

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

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REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON IMPORT LICENSING PROCEDURES

SWEDEN

Revision

The following notification has been received from the delegation of Sweden in response to the questionnaire on import licensing procedures annexed to L/5640/Rev.3. The present document replaces information previously contained in document L/5640/Add.14/Rev.1. Changes from the previous notification are sidelined in the margin.

Import Licensing Procedure for Goods under CCCN Chapters 1-24

Outline of systems

1. Basically Sweden has only one licensing system for goods under CCCN Chapters 1-24. The National Agricultural Market Board is the licensing authority for those products with some exemptions. Thus the National Board of Trade is the licensing authority for some, mainly non-edible, raw materials.

Purpose and coverage of the licensing

2-3. For imports from all countries an import licence from the National Agricultural Market Board is required for the following products:

- meat of asses, mules, hinnies, buffalo, wild boar and goats;
- cod and herring, not in fillets, fresh or chilled;
- herring, not in fillets, frozen;
- herring and mackerel, in fillets, fresh or chilled;
- cod, haddock and hake, in fillets, frozen;
- certain kinds of salted, not dried, herring;
- shrimps and prawns, boiled, frozen;
- apples and pears, fresh (seasonal restrictions);
- wheat (except durum wheat) and meslin;
- beet sugar and cane sugar, in solid form;
- table syrup, other syrup and other sugar solutions;
- edible molasses;

An import licence is required from the National Agricultural Market Board for seeds of lupin, grafted cherry-trees, plum-trees, pear-trees and apple-trees for imports from all countries except those, which have a free trade agreement with Sweden.

For imports from State-trading countries an import licence from the National Agricultural Market Board is required also for some other kinds of fish and fish products, meat and meat products, eggs, not in shell, and malt.

All imports (with a few exceptions) from South Africa and Namibia are forbidden.

4. The main purposes of the licensing system administered by the National Agricultural Market Board are to supervise imports, especially low-price imports, of certain products and to limit, when necessary, such imports. In most cases licences are granted automatically. Licensing requirements combined with quantitative restrictions are thus normally applied only to a small number of products, such as most of the above-mentioned kinds of fish. The seasonal import restrictions on apples and pears are intended to protect the marketing of the domestic crop. The licensing on wheat is aimed at controlling the imports of wheat not suitable for baking.

5. The licensing system administered by the National Agricultural Market Board is based on the Ordinance (1984 No. 53) on Import and Export Regulation.

Imports of products under the ordinance are in principle allowed without an import licence from the National Agricultural Market Board. The Government may however authorize the Board not to allow importation without a licence and such authorizations have also been issued.

Procedure

6. (a) The National Agricultural Market Board issues circulars in which information concerning the scope of the licensing requirements and formalities of filing applications for licences is published. In the exceptional cases where quotas are applied, each importer is informed directly about the quantity at his disposal for licences during a certain period. As regards new importers see (h) below.
- (b) When quotas in exceptional cases are applied they are determined on a yearly or six-monthly basis.
- (c) Domestic producers do not receive any special part of a quantity released. Licences are granted only for current purchases which in principle have to be proved by a sales contract. In order to check the utilization of the licence the Board requires that the licence document should be returned to the Board within a specified period. Unused allocations can be redistributed or carried over to the following period. The names of importers who have obtained licences are in accordance with existing legislation not revealed to authorities and export organizations in the exporting country.
- (d) A reasonable period of time. See (a) above.
- (e) The procedure normally takes a maximum of ten working days.
- (f) Licences granted are in principle valid for immediate importation.
- (g) As a rule, licence applications are handled only by one administrative authority. In any event the importer has only to approach one single instance.
- (h) Quotas, if any, are allocated mainly on the basis of the applicants' imports during an earlier base period. A reasonable part of the quota is then reserved for new importers. Applications are examined simultaneously. In cases where restrictions are not combined with fixed quotas, applications are examined on receipt.
- (i)-(j) Does not apply to agricultural products.
- (k) Import licences are sometimes issued on condition that the products should be exported and not sold in the domestic market.
7. (a)-(b) There is no minimum time fixed. A licence can be granted immediately on request.
- (c) There is a system of seasonal restrictions on apples and pears. A more detailed description of this system is to be found in GATT document COM.AG/W/68/Add.2/Part 1.
- (d) See 6 (g).
8. The reason for a refusal is communicated to the applicant. He can request the Board to reconsider the case and subsequently appeal to the Government.

Eligibility of importers to apply for licence

9. (a)-(b) All persons, firms and institutions domiciled in Sweden are eligible to apply for licences.

