

Registration of Facilities Involved In Processing, Cutting, Manufacturing & Packaging Chilled & Frozen (Bovine, Camel, Sheep, Goat, Deer and Poultry) Meat & Their Products As Certified Exporters into the Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia

Area and Scope of Application:

This arrangement applies to the inspection operations conducted by an SFDA technical team on slaughterhouses, chilled and frozen (bovine, camel, sheep, goat, deer, poultry and its viscera) meat processing, cutting, manufacturing and packaging businesses in the country of origin, wishing to export meat products to Saudi Arabia. It also applies to the registration process for the above establishments and the procedures followed to confirm their compliance with the approved Saudi and GCC Standards.

– Procedures:

1. The competent authority in the exporting country shall contact SFDA through the official channels by sending a request which shows its interest to export its meat products to Saudi Arabia, describing the following:
 1. The sanitary situation confirming:
 - Absence of any epidemics, foodborne outbreaks, or widespread infectious diseases transmittable to human or animal.
 - Non-use of forbidden substances for poultry farming, animal breeding or remedial purposes.
 - The completion of control on residues.
 2. The control and regulatory processes applied in the requesting country.
 3. The governmental veterinary monitoring and tracing systems applied.
 4. Names and addresses of meat producing establishments.
 5. The veterinary approval number for the meat producing establishments.

2. The request and all accompanying documents shall be reviewed by the concerned food department at SFDA. The sanitary conditions applied in the country wishing to export its meat products to Saudi Arabia must be investigated through the various means of communications.
3. A report shall then be submitted to the Authorized Person, explaining the following:
 1. The sanitary status (based on the information communicated by the requesting party and the international organizations)
 2. The control and regulatory processes applied in the requesting country.
 3. The governmental veterinary monitoring and tracing systems applied
4. The concerned department shall suggest delegating a Saudi Technical Team to investigate the animal health conditions in the exporting country and conduct on-the-spot inspection of the meat facilities to confirm their compliance with the health requirements, technical bylaws, Islamic slaughter, transportation compliance with the Saudi and GCC standards and to determine the possibility for approving such facilities as meat exports to Saudi Arabia.
5. Upon permission of the Authorized Person to delegate a technical team, the concerned exporting country shall be notified, through the official channels (e.g its embassy in Saudi Arabia) about the intention of a Saudi Technical Team to conduct an inspection visit to the meat facilities/plants. SFDA shall be provided with a proposed visit program includes the following points:

1. Visit duration, Technical Team accommodation Address, Visit start and end dates, the daily schedule of the work plan, action plan, and transportation.
 2. Names of the official bodies, including titles and names of senior staff, (such as ministries, reference labs, institutes, sea ports, airports, or any other concerned agencies).
 3. Number of establishments to be visited.
 4. Descriptions and details of the exported products from the certified establishments to be visited.
 5. Telephone & fax numbers, email and postal addresses of the establishments.
Note: "address" refers to the establishments address to be visited by the Saudi Technical Team rather than the address of the company office with which the establishment is associated.
 6. Veterinary license and registration number of the establishment.
 7. Establishment's capacity in terms of daily production of meat and meat products as measured in mitral tons.
6. The visit program shall be reviewed by SFDA officials to make sure the program meets the requirements mentioned above. The team selection process shall be based on the number of establishments to be visited and the visit duration which shall take two to three days by a number of three team members for each facility.
7. The visit program along with all relevant documents shall be submitted to the Authorized Person for approval, indicating the names and numbers of team members assigned the inspection task. Afterwards, SFDA coordinates with the

Saudi-based concerned body associated with the exporting country to make the necessary flight arrangements.

8. The SFDA Authorized person shall reply to the letter sent by the exporting country through the Saudi Foreign Ministry, notifying the exporting country about SFDA's approval to delegate a Saudi Technical Team (stating their names and titles) to conduct inspection visit to the concerned establishments and ensure that the abovementioned requirements are met thereon.
9. Upon arrival of the Technical Team, they shall be received by representatives of the competent authorities in the exporting country.

Visit Stages:

- Meet the officials at the competent authorities in the exporting country who show the systems maintained for veterinary care, livestock registration, sampling and traceability, laboratorial analysis and tests in relation with live animals on farms as well as the measures followed to safeguard against common diseases and immunization and treatment methods, establishment inspection and veterinary examination for animals slaughtering practices (including Islamic Slaughter), sanitary and health enforcement, establishment operational quality, storage and transport methods.

The field visit shall include the following:

- A. If necessary, the team shall inspect the farms to identify the type of veterinary care, tests and analyses conducted, and the way animals and fodders are treated. They shall also visit animal quarantines

to identify how they are operated and the period during which animals are kept before they are slaughtered or exported to prevent the entry of any suspicious animals or epidemics. They shall also observe the periodical immunization programs applied. This should be incorporated within the visit program approved by SFDA.

- B. The team shall review all documents and records of feed safety, health procedures, veterinary care and the national residue monitoring program.
 - C. The team shall visit the reference lab to observe the analyses and tests carried out on meat samples and the process of controlling test analysis from certified laboratories.
 - D. The team shall inspect the establishments to identify the quality of its products, SOP, record keeping methods, Islamic slaughtering and labeling practices, expiration periods for products, storage and transportation. An inspection form shall be filled out by the team for each establishment visited (see appendix 1). It must be ensured that the establishments comply with the technical and health requirements stated in the approved standards and specifications as mentioned in appendix (2).
- At the end of inspection, the team shall hold a meeting with the officials in the exporting country to present them with their comments on the meat processing, preparing, cutting and packaging establishments they inspected in the country of origin.

