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Report Highlights:

This report provides information on the food and agricultural product import requirements for Croatia. As a member of the European Union, Croatia follows EU directives and regulations. It is recommended this report be read in conjunction with the Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards report for the European Union (EU-27 FAIRS). Points of contact for U.S. food exporters interested in exporting to Croatia are listed in the report appendices. For developments on EU food and feed legislation, visit the USEU FAS website at www.usda-eu.org. All sections of this annual report were updated in November 2024.

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Disclaimer

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service in Zagreb, Croatia for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, the 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.

Executive Summary

This report provides information on the food and agricultural product import requirements for Croatia. It incorporates food laws, labeling requirements, packaging regulations, food additive regulations, pesticides, and other contaminants. Additionally, details are outlined on import procedures for food regulation of trademarks, brand names, and intellectual property rights. It is recommended this report be read in conjunction with the Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards report for the European Union (EU-27 FAIRS).

Section I. Food Laws

Croatia, as a member of the European Union, follows EU directives and regulations. Imports from third countries must comply with national legislation when EU law does not exist. Croatia's food laws and regulations are valid for domestic and imported products and are applied consistently as part of border inspections. Croatian laws and regulations can be found in the Croatian language at www.nn.hr.

Croatia's food legislation consists of the following key laws:

- -- The Food Act (Governmental Gazette NN18/23);
- The EU Regulation 2015/2283 on Novel Food;
- -- <u>The Law on Food Hygiene and Microbiological Criterions for Food</u> (Governmental Gazette NN83/22);
- -- <u>The Law on Food Additives, Aromas and Food Enzymes</u> (Governmental Gazette NN39/2013, NN114/2018, 36/2022);
- -- <u>The Law on Nutritional and Health Claims and Food Enriched with Nutrients</u> (Governmental Gazette NN39/2013, NN114/2018);
- -- The Law on Official Controls and Other Official Activities Carried out in Accordance with Regulations on Food, Animal Feed, Animal Health and Welfare, Plant Health and Plant Protection Products (Governmental Gazette NN52/2021);
- -- The Law on the Transposition of the EU Regulation 609/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on feeding stuff for infants and young children, special nutritional uses and replacements for whole-day diet in a reduction diet (NN69/2017, NN 114/2018);
- -- <u>The Law on Materials and Objects in Direct Contact with Food</u> (Governmental Gazette NN25/2013, NN41/2014, NN114/2018, NN27/2024);
- -- The Law on Contaminants (Governmental Gazette NN39/2013, NN114/2018);
- -- <u>The Law on the Transposition of the EU Regulation 396/2005 on Maximum Residue Levels of Pesticide in and on Food and Feed of Plant and Animal Origin</u> (Governmental Gazette 80/2013, NN 115/2018, NN32/20);
- -- The Law on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) (Governmental Gazette, 126/19);

- -- The Law on the Transposition of the EU Regulation 1829/2003 on GMO Food and Feed and Regulation 1830/2003 on Traceability and Labeling of Food and Feed Derived from GMOs that Amends EU Directive 2001/18/EC (Governmental Gazette NN18/2013, NN47/2014, NN114/2018, NN83/2022);
- -- The Law on the Transposition of the EU Regulation 1946/2003 on Trans-boundary movement of genetically modified organisms (Governmental Gazette NN81/2013);
- -- The Wine Act (Governmental Gazette NN32/2019);
- -- <u>The Law on Informing Consumers about Food</u> (Governmental Gazette NN56/2013, NN14/2014; NN56/2016, NN32/2019);
- -- <u>The Law on Prohibition of Unfair Trade Practices in The Food Supply Chain</u> (Governmental Gazette NN117/2017, NN52/2021, NN27/2024);
- -- The Act on the State Inspectorate (Governmental Gazette NN115/2018; NN117/2021; NN155/23).

Section II. Labeling Requirements

A. General Requirements

<u>EU Regulation 1169/2011</u> establishes the horizontal food labeling requirements. The mandatory nutrition declaration requirement introduced by the Food Information to Consumers (FIC) regulation was implemented December 13, 2016. For more details, refer to the <u>EU-27 FAIRS</u> report.

B. Other Specific Labeling Requirements

Croatia has the Law on Nutritional and Health Claims and Food Enriched with Nutrients (Governmental Gazette NN39/2013, NN114/2018) and the Law on Informing Consumers about Food (Governmental Gazette NN56/2013, NN14/2014; NN56/2016, NN32/2019). These laws incorporate EU rules with no major deviations from these rules that would impact US exports. For details on health and nutrition claims see the EU-27 FAIRS report.

