



First arrival activity guide for operators





Table of contents

1 FIRST ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES: A QUICK GUIDE FOR OPERATORS	3
2 FIRST ARRIVAL CONTROL	4
2.1 General	4
2.2 Legislation	5
2.3 Definitions	6
3 THE REGISTER OF FIRST ARRIVAL OPERATORS AND PLACES OF FIRST ARRIVAL	8
4 REPORTS SUBMITTED BY FIRST ARRIVAL OPERATORS	8
4.1 The operator's report on the commencement, significant alteration or termination of first arrival activities	8
4.2 Monthly report on received consignments	9
5 CATEGORIZATION OF FOODSTUFFS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN	9
5.1 Foodstuffs of animal origin; main categories and subcategories	9
5.1.1 Insects as food	11
5.2 Composite foodstuffs	12
6 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATORS' OWN-CHECK MEASURES.....	12
6.1 Operators that receive foodstuffs of animal origin	13
6.1.1 The inspection of received consignments and the required documents	13
6.1.2 Sampling and testing plan	16
6.1.3 Own-check record-keeping	16
6.1.4 Measures implemented when deficiencies are detected	17
6.2 Operators that forward foodstuffs of animal origin	18
6.3 Operators who sell foodstuffs of animal origin to ships for catering purposes	18
6.4 First arrival operators who sell foodstuffs of animal origin with distance selling methods ...	19
6.5 Domestic mobile and periodic first arrival operators	19
6.6 Foreign mobile and periodic first arrival operators	20
7 SPECIAL GUARANTEES CONCERNING SALMONELLA.....	21
7.1 Legislation	21
7.2 The requirements presented in Special Guarantee Regulation EC 1688/2005	21
7.2.1 Foodstuffs that are to be heated in an establishment	23
7.2.2 Exceptions to the Special Guarantee Regulation's documentation requirements	23
7.3 Further details concerning Special Guarantee Regulation EC 1688/2005-compliant documents	24
8 CONSIGNMENTS REJECTED BY THE AUTHORITIES	25
9 RECALLS	25
10 CONTACT INFORMATION OF THE FINNISH FOOD AUTHORITY'S FIRST ARRIVAL CONTROL UNIT	26
11 UPDATES TO THE GUIDE AND FORMS	26



1 FIRST ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES: A QUICK GUIDE FOR OPERATORS

First arrival activities refer to the reception or forwarding of foodstuffs of animal origin to Finland from other EU member states as well as from certain other countries ([special agreement countries](#), list currently available in Finnish). The food business operator is responsible for the safety and legislative compliance of their products. The purpose of the first arrival control process is to ensure that all imported foodstuffs that have been subjected to the first arrival process are compliant with the demands set for first arrival activities and to prevent the spread of any animal diseases through said foodstuffs. For more information on first arrival activities and control, see the Finnish Food Authority's [website](#).

The requirements concerning first arrival activities in brief:

- foodstuffs of animal origin may be imported only through approved establishments¹
- the operator must register as a first arrival operator to the Finnish Food Authority²
- the operator reports all received foodstuffs of animal origin to the Finnish Food Authority retrospectively on a monthly basis³
- the receiving operator must have a place of first arrival (food premises located in Finland)⁴
- the first arrival activities must be described in an own-check plan⁵
- all importing activities must take into account the requirements set forth in Commission Regulation 1688/2005 concerning salmonella⁶

¹In Finland, foodstuffs of animal origin may only be received from approved establishments: [establishments in the EU](#) and [establishments in countries outside the EU](#). This rule does not apply to honey or insects.

²The first arrival operator must inform the Finnish Food Authority in writing of its activities at least 14 days in advance before commencing, significantly altering or terminating its first arrival activities. To submit a report, use the following form on the website of the Finnish Food Authority: [Operator's report on the commencement, significant alteration or termination of first arrival activities](#).

³The first arrival operator must submit a summary report to the Finnish Food Authority on the consignments of foodstuffs of animal origin it has received, and this report must be submitted by the 15th day of the following month after the month of declaration. To submit a report, use the following form on the website of the Finnish Food Authority: [monthly report form](#).



When filling in the report form, remember to use the correct foodstuff [categorizations](#), a list of which is available on the website of the Finnish Food Authority.

⁴The first arrival operator must register as a food business operator with their municipal food control authority: [municipal contact information](#).

⁵The own-check plan of an operator that receives foodstuffs of animal origin must contain at least the following details on the operator's first arrival activities:

- a description of how the reports related to first arrival activities will be submitted
- a description of how received consignments will be inspected
- a description of the measures that will be implemented if any deficiencies are detected
- a sampling and testing plan
- a description of the operator's own-check record-keeping practices

⁶All consignments to Finland that contain raw (fresh or frozen) bovine, pork or poultry meat (including offal and blood) or ground meat made of these products must include a commercial document concerning salmonella and a laboratory test result (for salmonella). The commercial document must be compliant with Annex IV of Commission Regulation 1688/2005, and in case it is represented by another type of document, the document in question must contain the corresponding information. The salmonella samples must be taken by the establishment that will send the product. All consignments to Finland that contain chicken eggs must include an intra-Community trade certificate (Commission Regulation 1688/2005, Annex V, parts 1 and 2). All salmonella-related documents must be attributable to the relevant shipping documents and shipped foodstuffs.

The aforementioned requirements do not apply to raw bovine, pork and poultry meat and eggs that have been sent from Sweden or Norway, raw chicken meat and eggs from Denmark, or raw chicken and turkey meat and eggs from Iceland. Such products only need to include regular shipping documents.

2 FIRST ARRIVAL CONTROL

2.1 General

The Food Act (23/2006) and the Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on the activities at the point of entry (118/2006, amendment 353/2008) state that the first arrival control of foodstuffs of animal origin is based on assessment of the health



risks posed by foodstuffs imported from other member states and special agreement countries ¹ (European Single Market countries) to Finland.

