

The Lebanese Republic
Ministry of Agriculture
The Minister
Directorate of Animal Wealth

Number: 3628/6

Date: 06/17/2016

(For Circulation and safekeeping – 06/20/2016 – signature of the Director of Animal Wealth by Interim)

Decision Number 514/1

**Regulation of the Import of Dry Milk Products and White Cheeses and Similar Products
Composed of Milk and Vegetable Oil**

The Minister of Agriculture,

By virtue of decree number 11217 dated 02/15/2014 (Formation of the Government);

By virtue of the legislative decree number 97 dated 09/16/1983 and its amendments (merging public institution with the Ministry of Agriculture and the reorganization of the Ministry);

By virtue of decree number 5246 dated 06/20/1994 (organization of the Ministry of Agriculture...);

By virtue of decision number 1034/1 dated 11/21/2011 (regulation of the packing, packaging and display of milk and milk products);

And in order to protect the safety of food products and public health, and prevent fraud,

Has decided the following:

Article 1: Scope

This decision shall be applied for the following products:

- 1- White cheeses such as the following cheeses:
Halloum, Double Cream, Baladi, Akkawi, Fermented Akkawi (Czech), Mshalale, Majdouleh, Bulgarian white cheese, Mozzarella, and similar white cheeses.
- 2- Dairy products such as products of yogurt and Labne and yogurt drinks and the likes;
- 3- Food products composed of milk and/or milk products and other non-dairy ingredients intended to replace any milk ingredient -partially or totally- (such as vegetable oil and other...), that are similar to white cheese and yogurt.

Article 2: Registration of Factories

The party desiring to import one of the products mentioned in article 1 above shall present an application of registration of the factory to the Directorate of Animal Wealth – Department of Economy, Manufacturing and Marketing, before importing the products, along with the following documents:

- 1- A duly legalized attestation confirming that the production factory is licensed from the official authorities in the country of origin.
- 2- A certificate of conformity with a food safety management system (HACCP or ISO 22000,...) issued by an internationally accredited body for the issuance of certificates of conformity. The applicant shall provide a copy of the detailed documents relevant to this system, along with the audit report issued by an internationally accredited office, in the event the Directorate of Animal Wealth asks him/her to.
- 3- A duly legalized official veterinary health certificate agreed upon by the veterinary authorities in both Lebanon and the exporting country.
- 4- A duly authenticated official radiological certificate issued by the country of origin, or a certificate of radiological analysis of the product issued by a laboratory that is accredited for radiological exams.
- 5- A duly authenticated official dioxin certificate issued by the country of origin, or a certificate of dioxin analysis in the product issued by a laboratory that is accredited for dioxin exams.

Remark: The certificates required above may be presented on a single document or on several separated documents.

Article 3: Documents Required for Import

The party desiring to import one of the products mentioned in Article 1 of the present decision shall be registered as an institution or company in the relevant official services and shall present the Directorate of Animal Wealth – Department of Economy, Manufacturing and Marketing with prior notification before every shipment. The said notification documentation shall comprise the following papers:

- 1- A copy of the proforma invoice for the imported goods.
- 2- An insurance from the owners of the goods (importer) that they will provide the Ministry of Agriculture with a detailed digital list on a Compact Disk (CD) showing the points of sale and/or distribution of the imported goods packed in containers exceeding 2.5 kilograms in net weight and not intended for retail sale, including the names, addresses of the companies, in addition to the quantities delivered and the numbers of the batches..., according to the form approved by the Directorate of Animal Wealth.
- 3- A certificate of registration of the importing institution or company.

- 4- A real estate attestation or a yearly rent contract indicating the presence of a warehouse for the imported goods.
- 5- A copy of the identification card of the owner of the institution or company.

Remark: The papers required in clauses 3, 4 and 5 above may be presented with the first notification documentation only, provided that the Directorate of Animal Wealth is notified in case of any change in the information mentioned therein.

Article 4: Documents Required upon Arrival of the Products

The documents required upon the arrival of the products are as follows:

- 1- A duly authenticated certificate of origin.
- 2- A duly authenticated official veterinary health certificate agreed upon by the veterinary authorities both in Lebanon and in the exporting country.
- 3- A duly authenticated official radiological certificate issued by the country of origin, or a certificate of radiological analysis of the product issued by a laboratory that is accredited for radiological exams.
- 4- A duly authenticated official dioxin certificate issued by the country of origin, or a certificate of dioxin analysis in the product issued by a laboratory that is accredited for dioxin exams.
- 5- A chemical and microbiological analysis certificate issued by an official laboratory or by a laboratory that is approved by the official authorities in the country of origin.
- 6- A duly authenticated official certificate issued by the country of origin, confirming that the product is free of melanin contamination.
- 7- The original invoice for the imported goods.