For food containing or derived from genetically modified substances, see the Law on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) (Governmental Gazette, 126/19) and the Law on the Transposition of the EU Regulation 1829/2003 on GMO Food and Feed and Regulation 1830-/2003 on Traceability and Labeling of Food and Feed Derived from GMOs that Amends EU Directive 2001/18/EC (Governmental Gazette NN18/2013, NN47/2014, NN114/2018; NN83/2022). Food and feed containing genetically engineered ingredients must have special, additional information on the label that informs consumers of all its characteristics. In Croatia, a product must be labeled as GMO if it contains more than 0.9% of an approved event introduced with genetically engineered ingredients.

Further details about labeling food and certain specific food products (e.g. beef, wine, fruit juice, etc.) can be obtained from the FAS office at the U.S. Embassy in Zagreb (see Appendix II).

Additional information can also be found at the <u>Ministry of Health - Food</u>. Croatian authorities do not grant exceptions to labeling regulations.

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations

EU <u>Council Directive 76/211/EEC</u>, stipulates the maximum tolerable error between the actual content of a product and the quantity indicated on the label. The corresponding Croatian regulation is the <u>Regulation on Measuring Requirements for Prepackaged Products (NN82/2016)</u>.

<u>The Regulation on Measuring Requirements for Bottles as Measuring Containers (NN82/2016)</u> prescribes package nominal fillings and the marking of quantities. This regulation complies with <u>EU</u> Council Directive 75/107/EEC from 12/19/1974.

<u>EU Directive 2007/45/EC</u> abolished older regulations on mandatory pack sizes at both the EU and national levels, only wine and spirits have defined package sizes. Mandatory nominal quantities for wines and spirits are in the Annex to Directive 2007/45/EC. This regulation was adopted by Croatia in the <u>Regulation on Nominal Quantities of Prepackaged Products (NN</u>82/2016, NN33/2017).

Detailed information is available on the European Commission's website Legal Metrology.

Packaging materials and packaging material waste are covered by the Regulation on Packaging Materials and Packaging Material Waste, Single-Use Plastic Products and Fishing Tools Containing Plastic (NN137/2023). This regulation complies with EU Directive 2019/904 and EU Directive 94/62/EC as amended by EU Directive 2018/852.

Limitations on the type of packaging materials that can be used are described in the Law on Materials and Objects in Direct Contact with Food (Governmental Gazette NN25/2013, NN41/2014, NN114/2018, NN27/24). This regulation puts into national legislation the EU regulations on the topic.

Section IV. Food Additive Regulations

Additives are regulated by the Law on Food Additives, Aromas, and Food Enzymes (Governmental Gazette NN39/2013, NN114/2018, NN36/2022). Croatia applies EU regulations and does not have specific, national requirements for additives. For details on EU regulations see the EU-27 FAIRS report.

Croatia does not recognize the CODEX food additive list. All companies that seek to place food on the market in Croatia must comply with the EU list of food additives as published in <u>EU Regulation</u>
1333/2008, <u>EU Regulation 1332/2008</u> on food enzymes, and <u>EU Regulation 1334/2008</u> on flavorings.

New additives, flavorings, and enzymes can be added to the list according to <u>EU Regulation 1331/2008</u> (amended by EU <u>Regulation 2019/1381</u>) on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain), which prescribes a single common procedure for the entire EU. This ensures consistency in the procedures used to approve additives, flavorings, and enzymes with an emphasis on the safety evaluations by European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on which the approval procedure is based. For details on EU procedure see the <u>EU-27 FAIRS</u> report.

On January 14, 2022, the European Commission and Croatia adopted <u>Commission Regulation (EU)</u> <u>2022/63</u>, which bans the use of Titanium dioxide (TiO2 also known as E171) as an additive in food products.

Section V. Pesticides and Contaminants

According to the Law on Transposition of the EU Regulation 1107/2009 on Placing of Plant Protection Products on the Market (Governmental Gazette NN80/2013, NN 32/2019, NN32/2020), all pesticides must be registered. For details, see the EU-27 FAIRS report.

The maximum content of certain pesticide or pesticide residues in foodstuffs is governed by the Law on Transposition of the EU Regulation 396/2005 on Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) of Pesticides in or on Food and Feed of Plant and Animal Origin (Governmental Gazette NN80/2013, NN 115/2018, NN32/2020). Other contaminants in food are regulated by the Law on Contaminants (Governmental Gazette NN39/2013, NN 114/2018), which incorporates all EU regulations dealing with contaminants. For details on these topics see the EU-27 FAIRS report.

