

Imported food requirements: Fermented meat products, meat paste and pâté

Recent Updates:

Date	Location	Information
November 2009	Section 1.5 Section 3.2	Clarification of products included. Clarification of verification of recognised assurances/certification.
1 July 2009	Section 1.0	Structure revised

1.0 Scope

1.1 The purpose of this Imported Food Requirement is to provide administrative guidance to a Food Act Officer (FAO) as to the matters they may take into consideration when determining whether they have been satisfied by a person who imports food into New Zealand that the food complies in all respects with-

- (a) All relevant provisions of the Food Act 1981; and
- (b) All relevant provisions of any regulations made pursuant to the Food Act 1981; and
- (c) All applicable food standards.

Nothing in this Imported Food Requirement limits the powers of a Food Act Officer appointed under the Food Act 1981.

1.2 Legislative requirement: [Food \(Prescribed Foods\) Standard 2007](#)

- Products covered under the scope of these requirements are Prescribed Foods for the purpose of import into New Zealand (Section 11P, Food Act 1981).
- No person may import these products into New Zealand unless that person has satisfied an officer that the food complies.

1.3 This Imported Food Requirement sets out clearance options and procedures for importers of prescribed foods that an importer may follow when aiming to satisfy a FAO that the food complies with the Food Act 1981.

1.4 These clearance options and procedures apply only after a prescribed food has gained clearance from MAF Biosecurity New Zealand. Importers should check those requirements at: [MAF Biosecurity New Zealand](#).

1.5 Products included:

- Ready-to-eat products including salami, meat paste, pâté, terrines.

1.6 Products excluded:

- Raw meat products, retorted product (cans, jars and pouches), hams products including prosciutto (and similar products).

1.7 Imports of beef products **must also** meet [NZFSA Import Requirements](#) for bovine meat and bovine meat products.

1.8 [Tariff codes targeted](#)

1.9 **Food safety hazard:** pathogenic organisms, specifically *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Staphylococcus*.

1.10 **Import permitted with conditions from:** All countries. However where the product contains bovine meat, the bovine meat and bovine meat products Imported Food Requirements apply.

2.0 Importer Clearance Options

2.1 The clearance options and procedures in this Imported Food Requirement apply to **ready-to-eat processed meat** products and are in addition to clearance requirements detailed in the [Import Clearance Procedure](#).

2.2 Importers must also meet the requirements of the Food (Importer Listing) Standard 2008 and the Food (Importer General Requirements) Standard 2008. Importers should also read and understand the [Food Importer Standards Guidance](#) before sourcing products to import.

2.3 For **ready-to-eat processed meat** products, importers have a responsibility under the Food (Importer General Requirements) Standard 2008 to ensure imports are not contaminated with pathogens. Salamis and meat pastes (including pates, terrines and other homogenised meat preparations) that have not been retorted (heat treated) may be contaminated with pathogens, specifically *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Staphylococcus*, during their manufacture. Good manufacturing practice can greatly reduce the likelihood of contamination in the finished product.

2.4 The following three options are available to importers when they are aiming to satisfy a FAO that the food complies with the Food Act and can therefore be cleared:

Option 1 - Acceptance of recognised assurances / certification

For **ready-to-eat processed meat** products, recognised assurances / certification may be accepted from:

Australia: a manufacturer's declaration, where the manufacturer must declare that the product is of Australian origin, must accompany each consignment.

European Union: agreed certification issued by competent authorities of EU member states must accompany all imported consignments.

Option 2 - Clearance sampling and testing on arrival in New Zealand

In the absence of recognised assurance / certification or a multiple release permit (MRP), **ready-to-eat processed meat** products are sampled and tested in New Zealand.

Products will be tested for *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Clostridium perfringens* and coagulase-producing *Staphylococcus*.

Sampling and testing should be in accordance with [NZFSA's sampling and testing protocol](#).

Option 3 - Multiple Release Permit (MRP)

MRPs are issued for imported food products that are:

- Inadvertently captured by the tariff codes monitored by the NZFSA, and /or
- From particular suppliers under an arrangement agreed to by the importer and NZFSA.

Importers wishing to apply for a MRP should contact the Advisor (Food Service, Sale and Import) in the NZFSA Approvals Group at (04) 894 2500 or email approvals.fssi@nzfsa.govt.nz to discuss their situation prior to completing a MRP application form.

3.0 Clearance Procedures

3.1 Documentation checks

All consignments accompanied by NZFSA recognised assurances / certification from the relevant competent authority are subject to 100% documentation checks.

3.2 Physical inspections

Verification of recognised assurances/certification

Recognised assurances/certification may be verified by physical inspection of the consignment. Consignments imported with assurances or certification are verified by identity check and/or sampling and testing at intervals.

- The standard rate used to verify assurances/certification which applies to most prescribed foods is 1 in every 20 consignments where consignments are more frequent than 20 in a six month period. Where consignments are less than 20 in a six month period, they are verified every six months.
- Imports with certification from the European Union (EU) are verified at 1% rate (1 in every 100 consignments).