All first arrival control measures are carried out using a risk-based and non-discriminatory approach for streams of goods from other EU member states to Finland with the help of inspections that focus on the first arrival activities of operators. However, the first arrival control process cannot be used to limit the general EU principle concerning the free movement of goods and services. This principle refers to e.g. the movement of goods within the European Single Market without the imposition of fees, quotas or other similar measures, and the opportunity to introduce a product that has already been legally brought to market in another member state to the market of another member state. This free movement principle can be limited with additional national requirements that have been brought before the European Commission or have been included in EU legislation. These types of additional requirements include, for example, the special guarantees concerning salmonella laid down in Commission Regulation EC 1688/2005 (for pork, bovine and poultry meat, ground meat prepared from these products, and chicken eggs), and special attention is paid to the fulfilment of these in the first arrival control process. In addition, additional control measures are implemented on the basis of the volume and nature of goods received as well as the functionality of each establishment's own-check measures.

For more information, see the first arrival control page on the website of the Finnish Food Authority:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/companies/import-and-export/eu-countries-norway-and-switzerland/food/for-first-arrival-operators/>

2.2 Legislation

Legislation related to first arrival activities and its control:

- The Food Act (23/2006)
- The Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on the activities at the point of entry 118/2006 (hereinafter the APE), amendment 353/2008
- Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council EC 853/2004 concerning specific hygiene rules for foodstuffs of animal origin
- Commission Regulation EC 1688/2005 on the special guarantees concerning salmonella required for consignments to Finland and Sweden (hereinafter the Special Guarantee Regulation)

¹ Special agreement countries (list currently available in Finnish): <https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/yritykset/tuonti-ja-vienti/tuonti-eun-ulkopuolelta/elaimet-ja-elainperaiset-tuotteet/elintarvikkeet/tuonti-erityissopimusmaista/>



- Commission Implementing Regulation EU 1223/2011 concerning microbiological examination methods
- Commission Implementing Regulation EU 427/2012 concerning the extension of special salmonella guarantees to eggs intended for Denmark
- Commission Implementing Regulation EU 2018/307 concerning the extension of special salmonella guarantees to meat derived from broilers intended for Denmark
- EFTA Surveillance Authority Decision No 1/19/COL extending the special guarantees concerning Salmonella spp. to meat and eggs derived from chickens and meat derived from turkeys intended for Iceland
- Commission Implementing Regulation EU 931/2011 on the traceability requirements for foodstuffs of animal origin.

Other useful links:

- The import of live crayfish, guide of the Finnish Food Authority (available in Finnish and Swedish): <https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/yritykset/tuonti-ja-vienti/eu-maat-norja-ja-sveitsi/elintarvikkeet/elavien-rapujen-tuominen/>
- Safeguard decisions on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry:
<https://mmm.fi/lainsaadanto/elaimet-elintarvikkeet-ja-terveys/komission-suojapaatokset>

2.3 Definitions

Foodstuff of animal origin

On the basis of section 6 of the Food Act and article 1 of Regulation EC 853/2004, the term foodstuff of animal origin refers to such foodstuffs that have been manufactured solely from ingredients that are of animal origin or such foodstuffs where products of plant origin have been combined with unprocessed products of animal origin. Honey, blood and insects are also classified as foodstuffs of animal origin (EC 853/2004, Annex I, section 8). For further clarification, offal and blood are considered as meat (EC 853/2004, Annex I, section 1).

Composite foodstuff

Foodstuffs that contain both products of plant origin and processed (cooked) products of animal origin do not constitute products of animal origin as specified in Regulation EC 853/2004, Annex I, section 8.1; they are instead referred to as so-called composite foodstuffs. The definition of composite foodstuffs is presented in Regulation EC 853/2004 (Article 1, section 2): “Unless expressly indicated to the contrary, this Regulation shall not apply to food containing both products of plant origin and processed products of animal origin. However, processed products of animal origin



used to prepare such food shall be obtained and handled in accordance with the requirements of this Regulation.”

Health mark

The term health mark refers to the oval mark that is stamped on the parts of the carcass and which contains the name or code of the country of manufacture, the establishment's approval number and the EC abbreviation. The provisions concerning foodstuff health marks are laid down in Articles 5 and 6 and in Annex II, section I of Regulation EC 853/2004.

Identification mark

The term identification mark refers to the oval mark that is included on a foodstuff of animal origin or its wrapping or packaging and which contains the name or code of the country of manufacture, the establishment's approval number and the EC abbreviation. This mark has also previously been referred to as a health mark. The provisions concerning foodstuff identification marks are laid down in Articles 5 and 6 and in Annex II, section I of Regulation EC 853/2004.

The identification mark alone cannot be used to determine whether a foodstuff is of animal origin or a combined foodstuff (see section 5.2 of this guide).

Place of first arrival

The term place of first arrival refers to a food premise located in Finland that is used for the first reception of foodstuffs of animal origin that have been shipped from another EU member state (country in the European Single Market) to Finland. A place of first arrival can also be a food premise that is used to receive foodstuffs from an intermediate storage facility in the form of undivided import lots after a storage period of less than 48 hours (Food Act, section 6; APE, section 4).

The place of first arrival can be, for example, a slaughterhouse, a meat cutting establishment, a warehouse or a place of manufacture, and it can also be a grocery shop, restaurant or some other type of industrial kitchen.

First arrival operator

The term first arrival operator refers to a natural or legal person (company) who receives or forwards foodstuffs of animal origin from another EU member state to Finland (Food Act, section 6; APE, section 4). The first arrival operator can act simultaneously as both the recipient and forwarder. Operators who sell foodstuffs of animal origin via distance selling, for example on an online store, are also considered as first arrival operators.



