

All you should know before exporting to UAE



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1 Certification Process

1.1 Export Certificates Required¹

Products	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Ministry
Dry pea, lentil, Rice, seeds, fresh fruits & vegetables, etc.	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Phytosanitary Certificate	This is to certify that the plant(s) Product(s) described herein have been inspected and/or tested according to appropriate official procedures, are considered to be free from quarantine pests, and conform to Phytosanitary regulations of the importing contracting party including those for regulated non-quarantine pest.	Pest and insect free confirmation	Health Department of the local municipality , Ministry of Environment & Water
All products	Country of Origin Certificate	The goods are of "xxx" origin	Country of origin confirmation	Customs Authority
All products	Health Certificate	The goods have been prepared and shipped under sanitary conditions and are fit for human consumption.	Health Certificate	Health Department
Meat & Poultry Products	Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) Export Health Certificate	Animals were slaughtered and processed in accordance to U.S. health regulations	Product produce under hygienic conditions	Health Department
Meat & Poultry Products	Halal Slaughter Certificate	Animals were slaughtered in According to Islamic/Sharia laws & requirements	Product produce in accordance with Sharia Law	Health Department

¹ Please refer to Annexures 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 for certificate examples

			confirmation	
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1.2 Specific Attestation Required On The Export Certificate

Halal slaughter and health certificates need to be notarized by the UAE Embassy or Consulate (or any other Arab Embassy or Consulate in the absence of the UAE Embassy) in India. Non-notarized certificates may be sent back for notarization within 15 days.

1.3 Government Certificate Legal Entry Requirements

- Original certificates must accompany shipment at the time of entry. Sometimes importers are allowed to have the documents sent to their banks.
- Certificates are used for only the accompanying shipment since it carries the details of the shipment.
- U.S. "State" issued export certificates are acceptable.
- Modification to any certificate is not permitted once issued and shipped accompanying the product.

1.4 Other Certification/Accreditation Requirements

Original invoice, bill of lading and packing list are required to accompany the above-referenced certificates to meet documentation requirements of the Customs Authority for the release of the shipment.

2 Labeling Requirements

2.1 General Requirements

The Food Department of the Dubai Municipality took the initiative to draft a food import “mechanism” which translates the labeling and shelf life standards to an application procedure. It also provides both the importer and the exporter further clarification to the standards and the method of application.

2.2 Labeling regulations

While the UAE has accepted English-only labels in the past, bi-lingual labels are now required. Arabic stickers and labels should be legible and show, at least, the following information:

1. Product description;
2. Ingredients;
3. Country of origin; and
4. Net weight

Some products, such products intended for institutional use, may be exempt from the Arabic labeling requirement, but the “mechanism” is designed to eventually provide greater clarity on this point. Exporters should work closely with their importers to ensure that their products will meet the needs of retailers.

Labeling regulations apply to all products shipped in bulk and institutional-sized containers. Bulk cartons of fresh fruits and vegetables must contain most label information, but need not carry production/expiry dates. However, production dating continues to be a key difference. A food label must contain the following information:

- Product name (name of the food) in a prominent position on the label;
- Ingredients in descending order of proportion;
- Additives using their “E” number (group names are accepted)
- The source of the animal fats (beef, buffalo, etc...)
 - Animal fats and ingredients should be sourced from animals that are Halal slaughtered. The use of pork fat, as with all pork related products as ingredients, is restricted. Pork products may be sold in designated excluded areas of retail stores and in certain restaurants. Other non-Halal meats (meat and poultry) are permitted import through an exemption issued by the Director, Food Control Section of the

municipality. Such products are subject to certain restrictions, i.e., can only be sold to non-Muslims via the designated areas/establishments. Labels for pork and pork containing products must comply with the general labeling requirements and must clearly state that the product contains pork. Food labels may not include pictures of pork, nor may recipes list pork. To avoid confusion with regulatory officials and consumers, exporters may wish to steer clear of names traditionally associated with pork on non-pork products such as turkey ham or beef bacon; however, this is not a requirement and such names are permitted.

