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Global Agricultural Information Network

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Saudi Arabia

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative

FAIRS Country Report

Approved By:

Hassan Ahmed, U.S. Embassy, Riyadh

Prepared By:

Hussein Mousa, U.S. Embassy, Riyadh

Report Highlights:

This FAIRS Country Report contains the regulatory requirements and procedures for importing food and agricultural products into the Saudi market. The Food Laws Section of this report provides updated information on Saudi Arabia's requirements for U.S. poultry meat exports under the 2005 Saudi-U.S. agreement regarding Saudi Arabia's WTO accession. This section also includes an update on the recent Saudi ban on U.S. beef and beef product exports to the Saudi market following the confirmation of an atypical BSE case of a dairy cow in California in May 2012.

Disclaimer

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia) for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped. **FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.**

Section I. Food Laws:

A. Overview

The Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) is the government agency that is responsible for establishing laws concerning food and agricultural products and ensuring that established standards are implemented for both locally produced as well as imported processed food, feed, livestock, and poultry meat products. All food, drinks and edible agricultural products, including food ingredients, whether locally manufactured or imported to Saudi Arabia are required to comply with pertinent requirements laid down by SFDA. The SFDA will take over inspection of imported animal feed, fruits, and vegetables from the Saudi Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in the next few months.

The lists of important regulatory, non-tariff barriers that U.S. food product exporters encounter in the Saudi market includes:

- A temporary ban on imports of U.S. beef and beef products that was imposed by SFDA on May 9, 2012 following a discovery of an atypical case of BSE in California. The ban was lifted on October 12, 2012 subject to the implementation of the SFDA's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that must be followed by U.S. exporters.
- Additional official FSIS statements on the health certificate accompanying poultry and livestock meat shipments must indicate that the animals slaughtered for export to Saudi Arabia were not fed with feed containing animal protein, fat or remnants of animal origin and were not treated with any growth hormones. This requirement has drastically reduced U.S. poultry meat exports to Saudi Arabia.
- For religious reasons, Saudi Arabia bans imports of alcoholic beverages, live swine, pork and food ingredients or additives that contain pork products, including pork fat, rennet and gelatin. Meat and poultry shipments must be accompanied by a "Halal" slaughter certificate issued by an Islamic center in the country of origin.
- Mandatory biotech labeling of agricultural products containing more than 0.9 percent of genetically engineered content.
- Requirement for two dates (production and expiration) on labels.

SFDA Requires Attestation for Animal-Protein-Free Feed for Poultry Meat Exports

Background-- In 2001, the MOCI issued a new certification requirement for poultry meat, beef and further processed meat and poultry product imports to the Kingdom. This directive requires that health certificates for imported poultry and beef products clearly indicate that animals slaughtered were not fed animal protein, animal fat, or animal by-products before entering the Kingdom. The Ministry stated that the new measure was necessary in order to prevent the entry of poultry meat considered unfit for human consumption. In January 2006, the MOCI agreed to accept a two-certificate approach for U.S. poultry and cattle meat exports consisting of: (1) an official FSIS export certificate and (2) a

producer/manufacturer self-certification to cover any additional requirements not related to food safety or animal health. However, the SFDA which took over the inspections of imported food products from MOCI informed FAS/Riyadh in 2012 that the MOCI had overlooked the content of the 2005 Saudi-U.S. WTO accession agreement regarding certification requirements for U.S. poultry meat exports to Saudi Arabia. According to the SFDA, the U.S. government agreed in 2005 that USDA's FSIS would attest on its letterhead certificate that poultry slaughtered for export to Saudi Arabia was not fed with feed containing animal protein, fat or remnants of animal origin. In addition, SFDA required that FSIS Form 9060-5 (Meat and Poultry Certificate of Wholesomeness) that accompany U.S. poultry and livestock meat exports should provide information on the seal numbers affixed to all loaded containers bound for Saudi Arabia.

On July 5, 2012, FSIS updated its Export Library entry for Saudi Arabia to include the new SFDA requirements. In order for FSIS to issue the required animal protein free certification, exports of U.S. poultry and poultry products to Kingdom should come from slaughter institutions that participate in the Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) Animal Protein Free Verification (APFV) Program for Poultry. Information about this program can be found at [AMS' Website](#).

The Saudi Ban on Imports of Beef and Beef Products from the U.S.

On May 9, 2012, SFDA imposed a temporary ban on imports of U.S. beef and beef products following a discovery of an atypical case of BSE in a central California dairy cow headed for a rendering plant, the fourth case of BSE in the U.S.

On October 12, 2012, the SFDA informed USDA that it will lift the import ban subject to the implementation of its Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that must be followed by export establishments that want to export beef and beef products to the Saudi market. In general, SFDA's SOP requires each country that request lifting of the beef import ban to provide the following animal health information:

- The overall animal health situation in the country;
- The control and precautionary measures applied to safeguard against spread of disease;
- The pathogen detection methods applied in the specialized laboratories and the traceability and veterinary inspection systems used; and
- Supporting documents from the OIE which confirm that the country is free from BSE and that the underlying sanitary situation is stable.

Other conditions that the SFDA has specified for lifting the ban include SFDA's inspection, approval and registration of U.S. meat processing facilities that wish to export beef and beef products to Saudi Arabia, as well as a payment of inspection fee estimated at about \$48,000 per exporting establishment.

On December 4, 2012, USDA's APHIS provided a response to the SFDA conditions for lifting the ban, as outlined in the SOPs, including a copy of the U.S. epidemiological investigation regarding the BSE finding concerning the BSE case in California. It should be noted that APHIS' response has addressed

all SFDA concerns specified in its SOP and could help the efforts of lifting of the Saudi import ban on U.S. beef and beef products.

For religious reasons, Saudi Arabia bans imports of alcoholic beverages, live swine, pork and food ingredients or additives that contain pork products, including pork fat and gelatin. Livestock meat and poultry shipments must be accompanied by a "Halal" slaughter certificate issued by an Islamic center in the country of origin. Additional statements on the health certificate accompanying poultry and livestock meat shipments must indicate that the animals slaughtered for export to the Kingdom were not fed with feed containing protein, fat or remnants of animal origin and were not treated with any growth hormones.

B. Regulatory and Inspection Responsibilities of SFDA

The SFDA regulates, oversees, and controls food, drugs, and medical devices, as well as establishes mandatory standards for both imported and locally manufactured products. Testing activities for these products is conducted in SFDA or other government-operated laboratories. In addition, the SFDA is responsible for educating consumers on all matters related to food, drugs and medical devices.

Principal work objectives of the SFDA are summarized below:

- Monitor the safety, security, and effectiveness of food and drugs for human and animal consumption.
- Monitor the safety of complementary biological and chemical substances, cosmetics and pesticides.
- Monitor the safety of medical diagnostic devices and their impact on public health.
- Establish and implement clear policies and procedures for food and drugs.
- Conduct research and applied studies to identify health problems, their causes, and set methods for research evaluation. The Authority establishes scientific guidelines for specialized consulting services and executive programs in the fields of food and drugs. This is accomplished through recruitment of experts or through partnerships with research bodies such as King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) and/or university research centers.
- Control and supervise the licensing of factories producing food, drugs and medical devices.
- Disseminate and exchange information with local and international scientific and legal agencies.
- Inspect all agricultural, animal product and veterinary medicine imports at the King's 36 Customs ports (13 dry or land ports, 10 Customs Airports and 8 Seaports).
- Control imported food and drugs.

- Control locally processed food items before and during production process as well as issue quality and compliance certificates.
- Test children's food, therapeutic potable water, tobacco and plant derivatives.
- Control and inspect markets, food products retail/wholesale centers, restaurants, and food plants to ensure adherence to Saudi health and safety specifications as well as laws related to commercial fraud in the areas of food and drugs.
- Ensure the safety of potable water supplies.
- Supervise the implementation of statutes and laws related to food and drugs.
- Monitor hygiene conditions of facilities producing food and drug products.
- Supervise the safety of food workers through periodic site examinations.
- Regulate, monitor and inspect animal slaughtering facilities and meat sales outlets.

Note that the Saudi Ministry of Agriculture is still responsible for inspecting imported grains, seed, livestock, live poultry, ornamental birds, live tree, fruit and vegetables.

C. Regulatory Responsibilities of Gulf Standards Organization

SFDA is a dominant standard setting agency in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Which include five other countries in the Arabian Peninsula (United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar) In 2008, Yemen became the latest member of the Gulf Standards Organization (GSO), bringing the number of GSO member countries to seven. GSO is responsible for developing food and non food standards in the GCC countries and Yemen. The GSO Food Standards Committee, which is comprised of the Director Generals of member countries standard organizations, is responsible for drafting new GCC wide food standards and update existing ones. Chairmanship of the GSO Food Standards Committee rotates among member states and currently it is chaired by Qatar. The GSO Food Standards Committee has the following three specialized subcommittees:

1. Additives subcommittee, chaired by Saudi Arabia
2. Labeling subcommittee, chaired by Oman.
3. Bio-technology and organic food subcommittee, chaired by the UAE.

GSO standards are mostly based on CODEX Alimentarius regulations and to some extent on European and U.S. standards, but are modified to reflect local conditions. GSO often adopts existing member countries mostly Saudi Arabian standards after making sure that they conform to Codex Alimentarius guidelines. Sometimes, ISO standards are converted to GSO standards without modification. Since 1972, Saudi Arabia has issued more than 1,000 production and testing standards for food and agricultural products and is presently working on new standards.

All GSO draft standards prepared by the GSO Food Standards Committee are submitted for review and

approval to the GSO Board of Directors (BOD). The GSO BOD, which is composed of competent ministers responsible for standardization of each Member State, meets twice a year to deliberate on standards and other issues related to GSO.

Once a new standard is approved by the GSO's BOD, it is implemented in each member state after a grace period of six months from the date of approval.

Section II. Labeling Requirements:

As a member of GCC countries, Saudi Arabia has implemented Gulf standards GSO 9/2007 and GSO 150/2007 for labeling and shelf life requirements respectively.

A. General Requirements

All imported and locally produced prepackaged foodstuffs must meet labeling requirements as indicated in Gulf Standard 9/2007. According to this GCC-wide standard, prepackaged food product labels should be in Arabic or include an Arabic language translation of the label. Labels must contain at a minimum: the product name, packer's name, country of origin or manufacture, listing of ingredients, instructions where applicable, for the end use of the product, and the shelf-life of the product.

Section five of GSO 9/2007, specifies the following mandatory labeling requirements for prepackaged food products:

5/1 Name of the Food Product.

