

REPUBLIC OF LEBANON
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
THE MINISTER

Decree No. 1/828
Conditions for importing meats

The Minister of Agriculture,

In accordance with decree No. 2839 dated 9/11/2009 (forming the government),

In accordance with law No. 31 dated 18/1/1955 specially its second article (Specifying the missions of Ministry of Agriculture),

In accordance with law issued by decree No. 12301 dated 20/3/1963 (veterinarian quarantine),

In accordance with legislative decree No. 97 dated 16/9/1983 and its amendments (merging public institutions with the Ministry of Agriculture and reorganizing the ministry),

In accordance with decree No. 5246 dated 20/6/1994 (organizing the Ministry of Agriculture...),

In accordance with the 2 decrees No. 1/105 and 1/106 dated 3/6/1998, (conditions for importing chilled and frozen meats...),

In accordance with decree No. 1/93 dated 14/3/2005 (specifying arrival periods for meat shipments and their validity periods for human consumption),

In accordance with decree No. 10/1 dated 14/1/2010 (forming a national committee for the livestock sector and their meat products),

In accordance with the decision of the head of the national committee for the livestock sector and their meat products based on the meetings' official reports of the committee on various dates,

In accordance with the necessity of safeguarding public health and safety,

In accordance with the suggestion of the Acting Director General of Agriculture,

the following has been decided:

Article one: Definitions:

The terms mentioned in this decree mean the following:

1- Meats: These are the human consumable edible parts produced from slaughtering safe healthy animal stock ; cows, bulls, sheep, goats, camels and pigs that are prepared in certified slaughter houses that are supervised by veterinary inspection before and after slaughtering the animals.

2- Chilled Meats: These are the product of preserving fresh meats that have been chilled in accordance with the conditions for cold storing at an internal temperature ranging between zero and -2°C taking into consideration the conditions for required humidity for the sake of safeguarding its safety and quality and consistency throughout its validity period and not altering its susceptibility , taste and physiochemical properties.

3- Frozen Meats: These are the meats that went through the instant quick freezing process at a low temperature in a way that makes thermal range for maximum crystallization pass quickly on condition that they are stored at an internal temperature of -18°C or less after the thermal stabilization.

Article two:

1- It is permissible to import chilled and frozen meats from countries or regions that are free of diseases that are mentioned in the list issued by the World Animal Health Organization and specially that the exporting country should be listed as limited hazard or under control according to the World Animal Health Organization regarding (BSE).

2- It is up to the minister, based on the evaluation of the epidemic state situation in the country of origin done by the Directorate of Animal Wealth with reference to the newsletters issued by international health organizations specially the World Animal Health Organization, to decide to permit importing from that country or some of its regions or to prohibit it, on condition that it is supported by a veterinary health certificate between Lebanon and the country of origin, or an equivalent document for what is required.

3- The conditions of Codex Alimentarius are to be applied regarding the use of hormones and steroids.

Article three: Registration of the establishments that desire to export to Lebanon:

1- Registration applications for establishments that desire to export to Lebanon to the Directorate of Animal Wealth accompanied with the following documents:

A- Registration certificate issued by veterinary authorities in the country of origin stating the following:

- That the establishment is registered to produce, pack and cut meats and is under the supervision of regular official veterinary inspection, and the slaughter house is permitted to export its products to external markets.

B- Certificate of Hazard Analysis (HACCP) or (ISO22000) issued by an accredited establishment in the country of origin or its equivalent, stating that this company is obligated to apply all the health, technical and quality conditions required for slaughtering, preparing, cutting, freezing and packing.

2- The registration application will be studied by a committee headed by the Director General of Agriculture and the members are:

a- Director of animal wealth

b- Head of department of import and export and veterinary health quarantine

c- Head of department of animal health

d- Head of department of export and import.

3- This committee raises its reading to the minister of agriculture for final approval within a period not exceeding fifteen days from the date of presenting all the required documents.

The committee has the right to seek help when necessary from the representative of the World Animal Health Organization as a consultant.

4- The Ministry of Agriculture - Directorate of Animal Wealth has the right to inspect these establishments in the country of origin when necessary before the approval to export to Lebanon at the expense of the importer or the exporter.