Croatia's list of residues of pesticides for food matches EU law. This regulation is enforced by municipal and customs sanitary and veterinary inspection officials. The pesticide residue list is positive, i.e., stating what is permitted versus what is not permitted. Any residue not found on the list, regardless of quantity, is deemed an adulterant. For a list of authorized active substances or pesticide-MRL combinations, see the European Commission's online database at Pesticides list.

Section VI. Other Requirements, Regulations, and Registration Measures

A. Facility Registration

The EU approves establishments to ship products of animal origin based on submissions from U.S. government agencies. Only products processed in approved establishments may enter the EU. The third country lists according to sector and country are published on the European Commission's website, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/jhtml.country-10.1007/jht

Detailed information on certification of products from approved U.S. establishments is available on our website at Certification - EU Import Rules.

B. Product Registration

Certain products and ingredients may fall within the scope of the Novel Foods Regulation and require pre-market authorization. For details see the <u>EU-27 FAIRS</u> report. The introduction of foodstuffs with nutritional uses must be notified to the Ministry of Health. See Appendix I.

C. Other

Product samples shipped via express mail are treated like any other food import and must comply with all the food regulations applicable in the EU and/or Croatia (for details, consult <u>EU-27 FAIRS</u>). The invoice must also state that it is a sample and free of charge in order to receive proper levying duties.

An overview of legally required certificates in the EU and references to the U.S. regulatory agencies that issue certificates can be found on the FAS Brussels website at Certification - EU Import Rules.

U.S. exports of "composite products" are restricted due to burdensome certification requirements introduced in a 2012 European Commission Regulation (for details consult EU-27 FAIRS).

Croatia regularly tests products at the border and in the market. The testing is performed per Croatia's annual inspection plans for the State Inspectorate's Sanitary Inspection and the State Inspectorate's Veterinary Inspection, which are based on available fiscal resources. Infringements of EU food and feed legislation are reported through the Rapid Alert System on Food and Feeds (RASFF). The rapid alert system is a network of Member State authorities managed by the European Commission. The database with RASFF notifications is accessible via the RASFF portal. Information published on this website provides several notification details such as the reason for the non-compliance and the origin of the product but does not include company information. Repeated non-compliance may lead to suspension of imports or special import conditions for products entering the EU market.

All shipments that contain food go through the State Inspectorate's Sanitary Inspection. Random tests are conducted for GMO content and must comply with microbiological and contaminant health standards.

Section VII. Other Specific Standards/Laws

A. Fortification of Foods

Fortification of foods with vitamins and minerals is permitted. Labeling must be carried out per the Law on Nutritional and Health Claims and Food Enriched with Nutrients (Governmental Gazette NN39/2013, NN114/2018).

B. Agricultural Biotechnology and Novel Foods

Food products produced from substances derived from agricultural biotechnology are regulated through the following; The Food Act (Governmental Gazette NN 18/2023) that governs the responsible bodies and their tasks, responsibilities of stakeholders in the food and feed handling, official controls, and legal measures. The Law on the Transposition of the EU Regulation 1829/2003 on GMO Food and Feed and Regulation 1830/2003 on Traceability and Labeling of Food and Feed Derived from GMOs that Amends EU Directive 2001/18/EC (Governmental Gazette NN18/2013, NN47/2014, NN114/2018; NN83/2022) establish the responsible bodies and their tasks relating to the handling of biotechnology food and feed and its labeling as well as the penalties for breaching the provisions of the law. The Law on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) (Governmental Gazette, 126/19) regulates all products derived from modern biotechnology.

Novel foods are regulated by <u>the EU Regulation 2015/2283</u> (For additional information consult <u>EU-27 FAIRS</u>).

C. Special Use Foods

Dietetic or special use foods fall under the Law on the Transposition of the EU Regulation 609/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on feeding stuff for infants and young children, special nutritional uses and replacements for whole-day diet in a reduction diet (Governmental Gazette NN69/2017, NN 114/2018).

D. Food Sanitation

Food sanitation is covered by the Law on Food Hygiene and Microbiological Criterions for Food (Governmental Gazette NN83/2022). This law incorporates Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles and outlines the appropriate EU legislation.

E. Animal Quarantine

To import live animals, animals must pass through quarantine inspection which may take five to 30 days, depending on the type of animal, health status, and accompanying certification. For example, quarantine for cattle imported for slaughter is five days on the importer's farm and for breeding purposes- 30 days on the importer's farm. The competent authority is the Veterinary Inspection of the State Inspectorate, for contact information see Appendix I.