Consignment

The term consignment refers to a group of sales units that correspond to the same type of foodstuff and that have been produced, manufactured or packed in the same establishment and shipped to Finland at the same time (APE, section 4). One consignment (e.g. a vehicular or pallet-load of product) can contain one or several lots of the same type of foodstuff (e.g. cheeses).

Lot

The term lot refers to an identifiable group of products that has been manufactured using a specific process in practically identical circumstances and produced in a specific location within a predetermined manufacturing time (APE, section 4). For example, one lot of cheese can consist of one type of cheese (e.g. Emmental).

3 THE REGISTER OF FIRST ARRIVAL OPERATORS AND PLACES OF FIRST ARRIVAL

The Finnish Food Authority maintains a national register of first arrival operators and places of first arrival, and it also provides the information in the register for the use of local first arrival control authorities for control-related purposes (Food Act, section 83).

4 REPORTS SUBMITTED BY FIRST ARRIVAL OPERATORS

4.1 The operator's report on the commencement, significant alteration or termination of first arrival activities

The first arrival operator is required to submit a written report to the Finnish Food Authority at least 14 days in advance before the commencement, significant alteration or termination of any first arrival activities (Food Act, section 23). The Finnish Food Authority is the recipient of all reports submitted by operators. The following examples are considered to constitute a significant alteration to an operator's first arrival activities: a significant increase or reduction in activities, a change in the place of first arrival, a change in contact information.

The Finnish Food Authority will forward the report to the local first arrival control authority who is responsible for monitoring the area where the activities are conducted in.

The receiving operator's report must include the information specified in section 8(1) of the APE, and the forwarding operator's report must include the information



specified in section 8(2), and these must include e.g. information concerning the operator, the type of foodstuff that is to be received or forwarded, as well as the scope of the activity. To submit a report, use the form available on the website of the Finnish Food Authority:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/about-us/services/guides--instructions--and-forms/companies/import-and-export/control-of-places-of-first-arrivals/>

If an operator acts as both the recipient and forwarder of foodstuffs of animal origin, the operator must submit a report on both activities. In its report, the operator must specify which foodstuffs are to be received and which are to be forwarded as part of the operator's first arrival activities.

4.2 Monthly report on received consignments

The first arrival operator must submit a monthly summary report to the Finnish Food Authority on the consignments of foodstuffs of animal origin it has received, and this report must be submitted by the 15th day of the following month after the month of declaration (APE, section 10(2, 3)). For example, all information concerning January must be submitted by 15 February at the latest. An exception to this rule are foreign operators, as they are not required to submit monthly reports to the Finnish Food Authority.

The monthly report must contain the information required by the form that is available on the website of the Finnish Food Authority:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/about-us/services/guides--instructions--and-forms/companies/import-and-export/control-of-places-of-first-arrivals/>

The monthly report can also be submitted online. For more detailed instructions, see the website of the Finnish Food Authority:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/about-us/services/sahkoinen-asiointi/the-monthly-report-form-for-first-arrival-operators/>

The Finnish Food Authority files the monthly reports that it receives from first arrival operators and then forwards them to the relevant local first arrival control authorities for control-related purposes (APE, section 10(2)).

5 CATEGORIZATION OF FOODSTUFFS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN

5.1 Foodstuffs of animal origin; main categories and subcategories

Foodstuffs of animal origin are categorized into 12 main categories. Poultry meat (main category 3) and meat of other animals (main category 4) are also divided into



subcategories for each species of animal. The main categories and subcategories are presented below in table 1.

Table 1.

MAIN CATEGORIES 1 AND 2		
1a	bovine meat and ground meat, fresh	
1b	bovine meat and ground meat, quick-frozen	
1c	bovine meat MSM, fresh	
1d	bovine meat MSM, quick-frozen	
1e	bovine meat, raw meat products	
1f	bovine meat, meat products	
1g	bovine, other slaughter-animal products	
2a	pork meat and ground meat, fresh	
2b	pork meat and ground meat, quick-frozen	
2c	pork meat MSM, fresh	
2d	pork meat MSM, quick-frozen	
2e	pork meat, raw meat products	
2f	pork meat, meat products	
2g	pork, other slaughter-animal products	
MAIN CATEGORY 3		SUBCATEGORIES
Poultry: also specify the subcategory		
3a	poultry meat and ground meat, fresh	1 Chicken
3b	poultry meat and ground meat, quick-frozen	2 Turkey
3c	poultry meat MSM, fresh	3 Guinea fowl
3d	poultry meat MSM, quick-frozen	4 Duck
3e	poultry meat, raw meat products	5 Goose
3f	poultry meat, meat products	
3g	poultry, other slaughter-animal products	
MAIN CATEGORY 4		SUBCATEGORIES
Meat of other animals: also specify the subcategory		
4a	meat and ground meat of other animals, fresh	1 Bovids, sheep 2 Bovids, goat 3 Bovids, bison and antelope 11a pigs, boar, ranched 11b pigs, boar, wild
4b	meat and ground meat of other animals, quick-frozen	21a fowl, pheasant, ranched 21b fowl, pheasant, wild 22a fowl, quail, ranched 22b fowl, quail, wild
4c	meat MSM of other animals, fresh	23a fowl, other, ranched 23b fowl, other, wild 31a ostriches, all, ranched
		51a deer, moose, ranched 51b deer, moose, wild 52a deer, deer, ranched 52b deer, deer, wild 53a deer, roe deer, ranched 53b deer, roe deer, wild 54 deer, reindeer 61a camelids, all, ranched 61b camelids, all, wild 71 horse-like animals, horses