- 5/1/1 The name shall identify the true nature of the food and shall normally be specific and not generic.
- 5/1/2 Where a name or names have been established for a foodstuff in an individual Gulf Standard, at least one of these names shall be used; otherwise, the usual or common name used in the country where the food is distributed shall be adopted.
- 5/1/3 In the absence of any such names, either usually or commonly existing, an appropriate descriptive name which is not misleading or confusing to the consumer shall be used.
- 5/1/4 There shall be placed, either in conjunction with or in close proximity to the name of the food, such additional words or phrases as necessary to avoid misleading or confusing the consumer as regards the true natural or physical condition of the contents of a prepackaged foodstuff including the type of packing medium, style, the conditions or type of treatment has it undergone; for instance: dried, condensed, reconstituted, or smoked.

5/ 2 List of Ingredients:

- 5/2/1 With the exception of single ingredient foods, a list of all ingredients shall be shown on the label in a descending order of ingoing weight proportions (m/m), at the time of the

manufacture of such a foodstuff.

- 5/2/2 The list of ingredients shall be either preceded or headed by an appropriate title including the term ' INGREDIENTS '.
- 5/2/3 A list of food additives to the product or their numerical codes (international classification system (ICS) or European index) need to be declared.
- 5/2/4 The foodstuffs and ingredients which are known to cause hypersensitivity shall always be declared; these are :
 - 5/2/4/1 Cereals containing gluten substance ;i.e., wheat, barley ,oats, rye, spelt as such or their hybridized strains and products of these;
 - 5/2/4/2 Crustacea and products of these ;
 - 5/2/4/3 Eggs and egg products ;
 - 5/2/4/4 Fish and fish products ;
 - 5/2/4/5 Peanuts, soybeans and products of these ;
 - 5/2/4/6 Walnuts and nut products ;
 - 5/2/4/7 Milk and milk products (lactose included) ;
 - 5/2/4/8 Sulphite in concentration of 10 mg/kg or more.
- 5/2/5 Added water shall be declared in the list of ingredients except when the water forms a part of an ingredient such as brine, syrup or broth used in compound foods and mentioned as such in the list of ingredients. However, water or other volatile particles evaporated in the course of manufacture need not to be declared.
- 5/2/6 In the case of dehydrated or condensed foods which are intended to be reconstituted by adding water only, the ingredients may be listed after the addition of water in the order of weight proportion (m/m) in the reconstituted product, provided the inclusion of an explanatory statement such as "ingredients of the product when prepared in accordance with the instructions on the label".
- 5/2/7 The presence in any foodstuff or any of its ingredients being obtained via biotechnology of an allergen probably transferable from it to any of the products listed in Clause 5/2/4 shall be declared.
- 5/2/8 A specific name shall be used for ingredients in compliance with the provisions laid down in Clause 5/1), except :-

- 5/2/8/1 For generic nomenclature: unless a universal class title would be more informative, the following names may be used:-

Title of classes	Specific class names
-Refined oils, other than olive oil. -Refined fats.	- The term 'Oils' accompanied by either the quality 'vegetable' or 'animal' and a statement as to indicate whether it is 'hydrogenated' or 'partially hydrogenated' as appropriate. - The term 'fat' together with either the quality 'vegetable' or 'animal, as appropriate.
-Starches, other than chemically modified Starch. - All types of fish where the fish constitutes an ingredient of another food, provided that the labeling and presentation of such a food does not refer to a specific species of fish.	- 'Starch' - 'Fish'.
-All types of poultry meat where such meat constitutes an ingredient of another food , provided that the labeling and presentation of such a food does not refer to a specific kind of poultry meat. -All types of cheese where the cheese or a mixture of cheeses constitutes an ingredient of another food, provided that the labeling and presentation of such a food does not refer to a specific type of cheese.	- ' Poultry meat.' - ' Cheese '

Title of classes	Specific class names
All spices and spice extracts, not exceeding 2% of the weight, whether added individually or in combination in the foods.	- 'Spices','spice' or 'mixed spices' as appropriate.

- All herbs or parts of herbs as appropriate, not exceeding 2% of the weight, whether added singly or as a mixture in the foods.	- 'Essential herbs 'or ' mixed essential herbs' as appropriate.
-All types of gum preparations used in producing the gum base for the manufacture of chewing gum.	- 'Gum base'.
- All types of sucrose.	- 'Sugar'.
-Anhydrous dextrose and dextrose monohydrate.	- 'Dextrose'or 'glucose'.
- All types of caseinates	- 'Caseinates'
- Raw , pressed or refined cocoa butter	- 'cocoa butter'
-All crystallized fruits not exceeding10%of the weight of food.	- ' Crystallized fruit '

- 5/2/8/2 For the food additives permitted for use in Gulf Standards the following names shall be used beside the specific name or international number:-

Acidity Regulators:

- Acids
- Anti-caking Agents
- Anti-foaming Agents
- Anti-oxidants
- Bulking Agents
- Colors
- Gelling Agents
- Glazing Agents
- Humectants
- Preservatives
- Color Retention Agents
- Emulsifiers
- Emulsifying Salts
- Firming Agents
- Flour treatment Agents
- Flavor Enhancers
- Foaming Agents
- Raising Agents
- Stabilizers
- Sweeteners
- Thickeners.

- 5/2/8/3 The following names may be used for food additives permitted in foods, in general:-
- Flavor(s) and flavoring(s): can be described as 'natural', 'natural identical' or artificial ' as appropriate; Modified starch (es).
- 5/2/9 Shall be included in the list of ingredients, however, any food additive carried over from a food into another in a significant quantity or in an amount sufficient to perform a particular technological function in that food as a result of the use of raw materials or other ingredients in which the additive was used. Exempted from that, are the additives and processing aids.
- 5/2/10 Exempted from appearing in the list of ingredients is any food additive carried over into a food in a proportion less than that required for achieving a certain technological function in that food, . This exemption does not apply to the other food additives or processing aids.
- 5/2/11 Nutritional Information:

The following nutritional information may be preferably set out, however, in the case of foods catered for special dietary use the declaration of this information on the label is mandatory:

- 5/2/11/1 The nutritive value of the prepackaged foodstuffs to include such essential elements as: (Carbohydrates- Fats- Protein- Dietary fibers - Energy).
- 5/2/11/2 In the case of adding vitamins, mineral salts or any other dietary elements in the food ingredients, then, the value of each dietary element shall be separately declared in the nutritional information accompanying the prepackaged foodstuff.
- 5/2/11/3 All nutritional information and /or net content shall be set forth as percentage by weight if, it is less than 100 g or 100ml.
- 5/2/11/4 The information shall be set out in international units (g. mg. µg- IU) and (kilocalories) for Energy items).
- 5/3 Net Contents
- 5/3/1 The net contents, since packed, shall be declared in metric system.
- 5/3/2 The net contents shall be declared by volume as for liquid foods, by weight for solid foods and either by weight or volume for semi-solid or viscous foods.
- 5/3/3 The drained weight (weight of food after the liquid has been drained) of a packed shall be declared. A liquid medium means water, or any aqueous solutions of sugar or salt, fruit or vegetable juices in canned such products only, or vinegar, either in a single or combined form.

5/4 Name And Address

The name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor shall be declared.

5/5 Country of Origin

- 5/5/1 The country of origin of the food shall be declared on the food containers if its omission would mislead or deceive the consumer about the item, especially in the case of repacking.
- 5/5/2 When a foodstuff undergoes processing in a second country which may probably change its fundamental nature, the country where the processing has taken place shall be considered as the country of origin for labeling purposes.

5/6 Lot Identification

Each container shall be embossed or permanently marked either in such a coded or express terminology as to identify the processing lot numerical.

5/7 Date Marking and Instructions for Storage And Use

- 5/7/ Without prejudice to what has been mentioned in Gulf standard stated in item (2.1) the production date : and expiration date shall be declared as follows:-
- 5/7/1/1 For food products with a minimum durability less than three months (i.e. Day - Month -Year).
- 5/7/1/2 For food products with a minimum durability of more than three months (i.e. Month – Year).

If the month is December, the years is declared, and the minimum durability shall be counted up to the end of the month in which the expiration is dated.

- 5/7/2 The expiration date shall be preceded by such phrases as:-
- 5/72/1 Best before...'accompanied by the date;
- 5/72/2 Best before end...' in other cases.

These phrases shall be accompanied by either the date itself, or a reference to where the date is given.

- 5/7/3 The day, month and year shall be indicated in a clear (uncoded) manner in the same order.
- 5/7/4 The expiration date shall not be declared in case of the following products:-
- 5/7/4/1 Fresh fruits and vegetables, including potatoes which have not been peeled, cut or

similarly treated;

- 5/7/4/2 Bakers' ware or pastry which are normally consumed within 24 hours from their manufacture;
- 5/7/4/3 Vinegar ;
- 5/7/4/4 Edible salt;
- 5/7/4/5 Sugar;
- 5/7/4/6 Confectionery products consisting of flavored and /or colored sugary items;
- 5/7/4/7 Chewing gum.
- 5/7/5 In addition to the expiration date, any specific requirements pertaining to the storage conditions of the food shall be laid down on the label, should the minimum durability be dependent thereupon.
- 5/7/6 Instructions for use including reconstitution directives, where applicable, shall be indicated on the label, if necessary for ensuring a correct and sound utilization of the foodstuff.

5/8 Irradiated Foods

- 5/8/1 The labeling of a food which has been treated with ionizing radiation shall include a written statement indicating such a treatment in close proximity to the food name. The use of International Food Irradiation Symbol is optional; however, whenever declared on the label it shall be placed in conjunction with the name of food.
- 5/8/2 In the case where an irradiated product is used as an ingredient in another food, so, this shall be set out in the list of ingredients.
- 5/8/3 When a single ingredient product is prepared from a raw material which has already undergone a treatment by radiation, this shall be stated in the list of ingredients.

6. Exemptions from Mandatory Labeling Requirements

- Except for spices and essential herbs, small units, where the area largest surface is less than 10 cm² may be exempted from the requirements stipulated in Clauses 5/2, 5/6 up to 5/7.

7. Presentation of Mandatory Information

- 7/1 General Requirements
- 7/1/1 Labels stuck to the prepackaged foods shall be applied in such a manner as to prevent their removal from the container.

- 7/1/2 Statements intended to appear on the label shall be marked in a clearly visible and easily legible manner, under the normal conditions for purchase and use.
- 7/1/3 When the container is covered by a wrapper, this shall carry the necessary information; or the labeling on the container shall be readily legible through the wrapping and not obscured thereby.
- 7/1/4 The name and net contents of the food shall appear in a prominent position within the same scope of vision.
- 7/1/5 Any illegal or unauthorized nomenclature, terminology, coding, pictorial...etc, shall not be used.
- 7/1/6 If the informative label is in contact with the foodstuff, it shall not contain any chemicals or so. The ink used therein shall not be oozing or leaking in any way. The containers shall meet the requirements laid down in the relevant GS (vide Clause 2/3).