3.3 Clearance sampling and testing on arrival in New Zealand

Sampling and testing should be in accordance with [NZFSA's sampling and testing protocol](#).

Samples:

- Number of samples per lot = 5.
- Each lot sample must weigh at least 200g.
- Individual units or packets should be sampled if these are available.
- The laboratory may composite up to 5 of the 25g samples from a lot prior to or after pre-enrichment for *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* and *Listeria monocytogenes* only.
- *Clostridium perfringens* and coagulase-producing *Staphylococcus* must be tested separately.

Clearance criteria: The following criteria are used when deciding if a consignment captured by these requirements is safe to be released:

- Nil tolerance for *Listeria monocytogenes* per 25g.
- Nil tolerance for *Salmonella* per 25g.
- Nil tolerance for *Campylobacter* per 10g.
- *Clostridium perfringens* should not exceed per g ($n=5$, $c=2$, $m=10^2$, $M=10^3$).
- Coagulase-producing *Staphylococcus* should not exceed per g ($n=5$, $c=2$, $m=10^2$, $M=10^3$).

where n = the minimum number sample units which must be examined from a lot of food, c = the maximum allowable number of defective sample units, m = the acceptable microbiological level in a sample unit and M = the level which when exceeded in 1 or more samples would cause the lot to be rejected.

Reject criteria:

- FAO may REJECT lots that:
 - Test positive for *Listeria monocytogenes*.
 - Test positive for *Salmonella*.
 - Test positive for *Campylobacter*.
 - Have excessive levels of *Clostridium perfringens*.
 - Have excessive levels of coagulase-producing *Staphylococcus*.
- FAO may reject any untested lots in the consignment.
- Procedures for rejected lots and untested lots are described in [NZFSA's sampling and testing protocol](#).

3.4 Multiple Release Permit (MRP)

For holders of an MRP, the import agent will use the permit number to clear the products. Holders of an MRP must maintain an agreed imported food surveillance (sampling and testing) programme for the products covered by the MRP.

3.5 Management of non-compliant consignments

When clearance cannot be given because of non-compliance with import requirements, all determinations on disposition of non-complying consignments should be made in full consultation with NZFSA (or a representative nominated by NZFSA). This will facilitate appropriate corrective action and communication with relevant entities.

3.6 Contact details for border clearance agency

First stop for importers seeking more information.

Central Clearing House

NZFSA Verification Agency

Level 1, 96 New North Road, Eden Terrace, Auckland

PO Box 3540, Eden Terrace, Auckland

Email: imported.food@nzfsa.govt.nz

Fax: 09 909 6208

Phone: 09 909 6210 or 09 909 6211

To be notified of changes and updates to NZFSA's website, including import requirements, go to the [NZFSA website Notifications page](#).

4.0 Tariff Codes Targeted

Prescribed foods are targeted at the border using the New Zealand Customs tariff code system.

A tariff code is a number used for Customs purposes to classify goods. An import agent or customs broker may be able to assist with interpretation of the tariff code.

Importers who are importing **ready-to-eat processed meat** products under tariff codes not listed below should notify NZFSA Central Clearing House. CCH will notify NZFSA of the need to review the tariff codes targeted.

Inadvertent captures

As the tariff classification system is not designed specifically around the imported food regime, some food products may be inadvertently captured by the targeted tariff codes listed. If this is the case, products will not be subject to the sampling and testing protocol outlined in these requirements. Importers may apply to NZFSA for a multiple release permit (MRP) to facilitate clearance.

Products classified with the following tariff codes are captured under this requirement:

Tariff codes targeted for fermented meat products, meat paste and pâté	
1601 Sausages and similar products, of meat, meat offal or blood; food preparations based on these products	
1601.00.00.01A	Chicken Sausages
1601.00.00.09G	Turkey Sausages
1601.00.00.11J	Duck Sausages

1601.00.00.19D	Sausages Of Other Poultry
1601.00.00.29A	Sausages Of Other Than Poultry
1602 Other prepared or preserved meat, meat offal or blood	
1602.20.01.00E	Pâtés De Foie Gras
1602.20.09.00F	Homogenised Preparations Of Liver Other Than Pâtés De Foie Gras
1602.31.00.00G	Homogenised Preparations Etc Of Turkey
1602.32.90.01J	Preparations Of Chicken Otherwise Packed
1602.32.90.09D	Preparations Of Fowls Otherwise Packed
1602.39.19.01D	Preparations Of Chicken Otherwise Packed
1602.41.19.00C	Hams And Cuts Otherwise Packed
1602.42.19.00H	Swine Shoulders And Cuts Packed Other Than in Cans And Jars
1602.49.19.00K	Other Swine Meat Packed Other Than In Cans Or Jars
1602.50.19.00B	Bovine Meat Preparations Otherwise Packed
1602.90.01.00L	Preparations Of Blood