4d	meat MSM of other animals, quick-frozen	31b ostriches, all, wild 32a wild ducks, all, ranched 32b wild ducks, all, wild 41a rabbits, all, ranched 41b rabbits, all, wild	72 horse-like animals, other 81 reptiles, crocodiles 82 reptiles, lizards 83 reptiles, snakes 84 reptiles, turtles 91 frogs 101 molluscs (snails) 111 marsupials, kangaroo 121 predators, bears 122 predators, other 123 insects
4e	meat of other animals, raw meat products		
4f	meat of other animals, meat products		
4g	other animals, other slaughter-animal products		
MAIN CATEGORIES 5–12			
5	Live: mussels, crayfish, other shellfish, sea urchins, tunicates, sea mussels		
6	Chicken eggs		
7	Eggs, other than chicken eggs		
8	Egg products		
9a	Fishery products, fresh and quick-frozen		
9b	Fishery products, processed		
10a	Cheese made from non-heat-treated milk		
10b	Cheese made from heat-treated milk		
11a	Liquid milk products		
11b	Other milk products		
12	Honey		

5.1.1 Insects as food

An operator that imports insect foodstuffs from the European Single Market to Finland must sign up as a first arrival operator to the Finnish Food Authority. Insect foodstuffs from the European Single Market may only be imported to Finland from such European Single Market countries that permit the use of insects as foodstuffs and where the manufacture and sales of insect foodstuffs are subject to food quality inspection procedures. The species of insects that are to be imported must be approved for use as food in the country in question. The species of insects that have been approved for use as food may vary between countries.

The website of the Finnish Food Authority includes a list of the species of insects that may be sold in EU member states and imported to Finland:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/companies/food-sector/elintarvikkeiden-alkutuotanto/elaimista-saatavat-elintarvikkeet/insects-as-food/>



The species of insects that are to be used as food must be approved of as novel food, or a novel food application must be submitted for the species in question to the European Commission by 1 January 2019 so that they may be marketed after this date.

The Finnish Food Authority's guide 10588, Insects as food, can be found here:
https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/globalassets/tietoa-meista/asiointi/oppaat-ja-lomakkeet/yritykset/elintarvikeala/alkutuotanto/eviran_ohje_10588_2_uk.pdf

5.2 Composite foodstuffs

Composite foodstuffs do not fall within the scope of first arrival activities. Finnish customs are responsible for the European Single Market control measures related to them (www.tulli.fi).

An identification mark may be used in connection with a composite foodstuff that has been manufactured in an establishment that is compliant with the provisions presented in Regulation EC 853/2004, Annex II, section I, subsection B7. An identification mark alone cannot be used to solely determine whether a foodstuff is of animal origin or a composite foodstuff.

Section 3.3. of the European Commission's guidance document for Regulation EC 853/2004 focuses on foodstuffs of animal origin, while section 3.4 focuses on composite foodstuffs. The Commission's guidance document is available on the Commission's website:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/biosafety_fh_legis_guidance_reg-2004-853_en.pdf

Examples of composite foodstuffs are available on the website of the Finnish Food Authority, and this page also includes information on any new policies that have been introduced (page currently available only in Finnish):

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/yritykset/tuonti-ja-vienti/eu-maat-norja-ja-sveitsi/elintarvikkeet/elaimista-saatavat-ja-yhdistelmaelintarvikkeet/>

6 REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATORS' OWN-CHECK MEASURES

Food business operators must take sufficient care in all their operations so as to ensure that their foodstuffs, food premises, places of primary production and conditions for storing, transporting and handling foodstuffs meet the requirements laid down in the Food Act (Food Act, section 16). The physical space that constitutes the food premise that serves as the place of first arrival is the responsibility of the operator who is responsible for the space, and the first arrival operator is responsible for the import of the foodstuffs.



Domestic food business operators must prepare a written own-check plan and comply with it, as well as keep a record of its implementation (Food Act, section 20). Operators must submit their own-check plans to their local first arrival control authorities. Foreign mobile operators who operate on a permanent/seasonal basis are not required to submit a written own-check plan, and may instead orally describe how their own-check process will be implemented (EC Regulation 852/2004, Article 5).

The operator must be familiar with the relevant EU Commission safeguard decisions and their requirements that may concern the foodstuffs of animal origin that they import to Finland. The safeguard decisions are available on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry:

<https://mmm.fi/lainsaadanto/elaimet-elintarvikkeet-ja-terveys/komission-suojapaatokset>

6.1 Operators that receive foodstuffs of animal origin

The own-check plan of a recipient operator must contain at least the following details on the operator's first arrival activities:

- a description of how the reports related to first arrival activities will be submitted. For more information on reports, see section 4 of this guide.
- a description of how received consignments will be inspected
- a sampling and testing plan
- a description of the operator's own-check record-keeping practices
- the measures that will be implemented if any deficiencies are detected

The operator must immediately inform the control authority of the arrival of any consignments to the place of first arrival if the local first arrival control authority has deemed it necessary for control-related purposes (APE, section 10(1)).

6.1.1 The inspection of received consignments and the required documents

All received consignment lots must be inspected immediately upon their arrival to the place of first arrival, and the operator must ensure that the documents match the foodstuffs present (Ape, section 11). The temperatures of consignments that require cold storage must be measured and recorded.

Approved establishments

All foodstuffs of animal origin must be manufactured by approved establishments (with the exception of honey and insect foodstuffs). A list of approved establishments in the EU region and third countries can be found on the website of the European Commission:



EU

region:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/biosafety/food_hygiene/eu_food_establishments_en

Countries outside the EU:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/international_affairs/trade/non-eu-countries_en

The health and identification mark (mandatory and applies to all foodstuffs of animal origin, apart from honey and insects)

Foodstuffs of animal origin must include a health mark (animal carcasses) or an identification mark (other products of animal origin). The definitions for these can be found in section 2.3 of this guide and in section 11 of the APE The health and identification mark provides information on the establishment that manufactured the foodstuff (establishment approval number) and the member state where the establishment is located in. The packaging used for honey and insect foodstuffs does not need to include an identification mark, as Annex III of Regulation (EC) N:o 853/2004 does not include any demands that concern these products, and the facilities that process these are not required to be approved as establishments.