- The foodstuff and ingredients which are known to cause hypersensitivity shall always be declared;
- Net content in metric units;
- Production and expiry dates
 - Production/expiry dates must be engraved, embossed, printed or stamped directly onto the original label or primary packaging at the time of production, using indelible ink. P/E dates printed on stickers are not an acceptable alternative, as well as U.S. bar coding in lieu of P/E dates. Only one set of P/E dates on the label is permitted. P/E dates must be printed in the following fashion, depending upon the shelf-life of the product:
 - Day/month/year for products with a shelf-life of three (3) months or less
 - Month/year for products with a shelf-life longer than three (3) months

Under the month/year format, the last day of the month is considered the expiry date. Exporters who list the first day of the month following the expiry date have run into issues when trying to clear shipments. The month may be printed in numbers or letters. For example, both 3/08 and March 08 are acceptable formats.

The word "Production" or the letter "P" must precede the production date. The expiry date must be preceded by one of the following statements: "Expiration (date)"; "Fit for.....from the date of production"; "Use by (date);" "Use before (date);" "Sell by (date);" "Valid until (date) from the date of production;" or the letter "E."

- Country of origin;
- The name and address of the manufacturer, producer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor shall be declared on the label;
- Special storage and preparation instructions, if any;
- Foods making health claims must be labeled accordingly and require pre-approval by the Ministry of Health;

- Lot identification.

Alcoholic beverages and alcohol containing products can be imported but only through authorized importers who run their own retail shops. There are no special labeling requirements for alcoholic beverages beyond what is typically required in the country of origin. As with food products, labels for pet foods must be printed in Arabic. Arabic/English labels are permitted, as are Arabic stickers in lieu of Arabic labels. The pet food label must contain the statement "Not fit for human consumption." Production/expiry dates are required for pet foods.

Most major municipalities offer the following services to facilitate food product imports:

Pre-shipment approval of:

- **Food Labels** - Copies of labels can be sent (fax copies or e-mails are acceptable) directly or through one of the importers to health officials for review and registration, at no cost. When approved and registered, the products bar code will be added to the municipality's list of approved and registered products. This procedure is meant to facilitate the importation of products and reduce clearance time. While pre-approval is not required, ATO Dubai strongly encourages exporters to have labels for new products pre-approved.
- **Products** - Officials will analyze a product to determine compliance with food ingredient standards. Costs involved vary, depending on type of product and ingredients. Laboratory testing is required on first consignments to the UAE. The same product may be subject to future random laboratory testing. While pre-approval is not required, ATO Dubai encourages exporters to have their ingredients pre-approved for new products.

Occasionally, local health officials will permit the importation of food products with minor labeling infractions. Exemptions are granted on a one-time basis and the sale of such products usually is limited to institutional end users.

3 Other Regulations and Requirements

All imported food products must be accompanied by:

- A health certificate issued by the appropriate government agency in the exporter's country, attesting to the product's fitness for human consumption,
- A Halal slaughter certificate issued by a UAE-approved U.S. Islamic Center and notarized by the UAE Embassy/Consulate,
- Bill of Entry or Airway Bill,
- Packing list,
- Country of Origin Certificate.

The UAE Embassy or UAE Consulate in the United States must notarize health and Halal slaughter certificates.

There are no special packaging or container size requirements for food products. The UAE does not allow the importation of irradiated food products. A radiation-free certificate is required for food products from Europe and Asia.

There are no specific requirements for imported food samples. Samples for food shows and other promotional events are routinely exempt from local labeling and shelf life requirements. Product samples must be clearly marked as samples and accompanied by a statement claiming that they are not for sale.

Since 1998 the UAE has levied a commercial invoice legalization fee (equivalent to 1 percent of the consignment value) on all imported products. The fee can be paid at the UAE Embassy/Consulate or in the UAE upon arrival. Products will not be released from Customs until the fee is paid.

4 Other Specific Standards

Inspection officials routinely check for salmonella in poultry products. If salmonella is detected in more than 20 percent of tested samples, the shipment will be rejected.

Imports of alcoholic beverages are strictly controlled. Only a few local companies are licensed to import and sell alcoholic beverages. These products are exempt from local labeling requirements. The import of non-alcoholic beverages is permitted, but these products cannot contain more than 0.05 percent of alcohol by volume. These products are also exempt from local labeling requirements.

The sale of pork products is strictly regulated and confined to well-marked areas of supermarkets. Restaurants must clearly identify products on the menu that contain pork. Only selected retail outlets and hotels are permitted to sell pork.