Documentational and other requirements for application of licence

10. Applications shall contain information as shown by the annexed form. A sales contract ought to be attached to the application.

11. Normal customs documents and - where required - an Import licence shall be presented upon Importation.

12. No.

13. No.

Conditions of licensing

14. An import licence is valid for three to six months, or, as regards certain kinds of fish, for a considerable shorter period of time. The validity can be extended on request. A decision in this respect is noted on the licence document.

15. No.

16. No.

17. (a)-(b) A general condition is that payments for goods shall be made through an authorized bank. In principle no other conditions are attached to the granting of a licence.

Other procedural requirements

18. In some cases, import permission from authorities responsible for sanitary and phyto-sanitary regulations may be called for in addition to licensing.

19. Payments may be made through authorized banks without specific permission in each case and without the formality of presenting an import licence provided that the conditions for current payment are met, that is if the payments are not made earlier than immediately before the delivery of the goods to Sweden or, in respect of advance payments, do not exceed one third of the purchase sum for imports of machinery and such advance payment is stipulated in the contract, and an amount of SEK 100 000 for other imports. If payment is made by a letter of credit the latter must not be covered earlier than nine months before its expiry. For payments exceeding SEK 25 000 importers have to fill in - on the form where the customer instructs the bank to make the payment abroad - a few data in codes about the transaction.

ANNEX

Form Referred to In Reply to Question 10

Question 10. Import licence application. Information required in the application.

1. Name and address of applicant.
2. Description of goods.
3. Statistical number.
4. Quantity.
5. C.i.f. value, SEK.
6. Amount of invoice.
7. Estimated time of importation.
8. Country of origin.
9. Estimated time for payment.
10. Name and address of exporter (actual supplier, not agent or other intermediary).
11. Country from which goods are to be delivered.
12. Date, signature of applicant.

Import Licensing Procedure for Goods under CCCN Chapters 25-99

Outline of systems

1. Basically Sweden has only one licensing system for goods. Licences are issued upon written application by the importer. The National Board of Trade is the licensing authority for goods under Chapters 25-99 of the CCCN, with the exception of Chapter 31, and certain other commodities for which the National Agricultural Market Board is the licensing authority.

Purposes and coverage of the licensing

2-3. For imports from most State-trading countries a licence is required for the following goods:

cement; a limited number of chemical products, certain plastics; certain yarns and fabrics, knitwear and ready-made textiles; shoes with outer soles of leather, artificial leather, rubber or plastics; table china; pig iron, most ferro-alloys, rolling mill products, including tubes of iron or steel, bars and rods of brass, certain semi-manufactures of aluminium and cables, cordage and the like of aluminium; AC motors, triphase; graphite electrodes.

The importation of certain textile products from all countries other than EEC and EFTA countries (excluding Portugal), the Faroe Islands, Japan, USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia requires an import licence for surveillance purposes.

Special regulations are valid for importation of certain textile products from Brazil, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Macao, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Yugoslavia.

The importation of certain products of iron and steel requires an import licence for surveillance purposes. All imports (with a few exceptions) from South Africa and Namibia are forbidden.

4. The main purposes of the licensing are to limit, when necessary, the imported quantity and to provide a means to supervise imports of certain goods.

5. The licensing is authorized under an ordinance of 9 February 1984 (No 53) on Import and Export Regulation. Section 1 of that ordinance reads as follows:

"This ordinance is to be applied if the Government or, after decision by the Government, the National Agricultural Market Board or the National Board of Trade prescribe that goods are not allowed to be imported or exported without permission (import licence or export licence) by the National Agricultural Market Board or the National Board of Trade (licensing authorities).

The ordinance is not applicable to goods for which import or export control is regulated according to the statutes mentioned in Annex 1.¹⁾

¹⁾ Statutes concerning gas protection equipment, military and high tech equipment, nuclear engineering and foreign exchange.

Regulations referred to in the first paragraph will be prescribed

1. for special trade policy reasons
2. in view of risk of disturbance in the social economy or the national supply or
3. in order to regulate the prices of agricultural products or fish products"

Prescriptions on licence and limitations in imports and exports are under two ordinances of January 22, 1987 on Import and Export Licences within the competence of the National Board of Trade and the National Agricultural Market Board, respectively.

Procedure

6. (a) The National Board of Trade issues circulars in which information concerning the scope of the licensing requirements and formalities of filling up applications for licences as well as the over all amount is published. Each importer or agent is informed in writing about the amount at his disposal for licences during a certain period. As regards new importers, see (h) below.