The mark can be placed on the product, its wrapping or its packaging. When foodstuffs of animal origin are placed in consumer packages, the identification mark can be placed on the consumer package alone. If a foodstuff is intended to be used as a raw material in industry, the mark can be placed on the packaging alone. If a package of meat contains several different types of wrappings that feature no identification marks, the contents of the package may not be divided into separate lots intended for several food premises, and instead the contents of the package may only be unpacked at their final destination.

In addition to an identification mark, foodstuff packaging must always include the name and address of the relevant operator, as is required by the Food Information Regulation EU 1169/2011. The use of the health or identification mark, the restrictions to its use, its shape and how it is to be formatted are presented in further detail in guide 17068 of the Finnish Food Authority (see also the section titled package labelling below).

Package labelling

The party responsible for the information presented on the foodstuff is the operator whose name or business name is used to sell the foodstuff, or, if the operator is not from the EU region, the operator that has imported the foodstuff to the EU region. The first arrival operator must ensure that all foodstuffs of animal origin are equipped with the necessary package labels before they are brought to market in Finland or forwarded from the place of first arrival. In addition, foodstuffs that are sold in outdoor market areas and on a seasonal basis must include the necessary package labels in the required languages.



For more information on the requirements for package labelling, see guide 17068 of the Finnish Food Authority and the website of the Finnish Food Authority (some guides are only available in Finnish):

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/about-us/services/guides--instructions--and-forms/companies/food-sector/labelling/>

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/yritykset/elintarvikeala/valmistus/elintarvikkeista-annettavat-tiedot/pakkausmerkinnat/>

Bovine meat consignments, wrappings or packages must include the markings required by the labelling system for bovine meat, and the traceability code (e.g. lot number) of the bovine meat lots must match with the information presented in the shipping document. No bovine meat labelling system information is required for ground meat. The first arrival operator must transfer the markings concerning the traceability of bovine meat as well as the bovine meat labelling system-compliant markings to any newly-wrapped bovine meat lots if the operator intends to forward the wrapped bovine meat lots and these lots do not already include the aforementioned markings. For more information on how to label bovine meat, see the website of the Finnish Food Authority (page currently available only in Finnish):

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/yritykset/elintarvikeala/valmistus/elintarvikeryhmat/lih-a-ja-lihavalmisteeet/naudanlihan-merkitseminen/>

Documents

Consignments of foodstuffs of animal origin must be equipped with the necessary approved documents. As specified in the special guarantee regulation (EC 1688/2005), any consignments of bovine, pork or poultry meat, ground meat made of these as well as chicken eggs must also include the documents required by the Special Guarantee Regulation (see the special guarantees concerning salmonella, section 7).

All consignments of chicken eggs must include a TRACES model-compliant health certificate (see Annex 5 of the Special Guarantee Regulation). This requirement also applies to chicken eggs that are intended for the manufacture of products that are to be heated.

Consignments of live mussels and oysters to Finland do not need to include the type of registration document specified in Article 7 and Annex III, chapter VII of Regulation EC 853/2004 if the consignment is being shipped from a European food premise/establishment and not directly from where the product was farmed. A registration document must be included in a consignment containing live mussels/oysters until the consignment reaches the first EC 853/2004-compliant establishment. All live mussels and oysters must be marked with an identification mark.



6.1.2 Sampling and testing plan

Operators that receive foodstuffs of animal origin must take samples and conduct the necessary tests while observing the principles of risk assessment. Bovine, pork and poultry meat and ground meat made of these animal species as well as raw meat products must be tested for salmonella (APE, section 12). The operator is responsible for the safety of its foodstuffs and for the implementation of the own-check testing methods necessary for ensuring their safety.

For more detailed information and recommendations on how to prepare the operator's testing plan, see appendix 6 of the Finnish Food Authority guide 10501 "Elintarvikkeiden mikrobiologiset vaatimukset, komission asetuksen (EY) No 2073/2005 soveltaminen" ("Microbiological criteria for foodstuffs, application of Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005"). The guide is available in Finnish on the website of the Finnish Food Authority:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/tietoa-meista/asiointi/oppaat-ja-lomakkeet/yritykset/elintarvikeala/mikrobiologiset-vaatimukset/>

The first arrival operator's own-check plan may take into account any own-check tests conducted on foodstuffs in their country of manufacture. These tests can be used to replace some of the own-check tests in Finland, provided that the test results can be associated with the foodstuff lots that have been imported to Finland. In addition, an operator can deviate from the sampling recommendations presented in guide 10501 on the basis of their own risk assessment (e.g. operators that receive a great number of consignments that weigh very little in kilograms).

6.1.3 Own-check record-keeping

The requirements for the own-check record-keeping practices of a first arrival operator are laid down in sections 13 and 14 of Decree 118/2006 (APE).

- The operator must keep a record of the types and volumes of foodstuffs of animal origin that it receives, their arrival date (reception date), country of departure, the establishment that sent them, as well as their country of origin and establishment of origin (APE, section 14). If the operator also operates as a forwarder of foodstuffs of animal origin, the record-keeping for received lots must be kept separate from the records kept of any forwarding activities.
- The records must also indicate the tests conducted on the foodstuffs and their results as well as the deficiencies detected in the consignments and the measures enacted on the basis of these (APE, section 14).
- The records for consignments that are to be forwarded from a place of first arrival must indicate the type and volume (kg) of the foodstuffs, their date



of departure, and the recipient. These consignments must include a commercial document that contains the aforementioned information. Upon request, the first arrival operator must deliver copies of the special guarantee documents that were included in the consignment to the recipient (APE, section 13).