7/2 Language

- 7/2/1 Labeling and adjoining explanatory statements shall be in Arabic and, where another language is used, it shall be alongside the Arabic. All the information provided in another language shall be identical with those written in Arabic.
- 7/2/2 If the Arabic information is stated in a supplementary sticker adjacent to the original label, the following shall be met:-
 - 7/2/2/1 It shall be a single sticker provided by the manufacture only, to fulfill all the relevant stipulations provided in this standard.
 - 7/2/2/2 It shall not obscure any information required by this standard.
 - 7/2/2/3 It shall not contain any statement discrepant with the original labeling.
 - 7/2/2/4 It shall be irremovable in the ordinary handling and circulation conditions of the prepackaged foodstuff.

8. Optional Labeling

- 8/1 Additional statements, pictorial or graphic matters may be either written impressed or photographed on the label, provided that they shall neither contradict with mandatory labeling method , nor contain any medicinal or therapeutic declaration, or breach the provisions of this standard.
- 8/2 When marking the product grade declaration it shall be legibly understandable and not entail deception or misleading in any way.

- 8/3 If the foodstuff consists of two ingredients or more, the class name of the main ingredient may be listed with the rest of ingredients in a descending sequence by weight (m/m); but an ingredient with the proportion of less than 5% of the foodstuff shall not be included in the list of ingredients.

SFDA Requires Foodstuff Manufacturers to Affix Arabic Language Stickers on Labels of Exported Prepackaged Food Products

On June 9, 2010, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) informed Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce & Industry that it will fully implement on December 9, 2010 section 7/2 of Gulf Standards Organization (GSO) No.9/2007 titled “Labeling of Prepackaged Food Stuffs”. The most important requirement in the SFDA circular number E/991 is the decision to accept only Arabic language stickers affixed by manufacturers on labels of exported prepackaged food products (section 7/2/2/1 of GSO 9/2007). In the past, Saudi Arabia has allowed food products exporting houses or consolidators to place Arabic language stickers on labels of prepackaged food products at their warehouses.

Grace Period to Implement the New Requirement

SFDA granted a six month grace period that ends on December 9, 2010 for domestic foodstuff importers to fully implement the new requirement. SFDA has informed its food inspection laboratories at Saudi ports of entry to reject any prepackaged food products shipment that does not comply with the new Arabic language stickers requirement.

Section 7/2 states the following:

7/2: Language:

- 7/2/1: Labeling and adjoining explanatory statements shall be in Arabic and, where another language is used, it shall be alongside the Arabic. All the information provided in another language shall be identical with those written in Arabic.
- 7/2/2: If the Arabic information is stated in a supplementary sticker adjacent to the original label , the following shall be met:
 - **7/2/2/1: It shall be a single sticker provided by the manufacture only to fulfill all the relevant stipulations provided in this standard.**
 - 7/2/2/2: It shall not obscure any information required by this standard.
 - 7/2/2/3: It shall not contain any statement discrepant with the original labeling.
 - 7/2/2/4: It shall be irremovable in the ordinary handling and circulation conditions of the prepackaged foodstuff.

B. Shelf Life

In December 2005, Saudi Arabia implemented a voluntary shelf life standard (manufacturer-determined use-by dates) for most foodstuffs with the exception of selected perishable foods (fresh or chilled meat and poultry; fresh milk and fresh milk based products; margarine; fresh fruit juice; table eggs, and baby foods) that must meet SASO's established mandatory expiration periods. The revised standard (SASO 457/2005) will no longer ban imports of food product with less than half of its shelf life remaining.

Shelf life can only be shown by clear and unambiguous production and expiration dates. The use of any of the following statements for expressing expiration date is permissible.

- Expiration Date
- Use by (date)
- Fit for (from the day of production)
- Use Before (date)
- Sell by date (for food products having an expiration period exceeding 3 months).

The production and expiration dates should be declared on the label of the package in uncoded manner as follows:

- Day-Month-Year: for foodstuffs with an expiration period less than three months.
- Month-Year: for foodstuffs with expiration exceeding three months.

Dates shall be engraved or in relief, printed to stamp with permanent ink directly on all packages or on their original label by the producer only. Adding stickers for production and expiration dates is not permissible. There shall be not more than one date of production or of expiration on the same package. Both dates shall not be subject to deletion, change or deceit.

Products with No Specific Expiration Date: Products with no specified shelf life such as salt, spices, milled rice, etc. only the date of production or processing would be shown as: mm/yy.

We recommend that when putting together an order for a Saudi importer, a U.S. exporter should cross check information contained on his/her food label, including Production/Expiration dates, with the Saudi buyer.

C. Additional Labeling Requirements

In addition to requirements per GCC 9/1995, the following labeling information must be declared for food additives and antioxidants used in foodstuffs:

- For coloring matters, their mixtures, preparations and diluents used in foodstuffs, the following additional information must be declared:
 1. Common name
 2. Color index number
 3. Name of solvent or diluent
 4. Production and expiration dates in a non-coded manner (day-month-year)

5. Dye purity
 6. The statement “Free from alcohol”
 7. The statement “Color matter for use in foodstuffs.”
- For Flavors permitted for use in Foodstuffs common name and code number (if found) must be declared on food products containers contained flavors.
 - For preservatives permitted for use in food products, common name or EEC number and a statement “Preservative for Use in Food Products” in case of preservatives containers.
 - For emulsifiers, stabilizers and thickeners permitted for use in foodstuffs, the following additional information must be declared:
 1. Common name or EEC no.
 2. In case of gelatin, lecithin and mono and diglycerides the source shall be mentioned.
 - For Sweeteners Permitted for Use in Food Products:
 1. The name of sweeteners or INS numbers
 2. Food products formulated specifically for use by diabetics or for other special nutritional uses shall contain the statement “Food for special dietary use or food for diabetic.”
 3. The amount of sweeteners matter, mg/liter or kg in case of using combination of sweeteners, the amount of each in combination shall be declared.
 - The following warning must be declared:
 4. In case of aspartame, “Not to be used by persons who have phenyl ketonuria.”
 5. In case of saccharine, “Use of this product may be hazardous to your health because it contains saccharin which has been determined to cause cancer in laboratory animals.”
 6. In the case of sugar alcohol "Excess of consumed quantity may cause diarrhea.”
 - The following additional labeling information must be declared for antioxidants permitted for use in foodstuffs:
 1. Common name or EEC number
 2. A statement “Antioxidants permitted for use in foodstuffs” in case of antioxidant containers.

D. Requirements Specific to Nutritional Labeling

In addition to the general labeling requirements as stated in GS 9/1995, further information must be declared for prepackaged foods for special dietary use per Gulf Standard No. 654/1996 (General Requirements for Prepackaged Foods for Special Dietary Use). Following is the main labeling information to be stated per GSO No. 654/1996.

Definition of Dietary Foods: GSO number 654/1996 defines dietary foods as food products specially prepared or formulated to satisfy particular dietary requirements which exist because of a particular physical or physiological conditions and/or specific diseases and disorders. These foodstuffs differ significantly in composition from the ordinary products of comparable nature, if such ordinary foods exist.

Requirements

The following shall be met in prepackaged foods for special dietary uses:

- 4.1 The product shall be completely free from pork products or their derivatives.
- 4.2 It shall be registered by the Saudi Ministry of Health.
- 4.3 It shall not be pharmaceutically packaged in a way suggesting that it is a drug.
- 4.4 It shall be offered for sale in places separated from the ordinary foods in supermarkets. Foods for special dietary uses for infants and children shall be dispensed only by pharmacies, hospitals and children care centers.
- 4.5 Artificial sweeteners are not permitted to be used in all baby and infant foods.

Labeling:

Without prejudice to what is stated in the Gulf standards mentioned in 2.1 and 2.2, the following shall be declared on the label:

- 5.1 Name of the product followed by the characterizing essential features indicating that it is a food for special dietary use.
- 5.2 The amount of energy expressed in kilojoules and kilocalories per 100 grams or 100 ml of the food product and where appropriate per the specified quantity of food as suggested for consumption.
- 5.3 Its content of protein, carbohydrates, fat, dietary, fiber and each vitamin and mineral per 100 grams or 100 ml of the food (as sold) and where appropriate per specified quantity of the food as suggested for consumption.
- 5.4 The total quantity of the specific nutrients which provide the characterizing essential features per 100 grams or 100 ml of the food product and, where appropriate, per specified quantity of food as suggested for consumption.
- 5.5 The special cases in which the food is used and the suitable amount permissible for daily consumption.

- 5.6 Storage conditions before and after opening of the package.
- 5.7 The procedures of preparation and use, and in the case of baby and infant foods the procedures shall be indicated according to the age of child.
- 5.8 The following cautionary statement shall be declared: "To Be Used Under Medical Supervision", wherever applicable to certain foods.
- 5.9 The amount of added sweeteners accompanied by the following cautionary statements:
 - 5.9.1 In the case of aspartame: [5.9.1.1] "Not to be used by persons who have phenylketonuria", [5.9.1.2] "The maximum intake shall not exceed 40 mg/kg of body weight".
 - 5.9.2 In the case of saccharin: "Use of this product may be hazardous to your health, because it contains saccharin which has been determined to cause cancer to laboratory animals".
 - 5.9.3 In the case of manitol: "Excess of consumed quantity of manitol over 20 g per day may cause diarrhea".
 - 5.9.4 In the case of sorbitol or xylitol: "Excess of consumed quantity of sorbitol or xylitol over 40 g per day may cause diarrhea".
- 5.10 Not to be described or marked in such a manner that misleads the consumer.

E. Biotech Labeling

In December 2001, MOCI implemented its biotech labeling decree for processed foodstuffs. The decree requires positive biotech labeling if a product contains genetically modified vegetable (plant) ingredients. In a similar move, MOA implemented in January 2004 a comparable biotech-labeling requirement on animal feed, fruit and vegetables while banning imports of GE seeds.

Following is a summary of the biotech labeling requirements implemented by the MOCI:

A. Positive labeling: If a product contains one or more GE plant ingredient, the information should be clearly communicated to the consumer by labeling. A triangle should be drawn on the label with text that should read "Contains Genetically Modified Product (s). The Ministry will not accept a statement that says "This Product May Contain biotech Ingredients." Saudi Arabia does not permit imports of foodstuffs that contain GE animal products. According to the MOCI, local food producers must also abide by the biotech labeling requirements.

B. Bilingual labeling: The biotech statement must be clearly written in Arabic and English languages with ink color different from that of the main product tag.

C. Health certificate: Biotech products exported to Saudi Arabia must have been approved in the country of origin for human or animal consumption. Each shipment must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by a government agency stating that the GE ingredient used in the foodstuff is approved in the country of origin for human or animal consumption.

D. PCR Real Time Method: MOC approved the PCR Real Time Method for GE testing and set 0.9 percent threshold. If the test results reveal more than 0.9 percent of GE ingredient, the product is either destroyed locally or re-exported to the country of origin. Products with less than 0.9 percent of GE content are exempt from further testing for six months. If still on the market after six months, these products must be tested and recertified. Presently, no GE-labeled retail food products are marketed in Saudi Arabia, but GE-labeled bulk commodities and products destined for institutional end users are imported and marketed.