F. Organic Products

The regulation for organic production and labelling organic products was adopted in 2018 and became law January 1, 2022, Regulation (EU) 2018/848.

The U.S.-EU Organic Equivalence Arrangement took effect on June 1, 2012. Under the new EU Regulation on Organics, the U.S.-EU Equivalency Arrangements will expire on December 31, 2026. For more details on this topic refer to the <u>EU-27 FAIRS</u>.

G. Food Samples

Product samples and mail-order shipments are treated like all other food imports.

H. Other

The Food Information to Consumers (FIC) regulation 1169/2011 requires the European Commission to set out rules for the voluntary labeling of foods as "suitable for vegetarians and vegans." To date, the Commission has not adopted an EU-harmonized definition of the terms "vegetarian" and "vegan."

In July 2017, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that plant-based products cannot be labeled with dairy names such as "cheese," "butter" or "milk." A list of exceptions for non-dairy products that may be labeled with reserved dairy names was established by Commission Decision 2010/791.

<u>The Wine Act</u> (Governmental Gazette NN32/2019) regulates wine and the relevant EU regulations of the Common Market Order (CMO) of wine.

Beer is regulated by the Regulation on Beer (NN142/2011, NN141/2013), and strong alcohol is regulated by the Regulation on Production, Labeling, Protected Designations, Trade and Inspection of Strong Alcohols Drinks (NN76/2022). For additional details refer to the EU-27 FAIRS.

Section VIII. Geographical Indicators, Trademarks, Brand Names, and Intellectual Property Rights

Geographical Indicators

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for regulating the protection of Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) and Traditional Specialties Guaranteed (TSG) for food and wine. <u>eAmbrosia</u> is the EU's legal register of the names of agricultural products and foodstuffs, wine, and spirit drinks that are registered and protected across the EU.

On May 13, 2024, the new Regulation 2024/1143 on Geographical Indications for Wine, Spirit Drinks, and Agricultural Products, as well as Traditional Specialties Guaranteed and Optional Quality Terms for Agricultural Products entered into force. This Regulation establishes rules on optional quality terms such as "mountain product" and regulates three EU-wide quality labeling schemes. It covers the "Protected Designation of Origin" (PDO) scheme, the "Protected Geographical Indication" (PGI) scheme and the "Traditional Specialties Guaranteed" (TSG) scheme. Registration under the different schemes is also open to non-EU countries. The new Regulation improves the protection of GIs used as an ingredient in a processed product and of GI products sold online. The new Regulation also strengthens the protection of GI names in the domain name system. Wines and spirits are also covered by specific legislation: Commission Regulation 2019/33 and Commission Regulation 2019/34.

Trademarks, Brand Names, and Intellectual Property Rights

Trademarks are legally protected in Croatia and valid for ten years. Trademarks must be renewed at the end of their ten-year period to remain valid. The number of renewals is indefinite.

Companies interested in registering trademarks or brand names must apply at the State Intellectual Property Office where information and forms are available. Information on the registration process in Croatia can be found on the State Intellectual Property Office's web page: <u>State Intellectual Property Office</u>.

Section IX. Import Procedures

Incoming goods must go through customs storage at transport terminals or airports. After goods arrive at the customs storage, the importer or freight forwarder initiates procedures for checking and clearing goods. This process includes submission of import documents to the Inspection Departments and the Customs Office. The State Inspectorate's Sanitary Inspection conducts check of all products (except animal products, which are completed by the State Inspectorate's Veterinary Inspection) and may collect samples for food safety, quality, and biotech testing. The importer must pay for product inspections. If products are flagged for additional quality and/or health standard review, analytical results must be returned and deemed safe before the product can enter commerce. Customs clearance and removal from storage are carried out under the supervision of a customs officer. Customs authorities will review import documents after products have been checked by the sanitary or veterinary inspector for quality, ingredients, and health standards. Complete information on EU import rules for food products may be found at EU Import Rules.

Original certificates must accompany consignments at the point of entry into the EU. Certificates are issued in the language of the country of dispatch (English for the United States) or the Member State (MS) in which the border inspection takes place and the final destination. Member States may agree to accept certificates in another official EU language other than their own. For the Croatian market and border crossings, certificates must be in the official language of the Republic of Croatia, which is Croatian, as well as the MS where the border inspection occurs, if the product is not exported directly to

the Republic of Croatia. All certificates can be found in Croatian on the EU Official Journal website (<u>Eur-Lex</u>) under the relevant regulation.

