

Use of Shipping Marks

1. General Policy

Shipping marks are used to identify all shipping containers (cartons) within an imported shipment to the appropriate Official Meat Inspection Certificate (OMIC). **Each shipping container in each imported lot must be clearly marked with an appropriate shipping mark.** In the case of shipments from the United States, the USDA export stamp, bearing the appropriate export certificate number, is the shipping mark and does not have to be entered in the shipping marks column on the export certificate.

The shipping marks can be specifically generated numbers or they can represent the appropriate OMIC number. They must not be repeated in the next twelve (12) months on any OMIC from the same exporting country. There may be more than one shipping mark on an OMIC, but there may not be two OMIC with the same shipping mark.

The shipping marks must be entered on the OMIC, in the box 11, "shipping marks" on certificates from any country other than the USA whether they are specifically generated numbers or whether they represent the OMIC number.

Where the individual stamping of the retail containers would not be practical (e.g. small retail containers not containerized in larger containers, or products in tray packs), the alternative packaging procedure may be used. The alternative procedure allows for the pallet to be considered as the shipping container.

2. Use of Shipping Marks Under Alternative Packaging Procedures

2.1. Use of Pallets as Shipping Containers

2.1.1 Policy

Palletized, consumer packaged, fully marked and labelled meat and poultry products, intended to move as an intact unit to retail distribution, may be imported with the shipping marks and shipping container label applied to the outside of the pallet, rather than to individual tray packs or cartons.

2.1.2 Alternative Packaging Procedures for Fully Marked and Labelled Retail Products

2.1.2.1 Packaging and Palletizing

2.1.2.1.1 Fully marked and labelled, packaged products are placed in cartons or trays for retail sale as a unit. The trays may be stretch wrapped in groups or individually. The trays should be sufficiently sturdy and high enough to allow handling during import inspection sample selection.

2.1.2.1.2 The trays or cartons are then palletized and subsequently stretch wrapped (or covered by corrugated material). The wrapped pallet is considered as one shipping container for import certification purposes.

2.1.2.1.3 Only one type of product may be assembled on one pallet. Product type is interpreted as a meat product packaged in one container type and size, one product formula and originating from one processing establishment.

2.1.2.2 Labelling

2.1.2.2.1 When a pallet is identified as a shipping container, one main shipping label is required on the side of the pallet in the form of a placard underneath the pallet stretch wrap or as an adhesive label.

2.1.2.2.2 The pallet label must display in a **prominent and legible manner**, all mandatory information required on a shipping container and shipping marks. Refer to Annex E of this Chapter.

2.1.2.2.3 The shipping mark or export stamp in the case of US product must be applied to the placard or shipping container labels of the stretch-wrapped pallet. Trays and cartons need not be marked with the shipping mark/export stamp. However, if the entire pallet does not move as an intact unit to retail distribution, then the individual cartons or trays will be considered shipping cartons and shall have to bear the mandatory labelling requirements as per Annex E of this Chapter, including the shipping marks.

2.1.2.3 Certification

2.1.2.3.1 All production codes present on the retail package (such as date codes imprinted on the packages, or the entire production code required to be permanently marked on cans or other containers of hermetically sealed meat products) for each type of product in the shipment must be listed on the foreign country's export certificate (OMIC). This will allow for a production code based recall, should the need arise.

Box 12 of the Official Meat Inspection Certificate (number and kind of packages) will identify the number of pallets in the shipment, number of cartons or trays, the number of each individual unit carton or tray, the size of the units and all production codes. Example: 1 pallet (25 trays X 6 cans tray X 250ml), production codes: 00000, 00001 and 00002.

2.1.2.3.2 In the event that production codes are missing, incorrect or completely illegible on a health certificate the product shall not be permitted to move as an intact unit into Canada. The shipment can be presented under normal import reinspection procedures, provided the shipping marks are affixed to the individual cartons or trays. This must be done by an official of the foreign inspection system. If this is not possible, the shipment will be refused entry. Contact Chief Import Program, Meat Programs Division, for assistance.

2.1.3 Importer Responsibility

The importer is responsible for assuring that the full pallet will be distributed to the retail distribution level as an intact unit. If not, each individual unit that is distributed must be marked with the appropriate labelling features and shipping marks. If a CFIA official determines that a company or importer violates the provisions of this program, the foreign establishment shall be removed from the program. The foreign establishment that has been suspended from the program must submit a letter, through their competent authority to the Chief, Import Program, Meat Programs Division, requesting reinstatement to the program. This correspondence must provide details of corrective actions that have been taken to prevent future violations.

2.1.4 Import Establishment Responsibility

The import establishment is responsible for presenting the lot in a manner that each individual unit within the lot will have an equal chance of being selected as a sample.

As the meat products are subject to normal sampling and import inspection procedures, the import inspection establishment must provide facilities to draw the random sample, re-shrink wrap, re-stack and reapply the placard or the label to the pallets from which the necessary samples were drawn.