The UAE Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) is responsible for regulating the importation of live animals and plants.

5 Import Procedures

The UAE boasts some of the most modern air and seaport facilities in the world. Food shipments usually are off loaded, inspected by health officials and cleared through customs within hours of arrival at port. (Dubai ports are the primary entry points for food products.)

Every food shipment is subject to visual inspection upon arrival to ensure compliance with label and shelf life regulations. Shipments are subject to random laboratory analysis. Baby foods and edible oils are subject to 100 percent sampling. Other food products are sampled in accordance with the sampling policy manual, which sets out the frequency of sampling based on food type, brand and country of origin. A consignment undergoing laboratory analysis is stored under bonded warehouse selected by the importer, within the same emirate of arrival. Laboratory results are generally known within 5-10 days. New-to-market food products are subject to thorough laboratory analysis. Once cleared, they are subject to random sampling as are other food products on the market.

A product will be rejected if found unfit for human consumption or non-compliant with label requirements. In either case, the product would be destroyed by the local municipality or re-exported to the country of origin within 30 days, at the importers discretion. Products not conforming to label requirements may be re-exported to a third country (non-GCC). Fines may be imposed, depending on the severity of the violation.

A product rejection may be appealed to the Health Department having jurisdiction over that port. The municipality will convey a special committee to review the petition and issue a final decision, normally within a week. The committee's decision is final.

In case of a minor label infraction, a shipment may be permitted entry on a one-time basis for limited sale, i.e., to institutional end-users only. A major infraction, such as improper labeling of products containing pork or tampering with P/E dates, is severely punished, particularly those infractions discovered after import. Such products are automatically banned from import, usually for several months, and the brand name and importer is often reported in the press.

6 Customs procedures for Agricultural Goods

A precondition for the clearance of an import of any agricultural food product into Dubai (the primary port which will be used for export into UAE) is the Import Certificate from the Dubai Municipality. Similar Food Control and Environment Laboratories provide this function in each Emirate. Also, for any food product that is to enter the UAE, there must be a license granted to the consignee to trade in foodstuffs. Imports of agricultural products listed below must be approved by the Food Control Section of the Public Health Department of the Dubai Municipality:

- Cereal and wheat or rye flour, groats or meal
- Rice and broken rice
- Products processed from cereals
- Cereal-based compound feeding stuffs
- Beef and veal
- Pig meat
- Poultry meat
- Eggs
- Milk and milk products
- Products processed from fruits and vegetables
- Olive oil
- White and raw sugar without further processing
- Syrups and other sugar products; and
- Wine

6.1 Customs Regimes

6.1.1 Import for Home Consumption

For any food product that is to enter the UAE, there must be a license granted to the consignee to trade in foodstuffs. Customs requires the following documentation:

- Importer's License to trade in foodstuff
- Import Goods Declaration
- Dubai Municipality approval letter
- Commercial Invoice
- Certificate of Origin
- Bill of Lading
- Packing List
- Delivery Order (addressed to the Customs Department stating the description of the carrier and the cargo and stating to whom the cargo is to be delivered).

6.1.2 Temporary Import (Import for Re-Export)

The Director General of Customs may grant temporary admission for the following items:

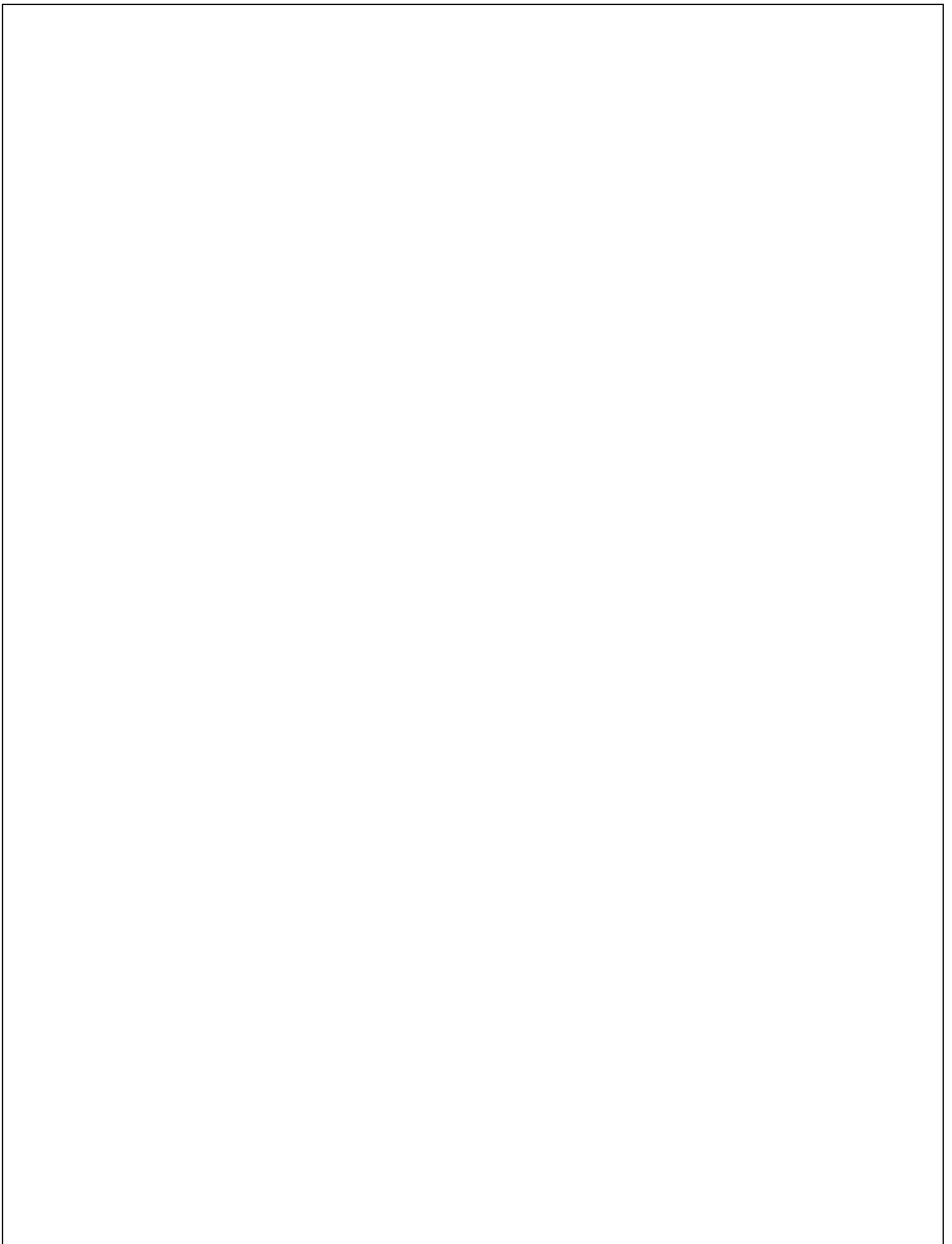
- Heavy machinery and equipment needed to complete specific project or needed for conducting tests for a specific project
- Foreign goods imported for processing
- Any items imported for exhibitions and the like
- Machinery and equipment imported for the purpose of repair
- Containers and packing materials imported for refilling
- Animals admitted for grazing

If imported food products enter Dubai for re-export, the importer must supply a written undertaking that the foodstuffs will not be sold in Dubai and that the goods have entered for a special purpose satisfying the temporary admission requirements. In addition:

- Deposit or bank guarantee for the estimated duty payable
- After re-exporting the documents the importer must submit evidence that the goods have been exported to the Dubai Municipality's Food Control section.

6.1.3 Warehouse

The Director General of Customs may permit goods to be deposited into bonded warehouse with suspension of duty payment until entered for home consumption or exported. The consignee must submit a deposit or bank guarantee for the estimated duty payable. There is a time limit of 365 days for storage after which duty will be charged. Warehouse system is primarily for storage, so any activities that involve value adding are not permitted.



