



agriculture,
forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) ON VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE TO
THE MEAT LABELLING AND RELATED REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORTED MEAT AT THE
PORTS OF ENTRY AND AFTER RELEASE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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PART 1

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE ON THE LABELLING AND DISTRIBUTION OF IMPORTED MEAT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The purpose of the procedure is to guide all importers and stakeholders about their roles with regard to the labelling requirements of imported meat.

1. All imported meat and animal products must be sourced from approved establishments in terms of the Meat Safety Act, 2000 (Act No. 40 of 2000) and the Animal Diseases Act, 1984 (Act No. 35 of 1984).
2. The importer must ensure that cold stores used for handling imported meat and animal products have a valid Certificate of Acceptability in terms of the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, 1972 (Act No 54 of 1972) and are approved to handle imported meat and animal products.
3. The importer must ensure that all food vehicles used for transporting imported meat and animal products meet the regulatory requirements.
4. The importer must ensure that temperature control is maintained throughout the cold chain. Expiry dates shall be six (6) months in the case of meat stored at/ or below -12°C and one (1) year in the case of meat stored at/ or below -18°C in compliance with the requirements of SANS 10156. In addition, expiry dates on Mechanically Deboned Meat (MDM) must meet the country of origin requirements. No frozen meat must be imported into the country two (2) months prior to its expiry and/ or best before date.
5. The importer must keep all records relating to the imported meat and animal products. Every consignment must be accompanied with a packing list with information as to the number of packages and their respective batch numbers.
6. The importer must have and maintain an effective traceability system which will include both backward and forward traceability. Consumer Product Safety Recall Guidelines notice No 490 of 2012 are defined in the Consumer Protection Act, 2008 (Act No.68 of 2008).

7. The importer and the subsequent business distributors must ensure that all meat and animal products are properly labelled up to the retail. Labelling of meat must ensure effective confirmation of a positive link between the meat, the country of origin, abattoir and/ or cutting/packing establishment as stated in the import permit as well as all other documentation pertaining to the subsequent inspection.

8. Importers and/ or end users should make sure that all meat and animal products are easily traceable in case a need arise to recall affected products.

9. In exceptional circumstances where repacking of imported poultry meat and poultry products is authorised once the consignment has arrived in South Africa, labelling requirements must be transferred to the new packaging.

10. Subject to the requirements stated in this SOP, the importer must ensure that information covered on the label and in labelling, complies at minimum with the requirements of Codex Stan 1-1985 standard as amended. Processed, Dried and Packed meat products must also comply with the government notice No 825 issued in terms of the Consumer Protection Act, 2008 (Act No.68 of 2008).

Part 11

MARKING AND LABELLING REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORTED MEAT

In terms of the Meat Safety Act, 2000 (Act No 40 of 2000), as prescribed in part VII of the Red meat regulations (Number 1072 of 17 September 2004) and Poultry regulations (Number 153 of 24 February 2006), the following specifications on marks, markings and labelling must be maintained throughout the meat distribution chain for imported meat in South Africa:

Specifications for marks

1. The mark must contain the following information:

(a) The country of origin and abattoir registration number and the wording which must be in at least two official languages, one of which must be English. Such an abattoir registration

number shall be the number approved by the National Executive Officer in terms of section 13(5)(a) of the Meat Safety Act, 2000 (Act No 40 of 2000).

(b) The marks must be printed on the wrapping and packing or on labels of each individual carcass or cut portions in sizes to suit particular circumstances.

2. Wrapping, packing and labelling

All labels used on carcasses and meat must:

(a) be printed on food grade paper or plastic printing material and treated in the same hygienic way as in contact wrapping material; and

(b) include the country of origin and abattoir registration number and other information required which include safe handling instructions for all poultry meat imported into South Africa.

3. Bulk packing, containers or cartons must be clearly marked on both ends with the mark of approval clearly visible and of readable size and provide information required by the Agricultural Products Standards Act, 1990 (Act no. 119 of 1990), as well as:

(a) the name, address and registration number of the establishments in which the meat was packed in the country of origin;

(b) the net weight of the contents;

(c) an accurate description of the contents;

(d) the packaging date;

(e) directions regarding the temperature at which the product must be stored as indicated in the country of origin;

(f) expiry dates and

(g) best before dates maybe acceptable in the case of chilled carcasses.