E. Biotech health certificate: The Saudi Ministry of Commerce has agreed to accept health certificates issued by state departments of agriculture for high value products instead of the previous requirement that the certificates be issued by a federal government agency such as USDA or FDA for U.S. products. The Ministry has reiterated its refusal to consider any health certificate issued by exporting companies or other private organizations including notary public statements.

F. For U.S. grains: The MOA has accepted a one-time biotech grains certification statement from the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) submitted to the Ministry in 2003. The statement certified that the exported transgenic grains are the same as those consumed in the United States. The approved statement eliminates the need for a shipment-by-shipment positive biotech certification for corn and soybean meal exported to the Kingdom. The MOA still requires each shipment of biotech fruits and vegetables to be labeled and accompanied by a biotech health certificate. In 2004, the MOA banned imports of all types of biotech seeds.

G. In February 2005, the Saudi Government announced the establishment of a national high-level committee consisting of four ministries, the Saudi Arabian Standard Organization (SASO), universities and the private sector to conduct a comprehensive policy review of current biotech labeling requirements.

On the other hand, as part of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC) Customs Union, the six member countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and U.A.E.) are working toward unifying their standard and conformity assessment systems. After working on three biotech draft standards for three years, Saudi Arabia decided in February 2009 to abandon its efforts to issue national biotech standards and opted to join hands with other members of the GCC countries to work on promulgating GCC wide agricultural biotech standards under the auspices of the Gulf Standards Organization (GSO).

The three Saudi agricultural biotech drafts standards indicated below were submitted to GSO Agricultural Biotech Subcommittee in 2009 and were immediately adopted as the GCC biotech draft standards:

(1) General Requirements for Genetically Modified Food and Feed

(2) General Requirements for Genetically Modified Unprocessed Agricultural Products

(3) General Requirements for Risk Assessment and Traceability for Genetically Modified

In November 2010, Saudi Arabia on behalf of GCC countries sent the above three draft GCC biotech standards to WTO for public comments and established January 7, 2011 as a deadline to provide feedback.

In December 2010, ATO Riyadh officially submitted U.S. comments on the three above GCC biotech draft standards to SFDA. The GCC is currently in an advance stage in evaluating comments received for several countries on the three biotech draft standards. According to SFDA, the feedback received from several countries including U.S. comments will help the GCC develop a regulatory framework for agricultural biotechnology.

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations:

In 1997, Saudi Arabia issued standard No. SSA 1149/1997 entitled Food Packages-part 1-General Requirements. Some of the main requirements are listed below:

- All packaging materials used in fabricating, forming, or treating packages shall be of food grade for contact with foods and in compliance with relevant Saudi standards.
- They shall be clean and in a condition that does not allow any contamination probabilities of the contained material.
- They shall maintain the properties of the packaged material and protect it from gaining undesirable odors, flavors and tastes.
- They shall offer protection to the product against contamination with microorganisms, insect, rodents, and dirt in the cases of products that requires it.
- They shall be impermeable to moisture in the cases of food products that require it.
- They shall offer necessary protection against environmental conditions and mechanical hazards such as impacts, vibration, static stresses, and they shall be in an intact appearance during handling.
- They shall not affect the container as a result of migration of some of their constituents that may react or be mixed with the food materials.
- It shall not be in a pharmaceutical shape.

Saudi standard No. SASO 1301/1997 deals with specifications for the general requirements of plastic packages used for packaging food materials. The three page regulations require limits among other things that the concentration of a vinyl chloride monomer not to exceed 1 mg per kg of the plastic material, or 0.01 mg per kg of the packaged food material if the packages are made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC).

Per the standard, the following labeling information should be written on labels of plastic packages used to package foodstuffs:

1. Type of plastic material
2. Weight, capacity, number, or dimensions based on the type of packages
3. Statement of food grade
4. Purpose and type of application
5. Directions for usage
6. Warnings if applicable

Section IV. Food Additives Regulations:

1. The Kingdom and the other five Gulf Cooperation countries have established the following major gulf-wide standards that regulate additives used in foodstuffs. Each standard contains a positive additive list.

- An eight-page Gulf Standard No. 23/1998 entitled “Coloring Matter Used in Food Stuff.” Shown below lists coloring matter permitted in foodstuffs.

Section 3- Definitions

- 3.1 Natural coloring matter: A material extracted, isolated, or otherwise derived with or without intermediates-from vegetables, animals, minerals or any other sources, which when added to a foodstuff is capable (alone or through reaction with another substance) of imparting a distinguishing color thereto.
- 3.2 Synthetic coloring matter: A material produced by synthesis of any similar artificial method and which when added to the foodstuff is capable (alone or through reaction with another substance) of imparting a distinguishing color thereto.
- 3.3 Lake: A salt prepared by reaction of one of the water soluble pigments with the basic radical aluminum or calcium.

Section 4- Requirements

- The following shall be met in the coloring matter:
 - 4.1 It shall be completely free from pork products or their derivatives.
 - 4.2 It shall not react with food components or its containers.
 - 4.3 It shall be capable of dissolving or dispersing in the foodstuff in case it is used without solvents.

- 4.4 Loss of weight on drying shall not exceed 0.2% in case of Beta-Carotene, Beta-Apo-8-Carotenal, Beta-Apo-8-Carotenoic acid and Canthaxanthin.
- 4.5 Residue on ignition shall not exceed 0.2% in case of Beta-Carotene, Beta-Apo-8-Carotenal, Beta-Apo-8-Carotenoic acid and Canthaxanthin.
- 4.6 The dye content in coloring matter determined spectrophotometrically shall not be less than 96% in case of Beta-Carotene, Beta-Apo-8-Carotenal, Beta-Apo-8-Carotenoic acid and Canthaxanthin when tested according to GS mentioned in 2.2.
- 4.7 Carrot oil shall contain no more than 25 ppm of hexan.
- 4.8 Lake may be used in coloring foodstuffs products.
- 4.9 No diluents or solvents shall be used with the coloring matter except the following materials:

Water, glucose, lactose, sucrose, dextrose, starch, sorbitol, glycerol, edible fats and oils, bee wax, citric acid, tartaric acid, lactic acid, pectin, beef gelatin, sodium carbonate, sodium bicarbonate, sodium chloride, sodium sulphate, (sodium, potassium or ammonium) alginate, sodium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide propylene-glycol, ethyl acetates, acetic acid, and (glyceryl-mono, di, and triacetate) polysorbate 80.

- m4.10 The toxic mineral elements shall not exceed the following:
 - Arsenic 3 ppm
 - Lead 10 ppm
 - Heavy metals 40 ppm
- 4.11 No coloring matter shall be added to the following food products: Nonprocessed (meat - birds - fish) processed (meat - birds - fish) (except what's mentioned in Table 3) – fresh fruits and vegetables - mineral water, milk without flavor (pasteurized - powdered – sterilized - fermented) – cream without flavor - olive oil - egg and egg products - flour - starch, bread – sugars - cocoa and row chocolate - coffee - tea - spices - foods for infants and children, honey except the following cases:
 - 4.11.1 Official ink used for stamping the slaughtered animals with distinguishing marks.
 - 4.11.2 Synthetic coloring of the fully ripe citrus fruits.
- 4.12 No natural or synthetic coloring matter shall be added to food products except those mentioned in Tables 1 and 2 in general, and coloring matter which are mentioned in Table 3 are permitted for use in certain foodstuffs only.

- 4.13 Synthetic coloring matter shall fulfill the characteristics specified in Table 4.

In June 2011, the GCC Standards Committee decided not to implement the ban on E102 and E122. In 2010, Saudi Arabia banned the use of Red 2G in foodstuffs.

Note that SFDA and GSO have removed E128 from allowable coloring matters used. As such, E128 is not allowed for use as a coloring matter in foodstuffs.

Table I
Permitted Natural Colors for Use in Foodstuffs in General (GSO 23/1998)

Color	EEC No.	Notes
<u>Red to Yellow Shades</u>		
Carmine	120	Cochineal, carminic acid
Annatto extract	160B	Bixin, Norbixin
Beta-Carotene	160A	Mixed carotene
Lycopene	160D	
Beta-Apo-8-Carotenal	160E	
Beta-Apo-8-Carotenoic Acid	160F	
Lutein	161B	
Carrot oil	-	

Beet root red	162	Betanine
<u>Red to Purple Shade</u>		
Anthocyanine	163	Grape skin extract (Enocianina)
Beet Powder	-	
Paprika	-	
Paprika Oleoresin	160C	
<u>Orange and Yellow Dyes</u>		
Saffron	-	Natural yellow 6
Turmeric Powder	100	
Curcumin	100	
Turmeric Oleoresin	100	
Riboflavin	101(I)	
Riboflavin-5-Phosphate	101(II)	

Table I continued

Color	EEC No.	Notes
<u>Green Dyes</u>		Chlorophyllins
Chlorophyll	140	

Chlorophyll copper complex	141	
<u>Brown Dyes</u>		
Plain caramel	150A	
Caustic sulphite caramel	150B	
Ammonia caramel	150C	
Sulphite ammonia caramel	150D	
<u>Black Dyes</u>		
Activated vegetable carbon	153	
<u>Inorganic Dyes</u>		
Titanium dioxide	171	White dye 6
Iron oxides	172	

Table II
Permitted Synthetic Colors for Use in Foodstuffs in General

Color	EEC No.	Notes
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<u>Red Colors</u>		
Azorubine	122	Carmosine, Food Red 3
Allura Red (Food Red 17)	129	FD C Red 40
<u>Yellow Colors</u>		
Sunset Yellow FCF	110	Food yellow 3, Orange
Tartrazine	102	Yellow S, FD and C Yellow No. 6 Food yellow 4, FD and C yellow No. 5
<u>Brown Colors</u>		
Chocolate brown HT	155	Food brown 3
<u>Green Colors</u>		
Fast green FCF	143	FD and C Green No. 3 Food green 3
<u>Blue Colors</u>		
Indigotine	132	Indigo carmine, FD and C blue No. 2, Food blue 1 Food blue 2, FD and C blue No. 1
Brilliant Blue FCF	133	
<u>Black Colors</u>		
Brilliant Black PN	151	Food black 1, Black PN

* Volatile matter + chlorides and sulphates.