- Upon their return, the team shall prepare a comprehensive report about the outcome of the visit within a period of no later than two weeks. All members shall sign the report and submit it to the SFDA Authorized Person.

General Terms:

- The SFDA Authority shall have the right to include experts from other relevant governmental bodies as members of the team.
- In case of minor defects (where the sanitary conditions, product quality and storage methods existing in the establishment are not affected), the technical team shall suggest amendments, along with their reported recommendations. Afterwards, the SFDA shall be reported in details (includes photographic or video evidence) of the corrective action taken by the establishment.
- In case of major defects (where the sanitary conditions, product quality, and storage methods existing in the establishment are affected), the technical team shall indicate their disapproval in the report submitted to the SFDA Authorized Person, notifying the concerned officials in the country of origin about the aforementioned decision.
- If the establishment, which failed the inspection, wishes to reapply, the official body in the country of origin, after meeting all recommendations, submits a new request through the official channels to SFDA. In such case, an SFDA Technical Team carries out a second inspection to confirm compliance.
- Meat and meat products may only originate from SFDA certified and registered establishments.
- Periodical inspection visit shall be assigned to make a surveillance visits to the certified establishments previously certified by MOCI and SFDA for enforcement purposes.

- After approving an establishment by the Authorized Person, a memorandum shall be circulated to the concerned governmental offices, food control laboratories, commercial chambers, and the Saudi Customs.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- ❖ *The export of meat and its viscera is subject to international standards.*
- ❖ *The terms and provisions stated above is subject to addition and amendments as perceived by the Authority.*

Appendix (1)

1. (SASO 871/2005) Expiration Periods for Food Products.
2. (Gs 9/1995) Labeling Of Packaged Foodstuff
3. (SASO 2176/2003) General Principles Of Food Hygiene
4. (Gs993/1998) Animal Slaughtering Requirements According To Islamic Law
5. (SASO 2172/2003) General Requirements For Halal Food
6. (GS 996/1998) Fresh Beef and Beef Buffalo, Mutton, and Goat Meat.
7. (GS997/1998) Chilled and Frozen Beef and Beef Buffalo, Mutton, and Goat Meat.
8. (GS 834/1997) Fresh Frozen and Chilled Camel Meat.
9. (GS 835/1997) Organs and Viscera of Chilled and Frozen Mutton, Goat, Cattle, Camel and Buffalo.
10. (GS 986/1998) Frozen Chicken
11. (Gs 815/1997) Code of Hygienic Practice for Preparation, Transportation, Handling and Storing Of Fresh Meat.
12. (GS 21/1984) Hygienic Regulations for Food Plants and Their Personnel.
13. (GS 323/1994) General Requirements For Transporting And Storing Frozen And Chilled Food
14. (GS 713/1997) Health Regulations for Poultry Processing Abattoirs and Their Personnel.
15. (GS 322/1994) Frozen Chicken
16. (GS 523/1994) Guide To The Safe Use Of Feed Additives For Livestock And Poultry Feeds
17. (GS 504/1994) Canned Corned Beef.
18. (SASO 871/1994) Processed Meat – Minced Meat
19. (SASO 137/1979) Canned Corned Beef And Mutton Meat.

- 20.(SASO 160/1979) Canned Meats: Luncheon Meats.
- 21.(GS 814/1997) Prepared Meats – Sausage
- 22.(SASO 1423/1998) Prepared Meats: Canned Sausage
- 23.(SASO 1667/200) Prepared Meats: Mortadelle.
- 24.(GS 1327/2002) Prepared Meats: Minced Chicken Meat.
- 25.(GS 1328/1998) Prepared Meats: Poultry Sausage.
- 26.(GS 1329/1998) Processed Meats: Chilled Or Frozen Meat
Kofta.
- 27.(GS 1389/2002) Chilled And Frozen Domesticated Birds And
Rabbits.
- 28.(Gs 1390/2002) Chilled And Frozen Poultry Edible Giblets.
- 29.(SASO 1668/2000) Prepared Meats: Pastrami
- 30.(GS 1399/2002) Prepared Meat – Frozen Bread Crumb
Enrobed Poultry Products.
- 31.(GS 1400/2000) Transportation Requirements Of Livestock By
Rail, Road, And Ships – Part 2: Transport Of Cows And
Buffaloes.
- 32.(GS 1330/2000) Requirements for Transportation of Broilers.
- 33.(SASO 2212/2004) Packaged Meat Containing Vegetables And
Sauce
- 34.(SASO 2213/2004) Prepared Meat: Dry And Semi Dry
Fermented Sausage.
- 35.(GSO CAC/MRL 02:2009) Maximum Limits for Veterinary Drug
Residues in Food.
- 36.(GSO CAC/GL 38:2007) Recommended International Code Of
Practice For Control Of The Use Of Veterinary Drugs.
- 37.(GS 149/2000) Drinking water, non-packaged.