



Raw milk products advisory

Updates

Date	Location	Information
April 2013		Rebranding as Ministry for Primary Industries and restructuring of information provided
November 2010	All	More information for importers of raw milk products.

Imports of raw milk products allowed with conditions

Imports of unpasteurised milk products are permitted by MPI only under the condition that a Biosecurity risk assessment and a pre-clearance arrangement with the exporting country have been completed.

Border clearance of raw milk products

No person may import raw milk products into New Zealand unless that person has satisfied a Food Act Officer that the food complies.

The clearance of foods into New Zealand is administered under the Biosecurity Act 1993 and Food Act 1981. For most food imports, clearance criteria are independently specified and administered separately under each Act. For certain imports there is a shared interest and in some cases goods are cleared on the basis of the same criteria e.g. documentation check. This allows lawful clearance of imported foods to be maintained in accordance with the import requirements laid out in Import Health Standards and Imported Food Requirements.

Raw Milk Products are able to be cleared by MPI (Biosecurity) on the basis that they have applicable recognised certification that also meets MPI food safety requirements.

Raw milk (unpasteurised) products from countries that have not been assessed and approved by the Ministry for Primary Industries are not able to be imported into New Zealand



Where can unpasteurised milk products be imported from?

Currently raw milk products may be imported from the European Union (EU) or Switzerland.

The applicable Imported Food Requirement (IFR) and Biosecurity Import Health Standard (IHS) can be found at these links:

[Imported Food Requirements Raw Milk Products.](#)

[Import Health Standard for Milk and Milk Products for Human Consumption from the European Union and Swiss Confederation.](#)

Regulatory background

The Animal Products (Raw Milk Products Specifications) Notice 2009 describes the criteria for the domestic production of raw milk products.

The Food (Imported Milk and Milk Products) Standard 2009 enables a variety of raw milk products to be imported into New Zealand.

Imported unpasteurised milk cheeses are included in the Food (Prescribed Foods) Standard 2007 as they are considered a high risk food. This standard was amended to reference the Food (Imported Milk and Milk Products) Standard 2009.

Unpasteurised milk cheeses can only be imported from an exporting country that operates a production programme that has been assessed as meeting New Zealand's animal and public health safety outcomes. A country-to-country arrangement will be agreed where production programmes have been recognised as being equivalent to, or complying with, New Zealand standards.

Correct labelling is important

Raw milk products are not pasteurised so they are more likely to carry bacteria, such as E.coli and Listeria, which can cause serious illness and death. Raw milk products should not be consumed by babies, young children, pregnant women, frail elderly people and those who are immune-compromised. Therefore raw milk products must be correctly labelled if they are produced from raw or unpasteurised milk.

Even where food is not for retail sale it must comply with Standard 1.2.2 which requires the label on its package to contain:

- The name of the food; and
- The lot identification of the food; and



- The name and business address in New Zealand or Australia of the supplier, or documentation accompanying the food which contains information about the supplier.

Importers also have a responsibility to ensure that the retailer has information to label the product at point of sale. If food is intended for sale then it must comply with all the relevant provisions of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (FSC).

Retailers are reminded of labelling requirements for food for sale as provided in the FSC.

By way of further explanation on Standard 1.2.4 -

- a) clause 4 of Standard 1.2.4 of the Food Standards Code requires ingredients to be declared using the common name of the ingredient, or a name that describes the true nature of the ingredient, or if applicable a generic name; and
- b) That requirement means that in relation to food made from raw milk, the ingredient declaration should include a statement that the milk is raw or unpasteurised (for thermised products).

The Food Standards Code can be viewed online at

[Food Standards Australia New Zealand - FSANZ website](#)

Pre-clearance arrangement assessment options

Countries interested in exporting raw milk products to New Zealand will need to have their animal health and public health standards assessed against New Zealand's animal and public health outcomes **before** import can take place

Following the completion of the assessment process, a formal pre-clearance arrangement for import is concluded with the exporting country.

Exporting country programmes may either:

- a) Comply with the New Zealand Animal Products (Raw Milk Products Specifications) Notice 2009 and health outcomes.
- OR
- b) Be judged as applying measures equivalent to the New Zealand Animal Products (Raw Milk Products Specifications) Notice 2009 and health outcomes.

Once the assessment is complete and approval has been granted, the exporting country will need to comply with both Food Safety and Biosecurity IHS requirements. Under a pre-clearance arrangement with the exporting country, each consignment must be accompanied by consignment-specific certification issued by the competent authority of the exporting country, unless otherwise



agreed in writing with the Ministry for Primary Industries

Approved alternative overseas sanitary standards for the manufacture of milk and milk products

Milk and milk products may be imported into New Zealand for sale if they have been processed in accordance with a processing method that has been approved by the Director-General.

Unpasteurised (raw) milk products can only be imported from an exporting country that operates a production programme that has been assessed as meeting New Zealand's animal and public health safety outcomes. A country-to-country arrangement may be agreed where production programmes have been recognised as being equivalent to, or complying with, New Zealand standards.

The Food (Imported Milk and Milk Products) Standard 2009

Raw milk products are milk products that have not undergone pasteurisation, ultra high temperature (UHT) treatment or ice-cream treatment. These terms are defined in the Food (Imported Milk and Milk Products) Standard 2009.

[Food \(Imported Milk and Milk Products\) Standard 2009](#)

The Director-General may approve a processing method for milk or a milk product if he or she is satisfied that the method will ensure that the processed milk or milk product achieves at least an equivalent level of safety protection for consumers as that achieved under New Zealand law.

The Food (Imported Milk and Milk Products) Standard 2009 requires that a list of all approved alternative processing methods be maintained and published in the Food Safety area of the MPI website below.

[Industry Sectors - Dairy](#)

List of approved alternative overseas sanitary standards

A milk or milk product listed in column 1 of Table 1 may be imported into New Zealand for sale if it has been manufactured either -

- a) in accordance with the applicable sanitary standard listed in column 2; and
- b) in the applicable country or geographical region listed in column 3.

**Table 1: Recognised equivalent overseas sanitary standards**

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Milk and milk products	Sanitary standard	Country or geographical region in which processing must occur
Milk and milk products excluding fresh milk and colostrum including 1. Emmental cheese 2. Gruyere cheese 3. Sbrinz cheese.	Ordinance on Quality Assurance in the Dairy Industry of the Swiss Federal Council of 18 October 1995, and any subsequent ordinance or amendment that replaces or amends that ordinance. Specifically, the Ordinance of 27 June 1995 (RS916.401), Ordinance of 7 December 1998 (RS916.351.0), Ordinance of 13 April 1999 (RS 916.351.021.1), Ordinance of 13 April 1999 (RS 916.351.021.2), Ordinance of 13 April 1999 (RS 916.351.021.3), and Ordinance of 13 April 1999 (RS 916.351.021.4).	Switzerland.
Milk and milk products excluding fresh milk and colostrum.	1. European Commission (EC) Regulation No 852/2004, and any subsequent regulation or amendment that replaces or amends that regulation; and 2. European Commission (EC) Regulation No 853/2004, and any subsequent regulation or amendment that replaces or amends that regulation; and 3. European Commission (EC) Regulation No 854/2004; and any subsequent regulation or amendment that replaces or amends that regulation.	In a member state of the European Union.