Remark: The certificates required in clauses 4, 3, 2 and 5 above may be presented on a single document or on several separated documents.

Article 5: Hygiene and Technical Requirements

Imported products shall meet the following hygiene and technical requirements:

- 1- Radioactive contamination shall not exceed 50Bq/kg.
- 2- Dioxin contamination shall not exceed the following maximum limits:
 - Sum of dioxins (WHO-PCDD/F-TEQ): 3.0 picograms/gram of fat¹
 - Sum of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs (WHO-PCDD/F-PCB-TEQ): 6.0 picograms/gram of fat¹.
- 3- Pesticide residues in the milk used in the production shall not exceed the limits permitted in Lebanese Standard NL 662 for “Pesticide Residues in Foods”.

¹ These limits shall not apply to products that contain less than 1% fat.

- 4- Veterinary Drugs Residues in the milk used in the production shall not exceed the limits permitted in the Standards issued by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
- 5- The preparation of the product shall be carried out according to the conditions and requirements mentioned in Lebanese Standard NL 656 for “General Principles of Food Hygiene”, and according to the Hygienic practices for milk and milk products (CAC/RCP 57-2004), to the provisions of the decision of the Ministry of Agriculture number 822-1, dated 12/03/2010, and to any other relevant texts issued by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
- 6- The product shall be compliant with the relevant Lebanese Standard.
- 7- The label shall be compliant with the provisions of decision number 1034/1 dated 11/21/2011 related to the regulation of the packing, packaging and display of milk and milk products, and to the relevant Lebanese Standards.
- 8- The containers shall be made from substances that are internationally permitted to come in contact with food. They shall be free from any defects and suitable for conserving the product and they shall be hermetically sealed in such a way that they can be opened by the consumer.

Article 6: Field Inspection

The Directorate of Animal Wealth – Department of Economy, Manufacturing and Marketing shall be entitled, through a committee composed of people specialized in the inspection of factories of food products of animal origin, to perform a health inspection of the production factories in the country of origin and to audit their papers, at any time and at the expense of the importer.

Article 7: Weight of the Containers

- 1- The import of the food products mentioned in clause 3 of article 1 of this decision shall be permitted, provided that the said food products are **only packed in single containers not exceeding one kilogram** and are hermetically sealed in a way that allows the consumer to open them by himself/herself.
- 2- White cheeses shall be packed in containers, the net weight of which does not exceed 14 kilograms, provided that these containers are hermetically sealed.

Article 8: Banning Repacking

It is absolutely forbidden, for any reason, to repack products covered by the provisions of this decision in other containers or to give them other labels.

Article 9: Maintenance of Documents

All documents related to the goods shall be kept for at least six months after the expiry date of the product.

Article 10:

All texts and regulatory decisions contrary to the provisions of this decision, namely decision number 653/1 dated 07/19/2011 related to the “regulation of the import, packing and sale of white cheeses” and decision number 146/1 dated 02/26/2015 related to the “registration of factories desiring to export white cheeses and food products composed of milk and/or milk products and other non-dairy ingredients (cheese substitutes) to Lebanon”.

Article 11:

This decision shall be published and notified to the relevant parties where necessary and it shall become effective two months after its publication in the Official Gazette.

Beirut on 06/15/2016

The Minister of Agriculture

Akram Chehayeb (Signature and Seal)

Copy to:

- The Presidency of the Council of Ministers
- Central Inspectorate
- Agriculture Inspectorate
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants
- Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Ministry of Public Health
- Ministry of Industry
- Higher Customs Commission – Directorate General for Customs
- The Lebanese Standards Institution – LIBNOR
- Official Gazette (for publication please)
- National Information Agency (for circulation to the media please)
- Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (Central Office for Administrative Information)
- Syndicate of Food Manufacturers
- Syndicate of Importers of Food Products
- Order of Engineers and Architects - Beirut
- Order of Engineers and Architects – Tripoli
- Syndicate of Veterinary Doctors
- Directorate of Animal Wealth
- Regional Agriculture Departments
- Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Information Exchange Unit
- Archives