Table 3
Coloring Matter Permitted for Use in Certain Foodstuffs

EEC No.	Color	Foodstuffs	Maximum Level
127	Erythrosine	Cherries and its products	-
128	Red 2G	Sausages Flavored yoghurt	20 ppm
161G	Canthaxanthin	Cooked sausages	30 ppm
		Edible ices	100 ppm

173	Aluminium	External coating of sugar confectionery for the decoration of cakes and External coating of confectionery External coating of confectionery BK Edible cheese surface Surfaces of frankfurters and sausages	GMP
174	Silver		
175	Gold		GMP
180	Lithotrubine		GMP
-	Orange B		150 ppm
-	Citrus Red No. 2	Skins of Orange	2 ppm

Table 4

Characteristics for Synthetic Colors

Property Color	Purity % (Min.)	Volatile* matter at 135°C % (Max.)	Water Insoluble % (Max.)	Ether Extract % (Max.)	Subsidiary Dyes % (Max.)
Azorubine	85	15	0.2	0.2	2
Red 2 G	82	18	0.2	0.2	2
Sunset Yellow FCF	85	15	0.2	0.2	4
Tartrazine	85	15	0.2	0.2	1
Chocolate Brown Ht	80	20	-	0.2	15
Fast Green FCF	85	15	0.2	0.2	1
Indigotine	85	15	0.2	0.2	1
Brilliant Blue FCF	85	15	0.2	0.2	3
Brilliant Black PN	84	15	0.2	0.2	4
FD & C Red 40	85	14	0.2	-	-

* Volatile matter + chlorides and sulphates.

5- Sampling

5.1 A number of containers shall be selected randomly from each lot according to Table 5.

Table 5

Number of Coloring Matter Containers Selected as Sample

Lot size	Number of selected containers
2 - 15	2
16 - 40	3
41 - 65	4
66 - 110	7
More than 110	10

- 5.2 Draw small quantities from different parts of each selected container and mix the portions as a composite sample whose weight shall not be less than 150 g.
- 5.3 Divide the composite sample to three equal parts. One of them for the purchaser, one for the vendor and the third shall be kept to be used arbitration in case of dispute between the purchaser and the vendor.

6- Methods of Test

- 6.1 Tests shall be carried out according to the Gulf Standard mentioned in item 2.2.
- 6.2 Necessary tests shall be carried out on the representative sample taken according to 5.1 to determine its compliance with this standard.

7- Packaging, Transportation and Storage

- The following shall be met on packaging, transportation and storage:
- 7.1 Packaging
 - 7.1.1 Natural coloring matter shall be packed in dark-colored glass containers or any other suitable, firmly sealed hygienic containers under an inert gas as far as possible so as to avoid its contact with outer atmosphere or contamination.
 - 7.1.2 Synthetic colors shall be packed in suitable firmly sealed hygienic containers so as to avoid its contact with outer atmosphere or contamination.
 - 7.1.3 The containers shall be filled so that the minimum net content volume shall not be less than 90% from the water capacity of used container.

7.2 Transportation

- The containers shall be transported in such a way as to avoid their breakage or damage.

7.3 Storage

- The containers shall be stored in cold dry places, far away from sources of direct light and contamination.

8- Labeling

- 8.1 The following information shall be declared on the labels of food coloring matter containers:
 - 8.1.1 The name of the coloring matter or EEC number.
 - 8.1.2 Name of solvent or diluent.
 - 8.1.3 Dye purity grade.
 - 8.1.4 The statement "free from alcohol".
 - 8.1.5 The statement "coloring matter for food".

Gulf Standard GS 23/1998

- 8.1.6 The statement "Do not exposure to light" in case of coloring matter affected by light.
- 8.1.7 Dates of production and expiry.
- 8.1.8 Batch number
- 8.2 Without prejudice to what is mentioned in GS 9/1984 "Labeling of Prepackaged Foods". The following information shall be declared on labels of the food products containers which contain food coloring matter.
 - Common name or EEC number.

ANNEX 1

Permissible Daily Intake of the Coloring Matter Per Body Weight

Color	ADI mg/kg body weight	Color	ADI mg/kg body weight
Annatto (determine as Bixin)	0.065	Iron oxides	0-0.5
Azorubine	0-4.0	Red 2G	0-0.1
Beta-Carotene	0-5	Riboflavin	0-0.5

Beta-Apo-8-Carotenal	0-5	Sunset yellow FCF	0-2.5
Beta-Apo-8-Carotenoic acid	0-5	Tartrazine	0-7.5
Beet powder	-	Titanium Dioxide	-
Brilliant black PN	0-1.0	FD & C Red 40	0-7.0
Brilliant blue FCF	0-12.5	Aluminium	-
Canthaxanthine	0-25	Anthocyanine	15
Caramel	-	Carrot oil	-
Caramel made by ammonium sulphite process	0-100		
Chlorophyll	-		
Chlorophyll copper complex	0-15		
Chocolate brown HT	0-1.5		
Turmeric	0-2.5		
Curcumine	0-0.1		
Fast green FCF	0-12.5		
Gold	-		
Indigotine	0-5		

A. Preservatives Permitted for Use in Food Products per Gulf Standard No. 356/1994

1- Scope and Field of Application

This standard is concerned with preservatives permitted for use in food products.

2- Complementary References

2.1 GS 9/1995 "Labeling of Prepackaged Foods".

3- Definition

3.1 Preservatives: Any additives which inhibit, or arrest decomposition of foodstuffs by micro-organism.

4- Requirements

- 4.1 No preservatives other than those mentioned in the Table, shall be used in food products.
- 4.2 Use of sulfite compounds is not permitted in fresh vegetables and fruits.

5- Sampling

- Samples shall be taken according to the methods prescribed in the relevant food product standard.

6- Methods of Test

- Tests shall be carried out according to the Gulf standard to be approved by the Organization on “Methods of Test for Preservatives Used in Food Products”.

7- Packaging

- Preservatives shall be packaged in suitable hygienic containers tightly sealed so as to prevent contact with outer atmosphere or contamination.

8- Labeling

- Without prejudice to the requirements of the Gulf standard mentioned in 2.1, the following information shall be declared in Arabic on food or preservatives containers:
 - Common name or EEC number.
 - 8.2 The statement “Preservative for Use in Food Products” in case of preservatives containers.

9- Transportation and Storage

- 9.1 Containers shall be transported in such a way so as to avoid their breakage or damage.
- 9.2 Containers shall be stored in dry, cool places far away from sources of direct light and contamination.

Labeling:

Without prejudice to the requirements of the Gulf standard mentioned in 2.1. the following information shall be declared on food containers or antioxidant containers in Arabic:

- Common name or EEC number.
- The statement “Antioxidant Permitted for Use in Foodstuffs” in case of antioxidant containers.

Transportation and Storage

- The containers shall be transported in such a way as to avoid their breakage or

damage.

9.2 Storage

- The containers shall be stored in dry, cool places far away from sources of direct light and contamination.

D. GSO standard number 381, defines Emulsifiers, Stabilizers and Thickeners Permitted for use in Food Products as follows:

- **Emulsifiers:** Substances which, when added to a foodstuff, aid the formation of uniform dispersion of two or more immiscible substances.
- **Stabilizers:** Substances which, when added to a foodstuff, aid the maintenance of a uniform dispersion of two or more immiscible substances.
- **Thickeners:** Substances which, when added to a foodstuff, increase its viscosity.

GSO requires that only emulsifiers stabilizers and thickeners mentioned in Table (1) below should be used only with food products.

E.E.C No.	Name
322	Lecithins
339	Sodium orthophosphates — monosodium dihydrogen phosphates — disodium monohydrogen phosphates
340	— trisodium phosphates
341	Potassium orthophosphates — monopotassium dihydrogen phosphates

	— dipotassium monohydrogen phosphates — tripotassium phosphates,
400	Calcium orthophosphates
401	— monocalcium tetrahydrogen diphosphates — monocalcium monohydrogen phosphates
402	— tricalcium diphosphates
	Alginic acid
403	Sodium alginate. Potassium alginate.
404	Ammonium alginate Calcium alginate
405	Propane-1,2-diol alginate (Glycol propalin alginate). Agar.
406	Carrageenan Locust bean gum.
407	
	Ghatti gum
410	
	Guar gum Tragacanth.
—	Acacia. Xanthan gum..
412	
413	
414	
415	

Table (1) Continued)

E.E.C No.	Name
416	Karaya gum.
420	Sorbitol, sorbitol syrup.
421	Mannitol.
422	Glycerol.
430	Polyoxyethylene (8) stearate.
432	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan monolaurate.
433	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan mono-palmitate.
434	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan mono-stearate.
435	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan tri stearate.
—	Polyoxyethylene (8) sorbitan tri-stearate.

436	Polyoxyethylene (40) stearate.
—	Pectin.
440 A	Amidated pectin.
440 B	Ammonium salts of phosphatic acid.
442	Diphosphates
450	Sodium and potassium polyphosphates.
450 A	Diphosphates
	--disodium dihydrogen diphosphate
	--trisodium monohydrogen diphosphate
	-- tetrasodium diphosphate
	--tetrapotassium diphosphate.
450 B—	Triphosphates
	-- pentasodium triphosphates
	— pentapotassium triphosphates.
450 C	Polyphosphates.
460	Micro crystalline cellulose.
461	Methylcellulose.
463	Hydroxypropyl cellulose.
464	Hydroxypropyl methycellulose.
465	Ethylmethylcellulose.

Table (1) Continued)

E.E.C No.	Name
466	Carboxymethylcellulose.
470	Sodium, potassium and calcium salts of fatty acids.
471	Mono - and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 A	Acetic acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 B	Lactic acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 C	Citric acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 D	Tartaric acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 E	Mono-and di-acetyltartaric acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
	Mixed acetic and tartaric acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 F	Sucrose esters of fatty acids.

473	Sucroglycerides.
474	Polyglycerol esters of fatty acids.
475	Polyglycerol polyricinoleate.
476	Propane-1,2-di-ol of esters of fatty acid.
477	Esters of glycerol and thermally oxidized soybean fatty acids.
479	Di-octyl sodium sulfosuccinate.
480.	Sodium stearoyl -2- lactylate.
481	Calcium stearoyl -2- lactylate.
482	Stearyl tartrate.
483	Sorbitan monostearate
491.	Sorbitan tristearate.
492	Sorbitan monolaurate.
493	Sorbitan monooleate.
494	Sorbitan monopalmitate
495	Amylose and amylopectin
—	Calcium acetate
—	Cholic acid
—	Desoxy cholic acid
—	Modified starch
—	Polydextroses A & N
—	

Table (1) Continued)

E.E.C No.	Name
—	Potassium sodium L +) tartrate
—	Tartaric acid
—	Polyvinyl pyrrolidone
—	Sodium caseinate
—	Succinylated monoglycerides
—	Sodium stearyl fumarate
—	Gelatin edible
—	Sorboyl palmitate
—	Stearyl citrate
—	Stearyl tartrate
—	Stearyl monoglyceridyl citrate.

7. Packaging

- 7.1 The product shall be packed in suitable hygienic containers tightly sealed against contact with outer atmosphere or contamination.

- 7.2 The packaging material shall be non-reactable with the product.

8. Labeling

Without prejudice to what is mentioned in the Gulf standard mentioned in 2.1, the following information shall be declared in Arabic on foodstuff containers of emulsifiers, stabilizers and thickeners.

