE FOOD CHAIN
"FROM FARM TO FORK"

FARMERS

Animal Health
Animal Welfare
Seed (GMO)
Plant Health
Pesticides
Feed

INDUSTRY

Hygiene
Contaminants
Additives
Packaging
Dietetic Food

CONSUMERS

Labeling
Claims
Transparency
Traceability

Food safety in the EU

▶ **The new regulatory framework is based on a coherent and comprehensive approach:**

- “Farm-to-table” – traceability
- Risk assessment based on best available science (EFSA)
- Risk management – precautionary principle
- Consultation of stakeholders – access to information
- Clearly assigned responsibilities (producers – officials)
- Equal treatment of domestic producers / importers
- New emphasis on enforcement
- New emphasis on communication (guidance documents)
- New emphasis on training (“Better Training for Safer Food”)



General Food Law (Reg 178/2002)

Article 17 – Liability

All operators must ensure safety of food and feed.

Article 18 – Traceability

All food, feed and animals: One step up, one step down.

Article 20 – Recall

All recalls must be reported to authorities.

Article 11 - Imports

Food and feed imported into the Community complies with food law or conditions recognised as equivalent.

Article 12 - Exports

Food and feed exported shall comply with the food law.

Official Food and Feed Control

Regulation 882/2004

- **Coherent principles for all authorities:**
 - Adequate staff, resource, training.
 - Accredited labs, international standards.
- **Risk-based controls in all sectors (Competent Authority)**
 - Based on multi-annual plans.
 - Control plans are subject to scrutiny.
 - Coordinated residue monitoring programs.

EU food law in a nutshell

All Member States:

- **Credible inspection and control system.**

All food and feed:

- **Liability, Traceability, Reporting.**
- **General hygiene rules.**
- **Self-controls by producers themselves.**
- **Residue monitoring**

High risk products

- **Specific hygiene rules.**
- **Animal health and plant health.**

Imports – Same rules apply

Food of animal origin (high risk)

- Lists of eligible countries and businesses.
- Country listing after inspection by FVO.
- Regular country audits on risk basis.
- Approval based on compliance or equivalence.

Food of non-animal origin (low risk)

- No country listing.
- Importer is liable for safety (general food law).
- Specific rules in particular cases (citrus, potatoes).

***The EU is NOT dealing with individual businesses.
National services must guarantee compliance.***

Country Listing: Food of animal origin

- **Must have Competent Veterinary Authority in-line with Regulation 882/2004.**
- **Must have animal health/zoonoses requirements met.**
- **Approved businesses meet EU hygiene requirements and are regularly inspected.**
- **Monitoring system for residues in place.**
- **Confirmatory inspection of the Food & Veterinary Office.**
- **Official Certification agreed.**
- **Member States agree.**

Plants, Fruit, Vegetables

- **No country listing, no business listing.**
- **Plant Health requirements.**
- **Residue tolerances must be met.**
- **Entry via any border post (unless specific rules apply).**
- **Importer is responsible and liable.**

Hygiene: Food of Animal Origin

Regulation 853/2004

*Specific rules for food of animal origin;
Covers all stages of production including
farms;*

*Operators need **authorization**;
Authorization only after inspection;
Listing of authorized businesses.*

Residue Monitoring

Food of animal origin (Directive 96/23)

- **Meat, poultry, game, aquaculture, milk, eggs, honey;**
- **Member States and exporting countries must submit a rational monitoring plan;**
- **Reviewed by FVO.**

Food of plant origin (Regulation 396/2005)

- **Rules for setting Import Tolerances**
- **Harmonised monitoring programs in Member States;**
- **Results collected by EFSA;**
- **Rapid Alert Notification if exceeded.**

Risk management - in case of problems

- ***Rapid Alerts trigger a letter to competent authority with a request to follow-up and report back.***

- ***Additional Measures:***
 - ***Entry through designated points,***
 - ***Increased checks;***
 - ***Pre-export checks and certification;***
 - ***De-listing of establishments or countries.***

It does not matter whether or not a territory is part of the EU

No discrimination:

- **The food law either applies, or must be complied with.**

No short cuts:

- **There cannot be a compromise on safety standards.**

But there is flexibility:

- **Objectives must be met, not the letter.**

And there is technical assistance:

- **Several funds, policies and mechanisms.**



SPS requirements for market access

	Contaminants	Hygiene	Health
Fruit	Market surv.	General	-
Potatoes	Market surv.	General	Plant health
By-products	Market surv.	General	Mainly BSE
Fresh fish	Market surv.	Specific	-
Aquaculture	Monit. Plan	Specific	Animal health
Meat prod.	Monit. Plan	Specific	Animal health
Fresh meat	Monit. Plan	Specific	Animal health
Milk prod.	Monit. Plan	Specific	Animal health
Animals	Monit. Plan	Specific	Animal health

Lebanon is only listed for honey

Bottom Line: Go to Europe?

Market access conditions are complex and not easy to meet, but ...

- **One negotiation – 500 Mio consumers;**
- **Fully harmonised, transparent rules in-line with international standards;**
- **No discrimination.**

... animal health conditions are difficult to meet.

- **Trade with regions of same health status;**
- **Risk management is possible.**

Given the time and effort needed ...

STRATEGIC PLANNING AVOIDS FRUSTRATION

- **Long-term business perspective;**
- **Realistic assessment of risks;**
- **Commitment of industry and government;**
- **Transparency, lines of communication;**
- **Follow the process through**
 - **it may take several years.**

Capacity of Competent Authority is key.



Documentation on the web

General Information:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/index_en.htm

Food and Veterinary Office:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.html

European Food Safety Authority

<http://efsa.europa.eu>