5- The Ministry of Agriculture (Directorate of Animal Wealth) issues an annual statement of the names of the establishments, slaughter houses and industries that are permitted to export meats to Lebanon and can reconsider this statement and modify and accept and deny the establishments or slaughter houses or industries according to the quality of the exported meats to Lebanon when necessary.

6- The general Directorate of Customs is notified with the statements related to registering the establishments or modification or cancellation of their registration in conformity with the rules.

Article four: General specification for packaging and transporting meats:

1- The slaughtered animals should be stored at a temperature of 2-4 °C for a period of 24 hours before the process of cutting, packing, chilling and freezing.

2- The meats should have the lymph nodes and external visible nerves removed.

3- The slaughtered animals or cuts should be packed in internationally approved thick transparent bags that should be vacuumed (for chilled meats).

4- The chilled container should be supplied with a thermograph working constantly throughout the period of transportation in accordance with decree No. 61/1 dated 25/2/2010 as well as it is possible to rely on the original electronic thermograph that is built-in in the container (temperature data logger) in accordance with decree No. 1/573 dated 22/12/2009.

5- For chilled meats: The bags of meat cuts should be packed in big boxes layered from inside with nylon or similar material to stop seeping during transport.

6- For frozen meats: The whole slaughtered animals or the cuts should be in sanitized nylon or linen bags or similar material within carton boxes during the process of transportation in the containers.

7- For chilled slaughtered animals: The chilled slaughtered animals (whole, halves or quarters) should be packed in sanitized white cloth.

8- The chilled and frozen slaughtered animal meats should be transported and stored in containers or refrigerators throughout the period of transportation and storage and circulation at a temperature degree in accordance to article one.

9- It is prohibited to empty any part of the contents of the container at any other port than the terminal port.

Article five: Specifications of identification stamps:

1- The whole or cut slaughtered animals should be branded with the stamp of the slaughter house and its number in the country of origin.

2- Every packed meat bag should have an identification stamp attached from inside within the nylon bag or printed on the bag on the outside with inerasable ink or glued on the bag from outside in an in-detachable way or clinging on the piece of meat (for chilled slaughtered animals) mentioning clearly with bold letters not less than 5mm thick the following information:

- The phrase "chilled Meats" or "Frozen Meats" and the animal species source of the meats (cows, sheep, goats, bulls or pig).

- Country of origin and the name of the slaughter house and its number and/or the name and number of the factory in the country of origin.

- Date of slaughter, date of production and date of end of validity period.

- Degree of temperature in which the meats are stored.

- Trade mark of the company exporting the meats.

- Kind of cuts.

- The chilled slaughtered animals (pistola) (whole or halves or quarters) should carry the stamp of the authorized slaughter house.

3- The outer package should also have an identification label similar to the mentioned in the previous article.

4- Either English or French language should be used in writing the identification labels on the meat packages in addition to using Arabic language where necessary for more clarification on condition that the used foreign language is to be referred to in case of any differences or ambiguity in the information between Arabic and the foreign language.

5- The source of the meats in the bag or carton should be only one animal species.

Article six: Conditions for importing and transportation:

1- It is not permitted to import chilled or frozen meats by land or sea except in containers specially designed for this purpose.

2- It is permitted to import meats by air transport without the special container on condition that the proper temperature is supplied within the airplane refrigerator with the presence of a Thermograph.

3- The import process from the country of origin should be carried out in containers fully directed to Lebanon and it is not permitted to unload any part of their content in any port for transit, and there is no limitation on transferring the whole container from one ship to another during the shipment (trans-shipment).

4- The arrival periods of the meat shipments mentioned in article one of this decree to Lebanon in addition to their practical validity periods for human consumption according to the following table:

| Meats | Maximum period for arrival to Lebanon Starting production date or packing date | Maximum validity period for human consumption starting production date |
|--|--|--|
| 1- Mostly chilled big cuts and/or vacuum packed | Fifteen days | Twenty eight days |
| 2- Chilled drained and vacuum packed | Sixty days | - eighty four days for beef - 10 weeks (70 days) for sheep |
| 3- Frozen at -18 °C or less | Six months | -14 months for beef - 12 months for sheep |
| 4- Chilled slaughtered animals (whole, halves, quarters) | 5 days | 15 days |

On condition that the period between the date of slaughter and the date of production does not exceed five days.