- 8.1 Common name or E.E.C No.
- 8.2 In case of gelatin, lecithins and mono - and di-glycerides the source shall be mentioned.

9. Transportation and Storage

The container shall be transported in such a way so as to avoid their breakage or damage, and shall be stored in a dry, cold place far away from sources of direct light and contamination.

Preservatives Permitted for use n Food Products (GSO 356/1994)

Table No. (1)
“Preservatives Permitted for use in Food Products”

Preservatives	EEC No.	Preservatives	EEC No.
Sorbic acid	200	Diphenyl (Biphenyl)	230
Sodium sorbet	201	Orthophenyl phenol	231
Potassium sorbat phenate	202	Sodium orthophenyl	232
Calcium sorbat	203	Thiabendazole	233
Benzoic acid	210	Formic acid	236
Sodium benzoate	211	Sodium formate	237
Potassium benzoate	212	Calcium formate	238
Calcium benzoate	213	Hexamine (hexamethylene	
Ethyl P-Hydroxy benzoate	214	teteramine)	239
Ethyl P-Hydroxy benzoate		Potassium nitrite	249
sodium	215	Sodium nitrite	250
Propyl P-Hydroxy benzoate	216	Sodium nitrate	251
Prophyl P-Hydroxy benzoate		Potassium nitrite	252
sodium	217	Acetic acid	260

Methyl P-Hydroxy benzoate	218	Potassium acetate	261
Methyl P-Hydroxy benzoate sodium	219	Sodium diacetate	262
Sulphur dioxide	220	Calcium acetate	263
Sodium sulphite	221	Lactic acid	270
Sodium bisulphate	222	Propionic acid	280
Sodium metabisulphite	223	Sodium propionate	281
Potassium metabisulphite	224	Calcium propionate	282
Calcium sulphite	226	Potassium propionate	283
Calcium bisulphate	227	Carbon dioxide	290
Natamycin (pimaricin)	-	Calcium disodium ethylene diamine tetra-acetate	-
Nisin		- Disodium ethylene diamine tetra acetate	-
		Heptyl Paraban	-

Section V. Pesticides and Other Contaminants:

The Kingdom and other members of the Gulf Cooperation have developed positive pesticide and other contaminants lists. Per SASO the lists have international context as they were mainly adapted from CODEX Alimentarius standards. The following are the major Gulf/Saudi standards enforced in the Kingdom:

Gulf Standard No. 382/1994 “Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues in Agricultural Food Products-Part 1” established the maximum limits for ten pesticide residues in foods and agricultural commodities or animal feed: Malathion, Bromophos, Diquat, Fenchlorfos, Pyrethrins, Quintozense, Parathion, Orthophenyl Phenol, Methidathion and Fentin.

Gulf Standard No. 422/1994 “Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues in Agricultural Food Products-Part 2” establishes the maximum limits for nine pesticide residues in agricultural and food products intended for human consumption. The residues are: dimethoate, chlorfenvinphos, crufomate, diazinon, dioxathion, diphenyl, diphenylamine, ethoxyquin and folpet.

Gulf Standard No. 357/1994 “Antioxidants Permitted for use in Foodstuffs” lists antioxidants and antioxidants synergists permitted for use in food products. Refer to appendix II for permitted antioxidants.

Gulf Standard No. 841/1997 regulates the maximum limits aflatoxins permitted in foods and animal feeds.

Gulf Standard No. 988/1998 is concerned with limits of radioactivity levels (gemma rays, cesium 134, 137) permitted in foodstuffs, drinking water and animal feeding stuffs. The limits of radioactivity levels permitted in food products shall not exceed the following limits:

- 10 becquerel/kg or liter in water
- 30 becquerel/kg or liter in milk and its products
- 30 becquerel/kg liter in liter in baby foods
- 75 becquerel/kg or liter in other food products

- 300 becquerel/kg in animal feeds

For dried products requiring reconstitution, the limits are determined after it is reconstituted with water.

English copies of the above and other standards are available at the Saudi Arabian Standard Organization. Interested U.S. exporter can purchase them from SFDA's information center. Please refer to appendix 1 for coordinates of the center.

The Ministry of Agriculture's (MAW) registers and enforces Saudi Arabian or Gulf standards on feed additives as well as pesticides used in agricultural products. Coordinates of the Ministry are found in Appendix I.

Gulf Standard No. 382/1994 "Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues in Agricultural Food Products-Part 1". The tables below indicate the maximum limits for Malathion, Bromophos, Diquat Fenchlorfos, Pyrethrins, Quintozene, Parathion, Orthophenyl Phenol, Methidathion and Fentin.

Requirements

Pesticide residue limits in or on food, agricultural commodities or animal feeds shall not exceed the limits given against each in the following Tables (1-10).

4.1 Malathion

- Residue: Sum of malathion and its oxygen analogue.

Table (1)
Maximum Residue limits for Malathion

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
Apples	2	Unprocessed
— Beans, Dried	8	Unprocessed
— Beans, Green	2	
— Blackberries	8	
— Blueberries	0.5	
— Bran of rye	20	
— Bran of wheat	20	
— Blue berries	0.5	
— Broccoli	5	
— Cabbage	8	
— Cauliflower	0.5	
— Celery	1	
— Cereal grains	8	
— Cherries	6	
— Citrus fruits	4	
— Eggplant (aubergines)	0.5	

— Endive	8	
— Fruit, Dried	8	
— Grapes	8	
— Kale	3	
— Kohlrabi	0.5	
— Lentils	8	
— Lettuce	8	
— Nuts (whole in shell)	8	
— Peaches	6	

Maximum Residue Limits for Malathion

Table (1) (continued)

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Malathion (PPM)	Notes
— Pears	0.5	
— Peas (in the Pod)	0.5	
— Peppers	0.5	
— Plums	6	
— Raspberries	8	
— Root Vegetables (except Turnips)	0.5	
— Spinach	8	
— Strawberries	1	
— Swiss Chard	0.5	
— Tomatoes	3	
— Turnips	3	
— Whole Meal and Flour from Rye and wheat	2	

Bromophos

Residue: Bromophos

Table (2)

Maximum Residue limits for Bromophos

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
Apples	2	
— Barley straw	0.5	
— Blackberries	1	
— Broadbeans (without pods)	0.1	
— Broccoli	0.1	
— Brussels sprouts	0.5	
— Cabbage	0.1	
— Cabbage, savoy	1	
— Carrots	2	
— Cauliflower	0.1	
— Celery	1	
— Cereal grains	10	
— Cherries	1	
— Cucumber	0.1	

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Table (2) (continued)

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
— Currants, red, black,	1	
white	1	
— French bean	0.5	
— Gooseberries	0.5	
— Kale	0.1	
— Kohlrabi	2	
— Leeks	1	
— Lettuce	2	
— Lettuce lamb's	0.05*	
— Milk	0.5	
— Oat straw	5	
— Olive oil	5	
— Olive	0.5	
— Onions	1	
— Peaches	1	
— Pears	0.1	
— Peas	2	
— Plums including prunes	2	
— Radishes	0.2	
— Rape seed	0.2	
— Rape seed oil	1	
— Raspberries	0.5	in the carcass

– Sheep, carcass meat	1	fat Unprocessed
– Spinach	0.5	
– Strawberries	0.5	
– Sugar beet (roots)	0.5	
– Sugar beet leaves	0.5	
– Tomatoes	20	
– Wheat bran	0.5	
– White bread	2	
– White flour	2	
– Whole meal bread		

* Level at or about the limit of determination.

Diquat

Residue: Diquat cation

Table (3)
Maximum Residue Limits for Diquat

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
– Barley	5	
– Beans	0.5	
– Cottonseed	1	
– Cottonseed, Edible oil	0.1	
– Eggs	0.05	
– Maize	0.1	
– Meat	0.05*	
– Meat products	0.05*	
– Milk (whole)	0.01	
– Onion	0.1	
– Peas	0.1	
– Potatoes	0.2	
– Rapeseed	2	
– Rapeseed, Edible oil	0.1	
– Rice in the husk	5	
– Rice (hulled and/or polished)	0.2	
– Sesame seed oil, Edible	0.1	
– Sorghum	2	

– Sugar beets	0.1	
– Sunflower seed	0.5	
– Sunflower seed, Edible oil	0.1	
– Vegetables	0.05*	
– Wheat	2	
– Wheat flour (white)	0.2	
– Whole meal wheat flour	2	
– Wheat bran	5	

* Levels at or about the limit of determination.

4.4 Fenchlorfos

Residue : Sum of fenchlorfos and its oxygen analogue

Table (4)
Maximum Residue Limits for Fenebtorfos

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
– Cattle Carcase	10	in the Shell-free-basis
Meat	0.05	
– Eggs	10	Carcase fat in the Fat
– Goat, Carcase	0.08	
Meat	0.01*	in the Carcase fat
– Milk	10	
– Poultry		
– Sheep, Carcase meat		

* Level at or about the limit of determination.

4.5 Pyrethrins

Residue: Sum of pyrethrins I and II and other structurally related insecticidal ingredients of pyrethrum.

Table (5)
Maximum Residue Limits for Pyrethrins

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
Cereal grains	3	
– Fish, dried	3	
– Fruit	1	
– Fruit, dried	1	
– Oilseeds	1	
– Peanut (kernels)	1	
– Tree nuts	1	
– Vegetables	1	
– Vegetables, dried	1	

4.6 Quintozene

Residue: Sum of quintozene, pentachloroaniline and methyl pentachlorophynyl sulphide.

Table (6)
Maximum Residue Limits for Quintozene

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
– Bananas	1	Whole Product
– Beans (except navy beans)	0.01	
– Broccoli	0.02	
– Cabbage	0.03	
– Cottonseed	3	
– Lettuce	0.2	
– Navy beans	2	
– Peanuts	5	
– Peanuts (whole product)	0.01	
– Peppers (bell-type)	0.2	
– Potatoes	0.1	
– Tomatoes		

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4.7 Parathion

Residue: Sum of parathion and its oxygen analogue.

Table (7)

Maximum Residue Limits for Parathion

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
– Apricots	1	Whole Product Except carrots
– Citrus fruit	1	
– Other fruits	0.5	
– Peaches	1	
– Vegetables	0.7	

4.8 Orthophenyl phenol [2-phenylphenol] and its sodium salt

Residue: 2 phenylphenol and sodium 2-phenyl -phenate, expressed as 2-phenylphenol.