7 Appendix

7.1 Annexure - Country of Origin Certificate Sample

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

CONSIGNEE / EXPORTER		DOCUMENT NO. EXPORT DOCUMENT NO. NOL030636		
ORIGIN		FORWARDING AGENT - REFERENCE		
BUYER PARTY		POINT AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN GOODS ARE ENTIRELY OF U.S.A. ORIGIN. DOMESTIC MOVEMENT REPORT, IS-200-100		
PORT OF AIRPORT		WE CERTIFY THAT THE GOODS SHIPPED ARE ENTIRELY OF U.S.A. ORIGIN.		
VESSEL OR AIRCRAFT	PORT OF LOADING NEW ORLEANS, LA	ONWARD INLAND ROUTING		
SEA PORT OF DISCHARGE DUBAI, U.A.E.	FOR TRANSHIPMENT TO			

VNS AND NUMBERS	NO. OF PKGS.	PARTICULARS FURNISHED BY SHIPPER DESCRIPTION OF PACKAGES AND GOODS	GROSS WEIGHT	MEASUREMENT
DB-32 DUBAI	1	20FT CONTAINER NO. MSC11 342507-3 SEAL NO. 1918411 FREIGHT PREPAID CONTRACT NO. 03-135WW ON BOARD NAMED VESSEL DATE 05-10-05 BY _____ NO SED REQUIRED-AES-X20050510006499 THESE COMMODITIES, TECHNOLOGY, OR SOFTWARE WERE EXPORTED FROM THE UNITED STATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EXPORT ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS. DIVERSION CONTRARY TO U.S. LAW PROHIBITED.	1 LBS KGS	1000CFT 28.32CM

I, the undersigned _____ (Owner or Agent), do hereby declare for the above named shipper, the goods described above were shipped on the above date and consigned as indicated and are products of the United States of America dated at NEW ORLEANS, LA on the 12TH day of _____.

SIGNATURE OF OWNER OR AGENT

The GREATER NEW ORLEANS INC., a recognized Chamber of Commerce under the laws of the State of LOUISIANA, has examined the manufacturer's invoice or shipper's affidavit concerning the origin of the merchandise, and, according to the best of its knowledge and belief, finds that the products named originated in the United States of North America.

Secretary CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

7.2 Annexure - Halal Slaughter Certificate

Logo of Establishment

Name of the Est.

شعار المؤسسة

اسم المؤسسة

شهادة ذبح حلال HALAL SLAUGHTERING CERTIFICATE

..... certifies that the under mentioned shipment of meat Deef / Veal / Buffalo / Sheep / Mutton / Goat / Poultry has been slaughtered according to Islamic Rites, in the presence and under direct supervision of it's authorized representative appointed in the area indicated below. Accordingly, this meat is HALAL and suitable for consumption by Muslims in any part of the world. In confirmation there of each animal's carcass/carton is branded with official Halal Seal. Adequate precautions were taken to prevent its contamination with non-Halal meat and the slaughtering process has been completed in a place where pigs slaughtering is prohibited.

تشهد..... بمأن شحنة لحوم الأبقار / الجمول / الخنازير / الأضغان / الماعز / الخنازير التي أتت من بلد تم فتحها وفقاً لإحكام الشريعة الإسلامية، وذلك بحضور ممثلها المفوض وتمت لشرائه المباشر في المنطقة التي أتت، تحت حراسة وصاحبة للاستهلاك لكافة المسلمين في أي بقعة في العالم. وتأكيداً لذلك تم وضع ختم الحلال الخاص على كل ذبيحة / صندوق، والتفقت الإحصائيات اللازمة لمنع اختلاطها باللحوم غير الحلال وأن عملية الذبح تمت في مكان لا يسمح به ذبح الخنازير.

OFFICIAL HALAL SEAL

ختم الحلال الرسمي

تفاصيل الشحنة

Consignment Details:-

الكمية - نوعها - وصفها

Quantity - Quality- Description :-

الوزن الصافي

Net Weight

الوزن الإجمالي

Gross Weight

وسيلة الشحن

Shipping

رقم الرحلة الجوية / البحرية

Voyage / Flight No.

ميناء الشحن

Loading Port

ميناء التفريغ (الوصول)

Destination

المستورد

Importer

المصدر

Exporter

اسم ورثم المذبح

Name & No. of Slaughter house

الشركة المنتجة والمذبح

Producing Company & Plant

تاريخ الذبح

Slaughtering Date

تاريخ الإنتاج

Production Date

تاريخ الانتهاء

Expiry Date

يوم Day	شهر Month	سنة Year

.....Code

رقم الشهادة الصحية

Health Certificate No.