5- Chilled meats are refused in case the temperature degree in the containers exceeds 4°C for 24 hours continuously during the period of transport.

6- Frozen meats are refused in case the temperature degree in the containers exceeds -15°C for more than 24 hours continuously during the period of transport.

7- It is prohibited to import unprepared and unprocessed minced meats.

Article seven: Documents required to accompany imported meats:

The following documents should be enclosed with imported meats:

1- Health certificate from the veterinary authorities in the country of origin agreed upon with the veterinary authorities in Lebanon or its equivalent containing the information and manifests required by the Lebanese veterinary authorities.

2- Certificate of origin issued by the chamber of commerce and/or agriculture and/or industry or any party authorized to grants certificates of origin.

Article eight:

- All the conditions mentioned in the decree No. 1/57 dated 20/2/2006 (organizing taking samples of food products of animal origin when importing and exporting) are to be applied, or any other decree issued later in this concern.

Article nine: The shipment will be rejected in case it contradicts any article of this decree.

Article ten: In case the shipments from the exporting establishment are rejected more than three times within a period of six months, this establishment will be prohibited to export to Lebanon and its registration will be cancelled, and it has the right to re-apply for registration.

Article eleven: The Minister of Agriculture has the right to approve making more laboratory tests, based on the readings of the Directory of Animal Wealth and the suggestion of the Director General, and that will be performed in one of the laboratories accredited by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Article twelve: Conditions for transport and sales in Lebanon:

1- Once the permission is granted for the products to enter Lebanon, they have to be transported from the port to meat warehouses in their containers.

2- Imported meats have to be stored in storage and freezing refrigerators in their original packages.

3- Meats are wholesaled in their original packages without removal or changing into other packages.

4- It is forbidden to freeze chilled meats for any reason ever.

Article thirteen: Meats slaughtered according to Islamic legislation :

It is required for those who desire to import meats slaughtered in accordance with the Islamic legislation, to apply the following in addition to the requirements mentioned in this decree:

- 1- Adding a paragraph in their registration file mentioning this.
- 2- Inclosing a statement from Islamic authorities who supervised the slaughter in the country of origin assuring that the meats have been slaughtered in the Islamic method and accredited in conformity of regulations and recognized by Dar al Fatwa or the Shiite Islamic High Council in Lebanon.
- 3- Mentioning the phrase "slaughtered in accordance with the Islamic Legislation (Halal)" clearly and obviously on the identification label carried on each package, with mentioning the name of the accredited Islamic authority who supervised the slaughter.

Article fourteen:

Any literature that contradicts the content of this decree is annulled specially the decrees: No. 144/1 dated 6/3/1998 and No. 106/1 dated 3/6/1998 and No. 105/1 dated 10/4/2004 and No. 90/1 dated 20/9/1999 and No. 366/1 dated 13/11/2001 and No. 1/234 dated 28/8/2003 and No. 191/1 dated 30/6/2004 and No. 1/93 dated 14/3/2005 and No. 81/1 dated 6/3/2006 and No. 233/1 dated 28/8/2003 and No. 105/1 dated 3/6/1998 and No. 438/1 dated 3/10/2009 and No. 513/1 dated 7/11/2009 and No. 500/1 dated 21/9/2010.

Article fifteen:

This decree is to be published and informed to whom it concerns then applied after one month of the issuance date.

Copies to be forwarded to:

- Prime Minister
- Central Inspectorate
- Agricultural Inspectorate
- Official Newspaper (for publishing)
- Ministry of Economy and Commerce
- Ministry of Information (for publishing via media)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (for publishing to foreign diplomatic delegates in Lebanon and Lebanese diplomatic delegates abroad)

- Board of Customs
- Directorate General of customs
- Agricultural Scientific Research Agency
- Central and regional units of the Ministry of Agriculture
- Concerned parties (through the Directorate of Animal Wealth)
- Syndicate of engineers in Beirut and Tripoli
- Syndicate of veterinarians
- Archives

Beirut 8-12-2010

Minister of Agriculture

Dr. Hussein Hajj Hassan