Table (8)

Maximum Residue Limits for Orthophenylphenol

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
– Apples	25	Edible portion
– Cantaloupes	10	
– Carrots	20	
– Cherries	3	
– Citrus fruit	10	
– Cucumber	10	
– Nectarines	3	
– Peaches	20	
– Pears	25	
– Peppers	10	
– Pineapples	10	
– Plums	15	
– Sweet potatoes	15	
– Tomatoes	10	

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4.9 Methidathion

Residue: Methidathion

Table (9)
Maximum Residue Limits for Methidathion

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
– Cotton seed oil (crude)	0.02*	Shell-free basis
	0.2	
– Eggs	3	
– Grapes	0.2	
– Hops (dried)	0.1	
– Leafy vegetables	5	
– Maize (Grain)	0.0008*	
– Mandarins	0.2	
– Milk	0.2	
– Nectarines	0.5	
– Peaches	0.1	
– Pears	0.2	
– Peas	0.02*	
– Plums	0.02*	
– Potatoes	0.02*	
– Poultry	0.02*	
– Poultry, Edible offal	0.02*	
– Poultry, fat	0.02*	
– Sheep, Edible offal	0.02*	
– Sheep, fat	0.1	Dry, manufactured
– Sheep, Carcase meat	0.1	
– Sorghum (Grain)	0.1	
– Tea		

Tomatoes		
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* Level at or about limit of determination.

4.10 Fentin

Residue: Fentin excluding inorganic tin and di- and mono-phenyl tin.

Table (10)
Maximum Residue Limits for Feath

Commodity	Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)	Notes
Carrots	0.2	
Celeriac	0.1	
Celery	1	
Cocoa beans	0.1*	Shell-free basis
Coffee (raw beans)	0.1*	Shell-free basis
Peanuts	0.05*	
	0.05*	
Potatoes	0.1	
Rice in the husk	0.1*	
Sugar beets	0.2	

* Level at or about limit of determination.

5. Sampling

Sampling shall be carried out according to the GSO standard mentioned in 2.2.

6. Methods of Testing

6.1 Pesticide residues shall be determined according to the GSO standard to be approved by GSMO on “Methods of Test for Pesticides Residues in Agricultural and Food Commodities”.

6.2 Tests for determination of the relevant residues of the following pesticides shall be carried out on the samples of agricultural and food commodities according to item (4.1) to determine their compliance with this standard.

- Malathion Quintozene
- Bromophos Parathion
- Diquat Orthophenylphenol
- Fenchlorfos Methidatlon
- Pyrethrins Fentin

Maximum Limits of Pesticides Residues Permitted in Agricultural and Food Products – Part 2 (GSO 383/1994)

Table 1
Maximum residue limit of dimethoate

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Apples	2	
Beans	2	
Beetroot	0.2	
Broccoli	2	
Cabbage	2	
Carrot	1	
Cattle	0.02	
Cauliflower	2	
Celery	2	
Cherries	2	
Corn grain	0.1	
Eggs	0.02	

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Cotton seed	0.1	
Goats	0.02	
Grapefruits	2	
Grapes	1	
Lemons	2	
Lettuce	2	
Melon	1	
Milk	0.002	
Mustard green	2	
Olive oil, refined	0.05	
Olive	1	
Olives, processed	0.05	
Onion	0.2	
Orange	2	
Pears	2	
Peas	0.5	
Pecan	0.1	
Peppers	1	
Potatoes	0.05	
Poultry	0.02	
Safflower, seed	0.1	
Sheep	0.02	
Sorghum, grain	0.1	
Soybeans	0.05	
Soybeans hay	2	

Spinach	2	
Sugar beet	0.05	
Sugar beet leaves	1	
Tomato	1	
Wheat, grain	0.04	
Wheat, straw	2	
Wheat (used as feed)	2	
Turnip	0.5	

4.2 Chlorfenvinphos

Residue: Sum of alpha and beta-chlorfenvinphos.

Table 2
Maximum residue limit of chlorfenavinphos

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Broccoli	0.05	
Cabbage	0.05	
Carcase meat	0.2	Carcase fat basis

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Carrot	0.4	
Citrus fruit	1	
Cauliflower	0.1	
Cottonseed	0.05	
Eggplant	0.05	
Horseradish	0.1	
Leeks	0.05	
Maize	0.05	(Kernels)
Milk	0.008	Fat basis

Mushroom	0.05	Shell - free basis
Onion	0.05	
Peanuts	0.05	
Potato	0.05	
Radish	0.1	
Rice	0.05	
Sweet Potato	0.05	
Tomato	0.1	
Turnip	0.05	
Wheat	0.05	

4.3 Crufomate

Residue: Crufomate

Table 3

Maximum residue limit of crufomate

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Meat	1.0	
Milk	0.05	Fat basis

Table 4

Maximum residue limit of diazinon

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Almonds	0.1	Shell - free basis
Barley	0.1	
Cattle, carcass meat	0.7	On the carcass fat basis
Citrus fruit	0.7	
Cotton seed	0.1	Shell - free basis
Filberts	0.1	
Fruit	0.5	
(except cherries, grape, melon, carrot, cucumber)	0.75	
Leafy vegetables	0.7	
Milk	0.02	
	2	

Olive oil	2	
Olive (unprocessed)	0.7	
Peaches	0.1	
Peanuts	0.1	Shell - free basis
Pecans	0.1	Shell - free basis
Rice (polished)	0.1	
Safflower seed	0.7	
Sheep, carcass meat	0.1	On the carcass fat basis
Sunflower seed	0.7	
Sweet corn	0.5	
Vegetables (except leafy vegetables)	0.1	
Walnuts		Shell - free basis

4.5 Dioxathion

Residue: Sum of cis and trans – dioxathion

Table 5
Maximum residue Limit of dioxathion

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Apple	5	
Apricots	0.1	
Cattle, carcass meat	1	On the carcass fat basis
Cherries	0.1	
Citrus fruit	3	
Goats, carcass meat	1	On the carcass fat basis
Grapes	2	
Milk	0.008	
Peaches	0.1	
Pears	5	
Plums	0.1	
Quinces	5	
Sheep, carcass meat	1	On the carcass fat basis

4.6 Diphenyl

Residue: Diphenylamine

Table 6

Maximum residue limit of diphenyl

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Citrus fruit	110	

4.7 Diphenylamine

Residue: Diphenylamine

Table 7

Maximum residue limit of diphenylamine

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Apple	10	

4.8 Ethoxyquin

Residue: Ethoxyquin

Table 8

Maximum residue limit of Ethoxyquin

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Apple	3	
Pears	3	

4.9 Folpet

Residue: Folpet

Table 9

Maximum residue limit of Folpet

Food Product	Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)	Notes
Apple	25	
Blue berries	25	
Cherries	15	
Citrus fruit	10	
Carrots (fresh)	30	
Cucumber	2	
Grapes	25	
Lettuce	15	
Onion	2	
Raspberries	15	
Strawberries	20	

Tomato	5	
Watermelon	2	

5. Sampling

Samples shall be taken according to the method mentioned in the relevant food product standard.

6. Methods of Test

- 6.1 Pesticide residue shall be determined according to the GSO standard mentioned in 2.1.
- 6.2 Tests for determination of pesticide residues shall be carried out according to 5.1 to determine their compliance with this standard.

Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements:

A. Product Registration

Herbal preparations, health and supplementary foods must be registered with the General Directorate of Medical and Pharmaceutical Licenses of the Saudi Ministry of Health in order to be marketed in the Kingdom. The registration is done through a local agent by submitting sample products and product brochures, which are studied and tested by the ministry's central laboratory. It takes about six months for the ministry to approve and license a product. The ministry charges about \$300 as a registration fee.

A U.S. exporter needs to submit the following documents through its local agent to the Ministry in order to initiate the product registration and licensing process:

- 1. Table of contents
- 2. An Authenticated copy of the agency registration certificate at the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- 3. When registering for herbal products, a copy of pharmaceutical wholesale license should be submitted by the local agent.
- 4. Certificate (s) issued by the health authorities in the country of origin clearly stating that the following should be provided:

The company is licensed to manufacture the products in the country of origin (state license number and date).

The company is permitted to sell the product in the country of origin (certificate of

free sale)

The company follows good manufacturing practice.

Coloring agents, diluents and other incorporate substances in the product formula are permitted in the country of origin (if the free sale certificate states such information it will be sufficient).

Package insert and applicable information stated on the pack are the same as that approved and currently marketed in the country of origin. Package insert shall be in Arabic and English languages. The company is obliged to add and/or delete any information required for handling the product in the Kingdom as determined by the registration committee.

- 5. A certificate issued by the company and authenticated by the relevant authorities in the country of origin clearly stating the following information about the product:

Registration number and date and date of marketing in the country of origin.

Trade and/or generic name.

Full composition (the scientific name of active and inactive ingredients and their quantities)

Therapeutic category (if any).

The composition of product to be exported to the kingdom is the same as that market in the country of origin.

Names of countries where the product is currently marketed.

A certificate of analysis indicating the results of completed analyses for the submitted samples.

If the product contains ingredients of animal source the kind of animal must be specified.

Percentage of alcohol in the finished product, if present, should be indicated with justification of that percentage.

- 6. Full specifications and methods of analyses of the finished product, as well as stability study and data including storage conditions.
- 7. Six samples of the product as well as samples of the outer package and product's label.
- 8. Abstracts of scientific references brochures and international scientific periodicals testifying

to the efficacy and safety of the product.

B. Products Inspection

With the exception of herbal preparations, health and supplementary foods (inspected by the Ministry of Health) and live animals, plants, seeds and grain animal feed (inspected by the Ministry of Agriculture), all imported foodstuffs are inspected by the SFDA at the port of entry.

SFDA Inspectors at Border Inspection Posts (BIPs)

Imported foods are inspected independently by SFDA inspectors at a Saudi port of entry without any interference from the SFDA headquarters in Riyadh. If imported consignment is in compliance with pertinent Saudi or GCC standards and regulations, it is cleared. Otherwise, it is rejected. The domestic importer has no access to SFDA internal report during the process. SFDA informs the importer its final decision whether to clear the product for sale in Saudi Arabia or reject it due to lack of compliance with established standards or regulations. Rejected products have to re-exported or destroyed domestically under SFDA's supervision.

SFDA's mandatory a four stage verification process at BIPs involves the following:

- Required documents verification
- Identity check
- Physical examination
- Laboratory test

Failure to comply with pertinent Saudi or GCC standards and regulations at any of the above stage may result in a rejection of the imported food product.

If a product is rejected by one of SFDA's BIPs for alleged lack of adherence to established specifications at any of the above four stages, the domestic importer has the right to appeal the decision in writing to the Executive Department of the Imported Food Control (EDIFC) at the SFDA headquarters and ask for reconsideration of the inspection results. In such cases, EDIFC forwards appeal to SFDA's special committee that studies shipment documentation and the BIP test results to verify compliance with established rules and regulations. If the BIP action was found to be in compliance with the rules and regulations pertain to the rejected product, then EDIFC considers the BIP findings and decision as final. If, for any reason, there was a misjudgment by the BIP inspectors, EDIFC repeals the decision and inform the importer to clear the consignment cleared from Customs.

C. Imports of Samples

Samples destined to potential Saudi buyers or for display in Food Shows are exempt from Saudi labeling and shelf life regulations, but are subject to inspection at ports of entry. A commercial invoice specifying that the product is not for sale and has no commercial value must accompany samples, which are usually sent to Saudi Arabia by D.H.L. and similar carriers.

