



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

P. O. Box 96456
Washington, DC
20090-6456

NOTICE TO EXPORTERS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Dairy Programs has provided certifications for dairy and related products exported to the European Union (EU) since April 1997. This certificate service has been very successful in responding to modified EU import requirements and facilitating the export of these products to the EU. This Notice is to remind participants of the requirements of the certification program and to inform you of modifications that will become effective January 1, 1999. The integrity of AMS issued EU export certificates, as confirmed by the auditing of accurate records and documents, is vital for the continuation of international trade with the EU.

The primary purpose of the EU export certificate is to certify that the products were manufactured under a system that is equivalent to the requirements of the EU Directives. Since differences exist in somatic cell and bacterial standards, the EU export certificate also must certify that the raw milk used in the production of products exported to the EU meets the requirements of the EU Council Directive 92/46/EEC. This certification is necessary for all dairy products and dairy ingredients that may be included in a product requiring an EU certificate issued by the Dairy Programs. It is the responsibility of the individual or firm requesting an export certificate to assemble and maintain the necessary production records and Certificates of Compliance for the products covered by each certificate. This policy and procedure was cooperatively developed with and agreed upon by industry and trade association representatives who participated in an April 1997, Joint USDA/FDA/Industry Task Committee meeting. As exporters, it is important that you maintain accurate records and documents supporting compliance with EU somatic cell and bacterial requirements for future Dairy Grading Branch audit purposes.

To facilitate the timely issuance of certificates and movement of products in international trade, AMS provides certificates based upon information provided by the applicant. This information includes a Certificate of Conformance that the products listed on the certificate comply with the EU Directive. Through the Dairy Programs audit program, we are able to assess the accuracy of the documentation provided by the applicant. To further enhance our audit capabilities, effective January 1, 1999, AMS will implement the following modifications to improve the efficiency of the audit process. These changes may increase your record keeping but will substantially reduce the cost of an AMS audit.

1. Each request for an EU export certificate shall include production lot identification codes and production dates for the products covered by the certificate. This information is necessary to facilitate the tracking of the products certified during the audit procedures.

2. The exporter or firm requesting a certificate is solely responsible for assembling and maintaining all production records and Certificates of Conformance for the dairy products and dairy ingredients used. The Certificates of Conformance shall provide an accurate record trail leading to the raw milk used for the dairy components requiring EU certification.

If production lot identification codes and production dates are not included in the request, issuance of certificates will be denied until the information is provided. Failure to maintain adequate records and complete files of Certificates of Conformance, to substantiate each request for a certificate as determined during an audit, will result in immediate ineligibility to receive EU export certificates. In order to resume the ability to receive future certificates, an audit of the exporter or firm will be conducted by the Dairy Programs to determine if adequate documents and records are maintained prior to issuance of the future certificate. This process will delay issuance of the EU export certificate.

The AMS, Dairy Programs will update current instructions to reflect these modifications. When completed, the instructions and procedures will be available on the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/dairy/grade.htm.

Attached to this notice is a modified worksheet and instructions for requesting an EU export certificate.

F. Tracy Schonrock
Chief, Dairy Grading Branch
Dairy Programs