- The records for consignments that have arrived at places of first arrival must be maintained in a manner that they can be associated with any new consignments that are forwarded from the places of first arrival (APE, section 14).
- The records kept of consignments and the documents included in the consignments must be stored for a minimum period of two years (APE, section 14).

6.1.4 Measures implemented when deficiencies are detected

The own-check plan must include a description of how the operator will act if it detects any deficiencies (APE, section 9).

- The operator must immediately notify the relevant control authority of any significant health hazards that have emerged in its own-checks or in some other way and of the measures taken to rectify the deficiencies in question (Food Act, section 24).
- A consignment may not be taken into use or forwarded before a reception inspection has been used to determine that the consignment's documents and labels correspond to the necessary legislative requirements and that the information in the documents matches the received consignment (APE, section 11).
- The operator must act in accordance with its own-check plan when it receives a product that falls under the scope of a safeguard decision. If you are unsure of how you should proceed in a given situation, contact your local first arrival control authority or the Finnish Food Authority.
- If a consignment of meat is to be heated in an establishment (and this has been marked in the commercial document) and it is discovered that the meat contains salmonella during the own-check process, the meat can still be used in the production process if the safety of the end product can be determined (the salmonella is destroyed) and the meat will not pose a contamination risk to the establishment.

Commercial returns

If the own-check testing process reveals the presence of salmonella in the type of meat that has been specified in the Special Guarantee Regulation, the operator must return or destroy the foodstuff (Food Act, section 23). This type of independently initiated return is called a commercial return. The operator must notify the control authority of



any salmonella that has been discovered during the own-check process and of the return of the food consignment.

According to section 60(1) of the Food Act, the operator also has the right to return a foodstuff of animal origin supplied from another member state back to the member state if

- the temperature of the foodstuff has changed during transportation or intermediate storage to the extent that it does not meet the requirements of the relevant food regulations, or
- the foodstuff does not meet the requirements referred to in section 18 of the Food Act concerning its marking, origin, documents or certificates.

The operator must notify the control authority of any commercial returns it makes on the basis of a foodstuff not meeting the requirements specified in section 18 of the Food Act regarding the foodstuff's origin, documents or certificates. The operator must also notify the control authority of any returns that it makes on the basis of a foodstuff not meeting the temperature-related regulations that it is subject to.

6.2 Operators that forward foodstuffs of animal origin

Food business operators must prepare a written own-check plan and comply with it, as well as keep a record of its implementation (Food Act, section 20). The own-check plan of a first arrival operator who is not the recipient of foodstuffs of animal origin must include at least the following details:

- Records kept on consignments that are to be forwarded (APE, section 9)
- A description of how reports will be submitted
For more information on submitting reports, see section 4.1 of this guide).

If an operator acts as both the receiving and forwarding first arrival operator, the operator must maintain separate records for both received and forwarded foodstuff consignments. The records kept of consignments must be stored for a minimum period of two years after the consignments have been forwarded (APE 14 §).

6.3 Operators who sell foodstuffs of animal origin to ships for catering purposes

The act of selling foodstuffs of animal origin that come from the European Single Market to ships that sail under the Finnish flag for catering purposes falls within the scope of first arrival activities. These types of operators must register with the Finnish Food Authority as first arrival operators and create an own-check plan for their first



arrival activities (receiving first arrival operator/forwarder). A ship that sails under the Finnish flag can also serve as a place of first arrival. If the same operator sells foodstuffs of animal origin from the European Single Market to ships that sail under some other flag than the flag of Finland, these foodstuffs do not fall within the scope of first arrival activities. However, upon a control authority's request, the operator must be able to demonstrate the location from which the foodstuffs were acquired and where they have been delivered, as is mandated by the traceability requirements for foodstuffs of animal origin.

6.4 First arrival operators who sell foodstuffs of animal origin with distance selling methods

Distance selling refers to sales activities that are conducted by means of distance communication, such as an online store. These means of distance communication can refer to any means that can be used to conclude a contract between a business and consumer without having these two parties be present at the same location at the same time. Telemarketing and mail-order selling are also considered distance selling.

The same requirements and responsibilities apply to food business operators that utilise distance selling methods as to other food business operators in retail sales. There are no exceptions. A first arrival operator that utilises distance selling methods must be subjected to food controls. In addition, a first arrival operator that utilises distance selling methods must first submit a report on the commencement of its first arrival activities to the Finnish Food Authority. The operator that utilises distance selling methods is responsible for providing consumers with the relevant mandatory product information. The operator whose name is used to market the foodstuff is responsible for the accuracy of the food information, all other information on the packaging and for the marketing material used. However, those food business operators who are not responsible for the food information of the foodstuffs that they sell are still not permitted to supply any foodstuffs that they know or presume to be in violation of the applicable food-related legislation.

For more information on distance selling, see the following page:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/companies/food-sector/sales/sale-of-food-online/>

6.5 Domestic mobile and periodic first arrival operators

Domestic first arrival operators who import foodstuffs of animal origin to Finland from the European Single Market and who utilise movable food premises and/or whose operations are of a periodic nature (also known as mobile and/or periodic first arrival operators) are subject to the same requirements as permanent Finnish first arrival



operators when it comes to e.g. their own-check plan, submitting reports, reception inspections, packaging markings, the origin of their products, as well as the documents that are included with the products.

Before commencing any first arrival activities, the operator (natural or legal person) must first register as a first arrival operator with the Finnish Food Authority. A copy of the commencement report should always be kept at the movable sales point so that it can be presented to any control authorities upon request. For more information on submitting the report, see section 4.1 of this guide.