D. Foodstuff Monitoring

The Environmental Protection Department at the Ministry of Municipality and Rural Affairs is responsible for establishing nationwide food sanitation laws and guidelines. Inspectors at the municipality levels do monitoring of products already in the market. The authorities inspect retailers, wholesalers, restaurants, bakeries, fast food chains, vegetable and meat markets for expiration dates, sanitary and storage conditions as well as product handling. Outlets found selling unhygienic or expired products are exposed to stiff financial fines, temporary closure or both.

F. Certification and Documents Requirements

All food products, whether imported for commercial purpose, or for display, or for sampling, must be fit for human consumption and should be within the shelf life set. The products must have a label or sticker showing the statutory information such as product name, country of origin, producer's name and address, production and expiry dates, etc. Bilingual labeling (Arabic/English) is required if the products are commercially imported. English labeling is sufficient for foodstuffs imported for display or sampling purposes.

For commercial importation, the following documents are required:

- Commercial invoice showing FOB price, freight and CFR value
- Certificate of origin
- Halal slaughter certificate for meat and meat products. Halal certificate is also required for cheese and cheese products if they contain rennet of animal origin.
- Health certificate from the country of origin
- Phytosanitary certificate for grain, grain products, edible nuts, fruits, vegetables, etc,
- Bill of lading or airway bill.
- Packing list (highly recommended to expedite product inspection and clearing process)
- Weight list (for grain)

Saudi Customs accepts the original commercial invoice and country of origin certificate attested by a local chamber of commerce and industry located in a city or area where the foodstuffs are purchased and shipped. Certificates number three to five listed above must be attested by any of the Saudi missions located in the States. Before taking the certificates to a Saudi mission, U.S. exporters must make sure that the certificates were first authenticated by any U.S./Arab Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Saudi Arabian Business Council or U.S. Chamber of Commerce located in the city or area where the exporting firm is based.

For small samples, simple documentation as follows is required:

- Invoice, showing consignee's name and address, details of product/s and also origin of goods.
- Packing list, if there are many items.

The above documents do not require legalization by the Saudi mission. An exporting company stamp and signature are sufficient. It is advisable to show on the invoice a nominal value of \$5 -\$10 for Customs purpose, with a statement that the goods are "Not For Sale – No Commercial Value"

For clearance of sea or airfreight cargo, a full set of documentation is required while for cargo sent by courier which do not require special certifications such as Halal, an invoice and country of origin certificate will be sufficient, provided the value is not more than \$3,000.

Section VII. Other Specific Standards:

A. Certificate of Islamic Slaughter

Per Saudi Arabia Standard No. SSA 630/1990 (Animal Slaughtering Requirements According to Islamic Law), a Certificate of Islamic Slaughter must be issued for all meat and poultry products entering the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This certificate issued by Islamic institutions recognized by the Saudi Embassy or Consulates in the United States. Information related to the approved Islamic institutions may be obtained from the Saudi Embassy in Washington or the nearest Saudi Consulate (New York, Houston, or Los Angeles). Such certificates contain language certifying Islamic slaughter. The following language was taken from a recently issued Islamic Slaughtering certificate issued in the United States:

“ This is to certify that an Islamic representative inspected the above slaughter facility. The healthy animals and/or poultry were inspected within 12 hours previous to slaughter by the United States Department of Agriculture official veterinarian. After processing, inspection was made and approved by the USDA Government Health inspector. Further, the animals and /or poultry were slaughtered under the following statement, “slaughtered and processed in the name of God, the Almighty, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, and God is Greatest.” Bismillahi Rahmani Rahim-Allahu Akbar. The animals and /or poultry covered by this certificate were slaughtered by means of a sharp knife, cutting through the skin, jugular vein, and trachea, to result in thorough bleeding of the carcass in preparation for dressing and evisceration.

B. Baby Foods

There are two Saudi Arabian standards that establish quality specification for baby foods. Canned Baby Foods and infant foods based on milk are regulated by SSA 676/1992 and SSA 675/1994 respectively. Copies of the standards can be purchased from the SFDA’s Information Center.

C. Frozen Chickens

SSA 117/1979 deals with frozen chicken standard. Per the regulation, imported frozen chickens must meet the Islamic slaughtering requirements mentioned above. The standard also calls for salmonella testing for imported frozen chickens. If the result of the test is positive in more than one sample out of five samples tested, the whole shipment is rejected.

D. Animal Feed Requirements

In 2001, the Saudi Ministry of Commerce issued a new requirement for poultry meat, beef and further processed meat and poultry products imports to the Kingdom. This directive requires that health certificates for imported poultry, and beef products clearly indicate that the animal slaughtered was not fed animal protein, animal fats, or animal by-products before it is allowed entry into the Kingdom. In

January 2006, the Kingdom implemented a two-certificate approach for U.S. poultry and bovine meat products exports. The two-stage approach consists of: (1) an official FSIS export certificate and (2) a producer or manufacturer self-certification to cover any additional requirements not related to food safety or animal health. These requirements have sharply reduced imports of U.S. livestock and poultry meat and products to the Kingdom.

E. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)

On February 9, 2003, the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry issued the Ministerial decree number **2436** to all Chambers of Commerce in the country requiring the insertion of a new clause in health certificates accompanying imported meat and meat products to make sure that the abattoirs used to produce meat & meat products exported to the Kingdom implement the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as a system of production process control.

Following is the summary of unofficial translation of a copy of the new decree number 2436:

Reference is made to the Ministerial decree #123 of April 10, 2001 which spelled out the rules and regulations to be followed when importing all types of meat: chilled, frozen or canned beef, veal, mutton, goat meat and poultry meat and their by products from safe origins to the Saudi Arabian.

Based on the need to protect consumer safety and health, it is required to implement the HACCP regime in all abattoirs producing meat and meat products. To facilitate this, a further Ministerial decree number 2436 was issued on February 8, 2003. The decision requires the insertion of a new clause, referred to as number 13, to the general regulations and condition to be followed when meat and meat products are imported to Saudi Arabia. The text of the clause # 13 should read as follows:

“The abattoir (s) implements HACCP procedures in all stages of meat and meat”

F. Animal Quarantine Regulations

Over the years, Saudi Arabia has banned cattle, meat and meat products imports for health reasons. Cattle imports from countries affected by Mad Cow disease, or Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), Foot and Mouth, and Cattle Plaque diseases have been banned for several years. Cattle imports from countries not affected by the diseases are subjected to strict quarantine regulations on arrival at Saudi ports. The country also bans meat and meat derivatives from countries affected by BSE (the Kingdom banned live cattle and cattle meat imports from Washington State, Alabama and Texas due to confirmed cases of BSE in those states). Saudi Arabia also banned transshipped livestock meat through countries banned from exporting meat and meat products because of infestation by BSE, FMD and other animal diseases. In addition it requested additional statements on the health certificate accompanying livestock and poultry meat shipment to indicate that the animals slaughtered for export to the Kingdom were not fed animal ruminants and were not treated with growth hormones.

Imports of live poultry, poultry meat (mostly from developing countries) and hatching eggs are banned from countries affected by bird flu. Imports of live poultry are also banned from countries with the West Nile Virus epidemic.

Section VIII. Copyright and/or Trademark Laws:

Royal Decree No. M/5 and Resolution of Council of Ministers No. 75 dated 1984 regulate trademark registration laws in the Kingdom. According to the decree, trademarks are registered with the Trademark Registration Department of the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry through a local agent or lawyer.

Once registration application is received, the Trademark Registration Department will require one month time to study the presented documents to decide on the request. If an application is approved, the department will publish the trademark in the official government Arabic language newspaper (Hum Al-Qura) with the cost of publication paid by the agent or owner of the trademark. The total registration cost is estimated at about \$2,000. Registered trademarks are protected for 10 years and can be renewed for another similar period or periods without any new inspection after republishing it in the official paper.

Section IX. Import Procedures:

The majority of Saudi food imports enter the country via Jeddah port on the Red Sea or Dammam port on the Arabian Gulf. About 70 percent of all foodstuffs enter Jeddah port. Imports from Jordan, Syria, and nearby countries enter the Kingdom by truck.

King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh and King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah also receive significant quantities of food items, particularly fresh fruits, vegetables and chilled meat. Fresh and chilled products are usually cleared within 24 hours of arrival.

Customs Clearance

As stated earlier, foodstuff shipments must be accompanied by commercial invoice, health certificates and other documents listed in Section VI (Certification and Documents Requirements). An importer translates the commercial invoice into Arabic language (per Saudi customs requirements) and hands it to his customs clearing agent along with the other required documents in order to start customs clearing process. Containers can be cleared in less than ten days provided all required documents are in order and imported products meet Saudi Arabian/Gulf specifications. Lab officials pull samples from full consignments and testing is done fairly. If there is any dispute about test results or products are rejected by one of SFDA laboratories at a port of entry, importers can appeal for re-test to the Director General of the Quality Control and Inspections Department of the Ministry. If an appeal is accepted, the Director General orders a sample (s) sent and re-tested by another SFDA's laboratory located in a different port (city). If the second test authenticates the initial results, the exporter is ordered to re-export or destroy the product.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts:

SFDA sets food and feed products standards. Contact information for SFDA, and other ministries involved in food and agricultural products safety and inspection is as follows.

Ibrahim S. Al-Mohizea
Vice President Food Affairs
Saudi Food & Drug Authority
Tel: 966-1-275-9222 ext. 202
Fax: 966-1-275-1788
www.sfda.gov.sa

Mr. Mohammed Al-Issa
Director General
Environmental Protection
Ministry of Municipality and Rural Affairs (tests food products at points of sale make sure product meet safety standards)
Tel: 966-1-442-1593
Fax: 966-1-441-6748

Dr. Mohammed Al-Jasir
Director General
General Directorate of Nutrition Department
Ministry of Health (registers herbal preparations, health and supplementary foods)
Tel: 966-1-464-0811
Fax: 966-1-464-5536
Website: www.moh.gov.sa

Live animals & plants and animal feed are inspected by the Saudi Ministry of Agriculture (MOA).
Following are coordinates of some the important departments.

Dr. Abdul Ghaniy Al-Fadhl
Director General
Plant and Animal Quarantine Department
MOA
Tel: 966-1-404-4292
Fax: 966-1-401-1323

Mr. Khalid Al-Ahmed
Director General
Livestock Department (registers and tests feed additives)
MOA
Tel: 966-1-404-4555
Fax: 966-1-404-4265

Mr. Mohammed Al-Mazroa
Director General (registers and testes seeds as well as pesticides used in foodstuff)
Agricultural Research Department
MOA
Tel: 966-1-405-5848

Fax: 966-1-405-5848

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts:

Saudi Arabia does not have any relevant import specialists that are not affiliated with the government.