Section X: Trade Facilitation

Croatia is a member of TRACES, the European Commission's multilingual online platform for sanitary and phytosanitary certification required for the importation of animals, animal products, food and feed of non-animal origin, and plants into the European Union, and the intra-EU trade and EU exports of animals and certain animal products, <u>TRACES</u>. Additionally, Croatia participates in <u>the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) ePhyto Solutions</u>.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Key Agency Contacts

Agricultural products are regulated by the following Croatian authorities:

Croatian State Inspectorate (all inspection services, e.g. veterinary, sanitary, phytosanitary)

Šubićeva 29, 10 000 Zagreb

Croatia

Tel: +385 1 23 75 100

e-mail: pisarnica.dirh@dirh.hr

https://dirh.gov.hr/

Government of the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Agriculture Grada Vukovara 78 10000 Zagreb Croatia Tel. +385 1 6106 111

Email: pisarnica01-MP@mps.hr https://poljoprivreda.gov.hr/

Government of the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Agriculture Planinska ulica 2a,

10000 Zagreb

Croatia
Veterinary and Food Safety Directorate

Tel. +385 1 6443 828

Email: uprava.veterinarstva@mps.hr

http://www.veterinarstvo.hr/default.aspx?id=4555

Government of the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Health Ksaver 200a 10 000 Zagreb Croatia Tel. +385 1 4607 555 https://zdravstvo.gov.hr/

Control of metrological requirements for packages and bottles is regulated by:

State Office for Metrology Department for Metrology Capraška 6 10 000 Zagreb Croatia

Tel: +385 1 563 52 93 Email: pisarnica@dzm.hr http://www.dzm.hr/

General trade legislation is overseen by:

Government of the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development Grada Vukovara 78 10000 Zagreb Croatia

Tel: +385 1 6106 111 http://www.mingo.hr/en

Waste disposal is regulated by:

Government of the Republic of Croatia
Ministry of Environment Protection and Green Transition
Radnicka cesta 80
10000 Zagreb
Croatia
Tel. +385 1 3717 111
Email: pisarnica@mzozt.hr
https://mzozt.gov.hr/

Intellectual property rights are regulated by:

State Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Croatia Ulica grada Vukovara 78 10000 Zagreb Croatia Tel: +385 1 61 06 418

Service for Customer Support and Professional Services (Information Centre for intellectual Property - INCENTIV)
Ulica grada Vukovara 78,
10000, Zagreb

Croatia

Tel: +385 1 61 09 825 Email: info@dziv.hr

http://www.dziv.hr/en/, https://www.dziv.hr/en/sipo-information-services/information-centre/contact-

incentiv/

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts

Useful contacts for general advice on food trade in Croatia:

Croatian Chamber of Economy (Commerce)
Agriculture, Food Industry, and Forestry Department
Rooseveltov trg 2
10000 Zagreb
Croatia

Tel. +385 1 4826 066

Email: poljoprivreda@hgk.hr

https://www.hgk.hr/s-poljoprivredu-prehrambenu-industriju-i-sumarstvo

Croatian Customs Alexandera von Humbolta 4a 10 000 Zagreb Croatia

Tel. +385 1 6211 300, +385 0800 1222

Email: ured-ravnatelja@carina.hr, javnost@carina

https://carina.gov.hr/en

Selected food laboratories in Croatia:

Croatian Public Health Institute
Department for Food Safety
Rockefellerova 7
10 000 Zagreb
Croatia

Tel. +385 1 4863 212 Email: info@hzjz.hr

https://www.hzjz.hr/en/contact-us/

Public Health Institute "Dr. Andrija Štampar" Mirogojska cesta 16 10 000 Zagreb Croatia Tel.+ 385 1 46 96 111

Email: info@stampar.hr, poslovni@stampar.hr

http://www.stampar.hr/en

Croatian Veterinary Institute Savska cesta 143 10 000 Zagreb Croatia

Tel. +385 1 612 36 66 http://www.veinst.hr/en/

Information on establishing a Croatian company can be found at:

Hitro HR Tel. 0800 0080 Email info@hitro.hr. http://www.hitro.hr/

For questions regarding other issues not covered in this report, please contact:

American Embassy Foreign Agricultural Service Thomas Jefferson St. 2 10000 Zagreb Croatia Tel. +385 1 665 8951

Information for reports on Croatia and other countries can be found at: $\underline{\text{GAIN Reports}}$

Attachments:

No Attachments