اسم مراقب الذبح

Slaughtering Supervisor

التوقيع


SIGNATURE

المستورب المفوض

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF

7.3 Annexure - Health Certificate

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EXPORT CERTIFICATE	STATE OF LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH FOOD AND DRUG UNIT 6867 BLUEBONNET BOULEVARD BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70810	
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10 MAY 2005
DATE

This is to certify that the product(s) listed below has (have) been registered with this office in accordance with the requirements of the State Food, Drug and Cosmetic Law, Title 40, Chapter 4, Part 1, Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950 (amended) (LSA R.S. 40:627) and may be legally sold in the State of Louisiana.

Exporting Firm Name _____

Address _____

Product(s)	Manufacturer, Packer or Distributor	Registration Number
		296-F

SHIPMENT IS DESTINED FOR U.A.E.

WE CERTIFY THAT THE GOODS SHIPPED ARE
FRESH PRODUCTION AND ARE FIT FOR
HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

Certified By: _____

Program Manager, Food & Drug Unit

7.4 Food Colors

7.4.1 Annexure – Permitted Food Colors (Natural)

The following is a list of food colors, natural and artificial, permitted in the UAE:

Color/ Description	International Number	Other Names
Red to Yellow Colors		
Carmine	120	Cochineal, Carminic Acid
Annato extracts	160B	Bixin, Norbixin
Beta Carotene	160A	Carotene blend
Lycobine	160D	
Beta-Apo-8-carotenal	160E	
Beta-Apo-8-carotenoid acid	160F	
Lutein	161B	
Carrot oil	None	
Beet root red	162	Beta nine
Red to Purple Shade		
Anthocyanins	163(i)	
Grape skin extract	163(ii)	
Blackcurrant extract	163(iii)	Enocianina
Beet powder	None	
Paprika	None	
Paprika oleoresin	160C	

Orange and Yellow Colors

Saffron	None	Natural yellow 6
Turmeric powder	100(ii)	
Curcumin	100(i)	
Turmeric oleoresin	None	
Riboflavin	101(i)	
Riboflavin-5-Sodium Phosphate	101(ii)	

Green Colors

Chlorophylls	140	Chlorophyllins
Chlorophyll copper complex	141(i)	
Sodium and potassium salts of chlorophyll copper complex	141(ii)	

Brown Colors

Plain caramel	150A	
Caustic sulphite caramel	150B	
Ammonia caramel	150C	
Ammonia sulphite caramel	150D	

Black Color

Activated vegetable carbon	153	
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Inorganic Colors

Titanium dioxide	171	Food white 6
Iron oxides	172	

7.4.2 Annexure – Permitted Food Colors (Artificial)

Red Colors

Azorubine 122 Carmosine, Food red 3

Allura Red 17 129 Food red 40

Yellow Colors

Sunset yellow FCF 110 Food yellow 3, Food orange S, Yellow 6 for food, drugs and cosmetics

Tartrazine 102 Food yellow 4, Yellow 5 for food, drugs and cosmetics

Brown Color

Chocolate brown HT 155 Food brown 3

Green Color

Fast green FCF 143 Food green 3, Green 3 for food, drugs and cosmetics

Blue Colors

Indigo tine 132 Carmine indigo, Blue 2 for food, drugs and cosmetics, Food blue 1

Brilliant blue FCF 133 Food blue 2, Blue 1 for food, drugs and cosmetics

Black Color

Brilliant black BN 151 Food black 1, Black PN

7.4.3 Annexure - Coloring allowed in Select Foods

International Number	Color	Food	Maximum Limit
127	Erythrosine	Cherry and Products	None

128	Red 2 G	Sausages	20 ppm
161G	Canthaxanthin	Cooked Sausages	30 ppm
		Frozen Foods	100 ppm
173	Aluminum	External Cover for Cake and Pasta	According to Good Production Practice
174	Silver	External Cover for Sweets	According to Good Production Practice
175	Gold	External Cover for Sweets	According to Good Production Practice
180	Lithotrubine	Cheese Covering	According to Good Production Practice
None	Orange B	Sausage and Frankfurters Covering	150 ppm
None	Citrus Red 2	Orange Peel	2 ppm

7.4.4 Annexure - Prohibited Coloring

International Number	Color	Remarks
104	Quinolin yellow	Prohibited in all food products
124	Ponceau 4R	Prohibited in all food products
	Sudan Reds 1-2-3-4	Prohibited in all food products