Periodic and/or mobile first arrival operators are required to submit monthly summaries to the Finnish Food Authority of the foodstuffs that were imported during the previous month. For more information on submitting the report, see section 4.2 of this guide.

All domestic first arrival operators as well as all mobile and periodic operators must have a fixed place of first arrival (food premise or establishment) where foodstuffs of animal origin from other EU member states to Finland are first received or where such foodstuffs are received from an intermediate storage facility in the form of undivided import lots after a storage period of less than 48 hours (Food Act, section 6; APE, section 4).

6.6 Foreign mobile and periodic first arrival operators

Before commencing any first arrival activities, the operator (natural or legal person) must first register as a first arrival operator with the Finnish Food Authority. A copy of the commencement report should always be kept at the sales point so that it can be presented to any control authorities upon request. For more information on submitting reports, see section 4.1 of this guide.

Foreign mobile first arrival operators are not required to have a fixed place of first arrival in Finland. However, a notification of movable food premises must always be submitted in Finland if the operations in Finland are of a permanent nature (over 6 months per year in total).

Foreign movable first arrival operators whose operations are periodic or temporary (under 6 months per year in total) are not required to submit a notification of food premises for their movable premises in Finland, provided that the operator has submitted a notification of food premises to the control authority of another EU member state. If a notification of food premises has not been submitted before entering Finland, it must be submitted to the municipality wherein the operations are set to begin (Food Act, section 14(1)). A copy of the notification of food premises



submitted in the operator's home country and the most recent control report should be kept at the sales point so that they can be presented to the food control authorities upon request.

Foreign mobile first arrival operators should inform the relevant local food control authorities in advance before commencing their sales activities. In connection with providing this information, the operator should also submit the notification of food premises that they made in their home country to the local food control authority in Finland.

Foreign mobile first arrival operators who use a mobile food premise or whose activities are of a periodic nature are not required to submit monthly reports to the Finnish Food Authority.

7 SPECIAL GUARANTEES CONCERNING SALMONELLA

7.1 Legislation

The special guarantees concerning salmonella for Finland and other member states are laid down in the following EU regulations:

- EC 853/2004
- EC 1688/2005
- EU 427/2012
- EU 2018/307
- EFTA Surveillance Authority Decision No 1/19/COL

7.2 The requirements presented in Special Guarantee Regulation EC 1688/2005

All consignments to Finland that contain bovine, pork or poultry (chicken, turkey, guinea fowl, duck and goose) meat or ground meat made of these products must include a commercial document concerning salmonella and a laboratory test result (for salmonella). The commercial document must be compliant with Annex IV of the Special Guarantee Regulation, and in case it is represented by another type of document, the document in question must contain the corresponding information. Please note that according to Annex I, section 1 of Regulation EC 853/2004, offal and blood are considered to be meat, and thus these special guarantee provisions for salmonella also apply to these products.

All consignments to Finland that contain chicken eggs must include an intra-Community trade certificate (Annex V, parts 1 and 2).



The aforementioned documents must be attributable to the relevant shipping documents and shipped foodstuffs. Each consignment must be provided with a unique set of documents that are appended to its consignment note. The documents may also be delivered digitally to the receiving operator as long as the operator can demonstrate that the consignment will not be forwarded before the documents have been received and inspected.

Salmonella samples of meat that is delivered to Finland and falls under the scope of the Special Guarantee Regulation must be taken at the establishment or food premise (e.g. the wholesaler) that will send the meat. The result of the salmonella analysis must be negative. This sampling process must be conducted for each consignment that is to be delivered to Finland, meaning the set of foodstuffs that belong to the same foodstuff group and are being sent using the same shipping documents.

If the first recipient after the EU border inspection is located in Finland (according to the CVED) no matter the country where the border inspection takes place in, then the lot will be considered as a third-country import and not as a lot from the European Single Market.

Example: A consignment of meat is sent from Brazil to Finland. A veterinary border inspection is conducted for the consignment in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and the first receiving company after the border inspection is located in Finland. This type of import does not represent European Single Market trade if the entire consignment is delivered to Finland after the border inspection.

However, if the consignment is divided in Rotterdam, the consignments become subject to European Single Market trade and each individual consignment must be issued with separate commercial documents and the consignments to Finland must be tested for salmonella by the European establishment or wholesaler that will send the consignment.

The special guarantee documents (commercial document and salmonella certificate) must be made in the same EU member state.

Example: If an undivided consignment is delivered from Austria to Finland through Germany in a way that the consignment is only stored (not processed) in Germany, the commercial document and salmonella testing can be done in either Austria or Germany. If the consignment is divided into smaller lots in Germany, and only some of these will be delivered to Finland, the salmonella tests and commercial documents must be made in Germany for the lots that are to be delivered to Finland.



7.2.1 Foodstuffs that are to be heated in an establishment

If a meat preparation establishment or establishment that prepares egg products intends to import foodstuffs for the purposes of manufacturing products that need to be heated, these foodstuffs must come with the necessary Special Guarantee Regulation EC 1688/2005-compliant commercial document (for bovine and pork meat) or intra-Community trade certificate (for chicken eggs), but the meat or the flock of origin of the eggs does not need to be inspected for salmonella provided that the foodstuffs will be subjected to a process that will guarantee the destruction of any salmonella (APE, section 5(3) and 6(3)). The foodstuff's documents must indicate that the foodstuff is to be used for this purpose. If the consignment is to be forwarded from the place of first arrival to another establishment, a label must be affixed to the consignment to indicate that the meat is to be heated. As part of its own-check process, the operator must also ensure that all foodstuffs that are to be heated are kept separate from all other foodstuffs.