(b) Allocations are in principle made for one-year periods. Licences are usually valid for three to nine months after the expiry of the current month. The validity can be extended, however not exceeding the period of licensing. After this period the importer must apply for a new licence.

(c) Domestic producers as such do not receive any special share of released quantities. The total amount is allocated on the same basis between all importers. Licences are only issued for immediate purchases which have to be certified by a sales contract. Non-utilized shares of a licence are in principle not transferable to a following period. In accordance with existing legislation the names of the importers who have obtained licences are not revealed to authorities and exporting organizations in the exporting countries, with the exception of the names of importers of goods from South Africa and Namibia.

(d) The amount allocated is as a rule available to the importer for three quarters of the period in respect of which the total allocation is granted. Licence amounts not utilized by one importer are generally reallocated to other importers expected to be able to utilize the amounts.

(e) The time required for the handling of licence applications is usually one to ten working days.

(f) A licence which has been granted is in principle valid for immediate importation.

(g) Licence applications are in principle only dealt with by one authority. The importer needs to approach one authority only.

(h) If the amounts of licences applied for are greater than available total amounts or quantities, allocation is made on the basis of the applicants' imports during an earlier base period. There is no upper limit for such allocations. New importers are granted a minor share of the total amount or quantity. Applications from such importers are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Licence applications are in general examined on receipt.

(i) The surveillance licensing requirements on the importation of certain textile products (cf. paragraphs 2-3) are applicable also to products subject to export restraint arrangements. In such cases licences are granted upon application and presentation of the relevant export document.

(j) In the case when imports are permitted subject to the presentation of an export document, this is transmitted by the importer to the National Board of Trade with a licence application. The National Board of Trade furthermore periodically receives accounts of export declarations issued by the exporting country.

END

(k) Import licences are only exceptionally issued on condition that the goods are re-exported and not sold in the domestic market.

7. (a) Licences for goods not subject to quantitative restrictions are dealt with in the same way as other licences, i.e. the time of processing is one to ten working days.

(b) Licences can be granted immediately on request only under special circumstances.

(c) No.

(d) Licence applications are in principle examined only by one authority. The importer needs to approach one authority only.

8. In principle a licence is issued only to a person or a firm domiciled in Sweden. Reasons for refusals are always communicated to the applicant. In the event of refusal applicants have a right of appeal through written application to the Government.

Eligibility of importers to apply for licence

9. (a)-(b) All persons, firms and institutions domiciled in Sweden are eligible to apply for licences and entitled to expect consideration within the framework of normal procedures provided they are the presumptive importers.

Documentational and other requirements for application of licence

10. Information required in the application is i.a.: Name and address of the applicant, description of goods, statistical number, quantity, value, country of origin, manufacturer, supplier, time of delivery. A sales contract or the like shall be attached to the application.

11. Normal customs documents and - where required - an import licence shall be presented upon importation.

12. From 1 July 1982 a licensing fee is charged for issued licences according to the following tariff:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| - The value of the licensed goods equal to or exceeding SEK 5,000 but below SEK 10,000 | SEK 50 |
| - The value of the licensed goods equal to or exceeding SEK 10,000 but below SEK 15,000 | SEK 100 |
| - The value of the licensed goods equal to or exceeding SEK 15,000 | SEK 150 |

The fee is charged for licences issued by the National Board of Trade. Licences for certain products of iron and steel are excepted.

13. No.

Conditions of licensing

14. The normal period of validity of a licence is the current month plus three months, however not exceeding the period of licensing. The validity can be extended by submitting the licence to the licensing authority with a request for extension. A decision regarding extended validity is noted on the licence.

15. No.

16. No.

17. (a)-(b) A general condition is that payments for goods shall be made through an authorized bank. In principle no other conditions are attached to the granting of a licence.

Other procedural requirements

18. Apart from import licensing and similar administrative procedures, no other measures are required prior to importation.

19. Payments may be made through authorized banks without specific permission in each case and without the formality of presenting an import licence provided that the conditions for current payments are met, that is if the payments are not made earlier than immediately before the delivery of the goods to Sweden or, in respect of advance payments, do not exceed one third of the purchase sum for imports of machinery and such advance payment is stipulated in the contract, and an amount of SEK 100 000 for other imports. If payment is made by a letter of credit the letter must not be covered earlier than nine months before its expiry. For payments exceeding SEK 25 000 importers have to fill in - on the form where the customer instructs the bank to make the payment abroad - a few data in codes about the transaction.