

Dairy Products for Human Consumption for Export to Colombia

Alert: As of May 1, 2017, certification of dairy products for human consumption for export to Colombia will be performed by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Dairy Programs only. The 90 day transition period has now ended and APHIS will no longer issue certificates for dairy product except as described below.

Please see <http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/imports-exports/dairy-exports> and <http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/imports-exports/dairy-sanitary-certificates>.

There are two Colombian agencies that regulate importation of dairy products for human consumption: ICA (animal health) and INVIMA (food safety, Ministry of Health). An export certificate is not required by ICA for certain low risk dairy products (see list below, Colombia's ICA-CAN (Resolution 1153/2012). While these products only need verification at the port of entry by ICA, please note that, INVIMA may require official documentation (export certificate, perhaps other documentation can also be accepted). However, this documentation will be issued by AMS.

Products for which ICA does not require certification:

- UHT or sterilized milk and cream, both condensed and with or without the addition of sugar or any kind of sweetener, packed in tetrapack or cans
- Yogurt and similar fermented or acidified milk and creams
- Cheeses (melted, grated, powdered and with less than 50% moisture (calculated on a fat-free weight basis) or cheeses with 50% but less than 56% moisture calculated on a fat-free weight basis)
- Ice cream

Products containing less than 10% dairy ingredients (e.g. baked goods, salad dressing, etc.), can be imported into Colombia with a certificate of free sale. A health certificate issued by APHIS is not required. Documentation may be necessary at the port of entry demonstrating the product contains less than 10% dairy ingredients.

Documentation requirements for re-export of dairy products:

If an *imported* animal-origin product is re-exported from the United States without repackaging, relabeling, or further processing, the shipment must be accompanied by a VS Form 16-4 containing only the following additional declaration:

This office has on file a notarized affidavit from [exporter] verifying the accuracy of the statements below:

“The consignment described below was legally imported into the United States from (insert country of origin) accompanied by the attached certificate number (insert number of certificate from the country of origin). The consignment was not commingled with any other animal origin materials while in the United States.”

Along with the VS 16-4 export certificate issued by APHIS, the exporter must obtain a certificate from the country of origin of the product. This certificate must meet Colombia's import requirements, which includes listing of the lot numbers on the certificate. Information regarding Colombia's certification requirements should be obtained from the Colombian importer. In addition, any documentation from the country of origin of the product should be requested through direct communication between the importer and the exporter in the country of origin; APHIS should not need to be involved.

It is important to note that U.S. import requirements must still be met. Therefore, certification required by Colombia for re-exported product should be acquired along with the documentation required for import into the U.S.

In addition to an export certificate, Colombia's INVIMA requires that the lot number and the expiration date of the product be provided for each shipment. The lot number information should be included in the VS Form 16-4 in the IDENTIFICATION box and should match the lot number listed on the certificate from the country of origin. If more space is needed, it can be included as a continuation on VS Form 16-4 or VS Form 16-4a.

The expiration date of the products in a shipment should not be included in VS Form 16-4. Instead, it must be included in a supplemental declaration from the exporting company. Along with the product expiration date, this supplemental declaration should include the lot number so it can be cross-referenced to the APHIS export certificate and the country of origin export certificate. The supplemental declaration should be under company letterhead and include the name of the signing official, their position within the company (e.g. owner, president, quality control manager), and signature.

INVIMA's institutional web page has the list of authorized establishments that can export food products which have been determined to be of risk to human health into Colombia. This list should be reviewed by the exporter to ensure their supplier is listed.

https://www.invima.gov.co/images/pdf/inspeccion_y_vigilancia/direccion-alimentos/acceso-mercados/general/PUBLICACION-05-12-2017.pdf

There will be a transition period of 90 days for exporters wishing to re-export dairy products to Colombia, which will allow the interested parties to make appropriate arrangements with the country of origin's Competent Authority and ensure the requirements listed here are met. The 90 day transition period will end on March 18, 2018.