7.2.2 Exceptions to the Special Guarantee Regulation's documentation requirements

A commercial document and intra-Community trade certificate (EC 1688/2005, Annexes IV and V) or a salmonella inspection certificate does not need to be included in a consignment in the following cases:

- if the consignment is being shipped from a member state in the European Single Market where the product in question is subject to a similar type of Commission-approved salmonella control programme as in Finland:
 - bovine and pork meat and ground meat: Norway, Sweden
 - poultry meat and ground meat (chicken, turkey, guinea fowl, duck and goose; also including broiler meat): Norway, Sweden
 - broiler/chicken meat (*Gallus gallus*) and ground meat: Denmark, Iceland
 - turkey meat and ground meat: Iceland
 - chicken eggs: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland
- if a product's country of origin is one that has already been granted special guarantees for salmonella for the product in question, but it is transported to Finland through a country that does not have any special guarantees for salmonella, such as Estonia. The transportation process can include storage, but no processing (e.g. re-packaging).

Special Guarantee Regulation EC 1688/2005 does not apply to the following foodstuffs, i.e. they do not require commercial documents/intra-Community trade certificates or inspection certificates:



- meat from other animal species than bovine, pork and poultry (chicken, turkey, guinea fowl, duck and goose) as well as ground meat made of these,
- mechanically separated meat (MSM),
- raw meat products made using the meat of any animal species, meat products,
- egg products,
- other bird eggs than chicken eggs.

7.3 Further details concerning Special Guarantee Regulation EC 1688/2005-compliant documents

- The commercial document/intra-Community trade certificate must be written in Finnish, Swedish or English.
- All Regulation-compliant documents must be prepared in a way that they can be reliably associated with the foodstuff in question and, in the case of meat, with the relevant inspection certificate. The factors that can be used to associate documents with the relevant foodstuffs include reference numbers, lot numbers, dates, product names and weights in kilograms. Delivery notes and invoices can also be used to associate documents with the relevant foodstuffs.
- The reference number of a commercial document is assigned by the responsible person who signed the document, and this number is used to associate the salmonella inspection analysis certificate with the correct lot number. Upon request, the first arrival operator must be able to demonstrate traceability to a control authority.
- The commercial document must be drawn up in triplicate (the original and two copies). The original document is sent to the place of first arrival for storage for a minimum period of two years.
- The total page number of the commercial document also includes the pages used for the laboratory inspection certificate.
- As a rule, the information presented in section 1 of the commercial document must include the approval number issued by the establishment that sent the consignment. If the product originates from some other type of approved food premise than a food premise that has been granted establishment status, the approval number cannot be required (e.g. a wholesaler).
- Section 2 of the commercial document must clearly indicate the recipient's information, the destination establishment's approval number is not necessary.



- Any unnecessary options in section 6 of the commercial document must be crossed out. The first option requires that the sender also submits the laboratory inspection certificate.
- If the required documents are not present, they cannot be replaced with any official or own-check samples that have been taken in Finland. If the operator does not submit the missing documents within the period mandated by the authority, the authority will reject the foodstuff.

The rules concerning the sampling of bovine, pork and poultry meat and ground meat are presented in Annexes I and II of the Regulation, and the rules concerning the sampling of the flock of origin of chicken eggs in Annex III. The number of required samples depends on the number of packages present in the consignment.

8 CONSIGNMENTS REJECTED BY THE AUTHORITIES

If a local first arrival control authority rejects a foodstuff consignment and provides the operator with the opportunity to return the foodstuff back to its country of departure, the consignment may not be returned before the Finnish Food Authority has confirmed with the authorities of the country of departure that the foodstuff may be returned to said country (Food Act, section 60; APE, section 17).

The local first arrival control authority must notify the Finnish Food Authority of the first arrival operator's intent to return the rejected foodstuff back to its country of departure. The request must also include the type of form required by Annex 2 of Regulation 118/2006 or the corresponding set of details. The Finnish Food Authority will submit the return permission inquiry to the control authorities of the country of departure, and after it has received a return permission, the Finnish Food Authority will notify the relevant local first arrival control authority of the matter.

9 RECALLS

A food business operator is required to initiate a recall if a foodstuff that it has imported, produced, processed, manufactured or distributed does not meet the necessary food safety requirements. The recall process includes notifying the authorities, which should be done using a special recall form, arranging for the removal of the product from the market, and, whenever necessary, notifying consumers of the defect in the foodstuff. In some cases, a foodstuff that has been removed from the market and is still in storage can be corrected so that it can be sold again, but usually the operator will be required to destroy the defective product in the appropriate manner. The food control authority of the relevant control region will monitor the



recall process and instruct the operator. The recall form is sent to this authority, as well as to this address takaisinvedot@ruokavirasto.fi.

The recall form as well as more detailed instructions can be found on the website of the Finnish Food Authority:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/companies/food-sector/common-requirements-in-the-food-sector/valvonta/guidelines-on-withdrawal-of-products/>

10 CONTACT INFORMATION OF THE FINNISH FOOD AUTHORITY'S FIRST ARRIVAL CONTROL UNIT

If you wish to contact the first arrival control unit, please get in touch by email at ensisaapumisvalvonta@ruokavirasto.fi or by mail:

Finnish Food Authority
Microbiological food safety unit
First arrival control
P.O. BOX 200
FI-00027 FINNISH FOOD AUTHORITY

11 UPDATES TO THE GUIDE AND FORMS

The Finnish Food Authority will update this guide whenever necessary. The instructions and forms for first arrival activities are published and updated only on the website of the Finnish Food Authority:

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/about-us/services/guides--instructions--and-forms/companies/import-and-export/control-of-places-of-first-arrivals/>

This guide will enter into force on 22 August 2019.