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Report Highlights:

This report provides information of the food and agricultural laws and regulations currently in force in Vietnam. Updates have been made to the Executive Summary, Section I – Food Laws, Section II – Labeling Requirements, Section IV – Food Additives Regulation, Section VI - Other Requirements, Regulations and Registration Measures, Section VII – Other Specific Standards, and Section X – Trade Facilitation. New sections added to the report include Section 3.2 – Packaging Sustainability Measures, and Section 7.3 – Plant-Based Meat and Dairy Alternatives.

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Abbreviated terms for easy reference:

- CFS (Certificate of Free Sale)
- DAH (Department of Animal Health, MARD)
- DFISH (Directorate of Fisheries, MARD)
- DLP (Department of Livestock Production, MARD)
- FBOs (Food Business Operators)
- FSL (Food Safety Law)
- GDVC (General Department of Vietnam Customs)
- GVN (Government of Vietnam)
- MARD (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development)
- MOF (Ministry of Finance)
- MOH (Ministry of Health)
- MOIT (Ministry of Industry and Trade)
- MOST (Ministry of Science and Technology)
- NAFIQAD (National Agro-Forestry-Fishery Quality Assurance Department, MARD)
- NOIP (National Office of Intellectual Property, MOST)
- SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary)
- VFA (Vietnam Food Administration, MOH)
- WTO (World Trade Organization)

DISCLAIMER

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Hanoi Vietnam, for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies may have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is strongly 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.

Post also notes that this report may not cover the regulations released after December 2021 by the Government of Vietnam (GVN), should U.S. exporters have any questions, please contact aghanoi@fas.usda.gov.

Executive Summary

Vietnam is the largest export market for U.S. foods and agricultural products in Southeast Asia. From January to September 2021, the total value of U.S. agricultural exports to Vietnam reached \$3.1 billion USD, increasing 9.1 percent compared to the same period in 2020. Despite the nationwide lockdown from July to September due to the fourth COVID-19 surge, which caused temporary disruption of supply chains in Vietnam, exports of U.S. bulk commodities were valued \$1.42 billion USD, down slightly compared to the previous year. Consumer-oriented products increased by 6.9 percent with rising exports of dairy products, tree nuts, and non-alcoholic beverages (juices). Intermediate products were up by 44.7 percent with a significant increase of soybean meal and distiller grains exports.

Vietnam's import requirements for food and agricultural products are regulated under several key laws, including the Food Safety Law (FSL), the Law on Quality of Goods and Products, the Law on Animal Health, and the Law on Plant Health and Quarantine. The FSL assigns the role of food safety inspection to three ministries, the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT). Most processed products are under MOH and MOIT's jurisdiction, while meat and poultry, bulk commodities, dairy products, fresh fruits, and tree nuts are under only MARD's jurisdiction. Vietnam reformed its food safety law in 2018, which allowed self-declaration without pre-approval for the import of processed products. Product declaration, which needs to be approved by the health competent authorities, is required for supplemental foods, medical food and health supplements, medical foods, food for special dietary uses, and products for children up to 36 months.

In 2021, Vietnam notified several amendments of regulations on food and agricultural products to the World Trade Organization (WTO), including a food additives regulation and labeling requirements. Vietnam notified a draft Decree revising the food safety and quality inspection for imported goods to the WTO in July 2021. Significantly, Vietnam reduced the quarantine inspection for prepackaged products containing dairy ingredients and processed fishery products. Vietnam suspended the SARS-CoV-2 virus testing in packaging of imported frozen foods since there were no detections of COVID-19 on frozen food packaging in the first quarter of 2021.

Section I: Food Laws

Law on Food Safety

The Vietnam Food Safety Law (FSL), which entered into force on July 1, 2011, outlines responsibilities to ensure food safety; conditions for food safety; food production and trading; food import and export; food advertisement and labeling; food testing; food risk analysis; prevention and dealing with food safety incidents; communication on food safety; and state management of food safety.

According to the FSL, all imported food, food additives, substances used in food processing, and tools and materials used for containers and packing imported food shall be subject to import inspection for food safety, except in cases where the import inspection is exempt. Imported food is only granted customs clearance once inspection results show that the products in question meet import requirements. The Food Safety Law outlines three categories of food inspection: 1) Strict Inspection; 2) Normal Inspection, and 3) Simplified Inspection. The FSL assigns responsibility for the inspection of imported food to three ministries, MOH, MARD, and MOIT.

Registration and Inspection of Food Safety

To improve the enforcement of the FSL, the GVN issued Decree 15/2018 on February 2, 2018, replacing Decree 38/2012, to detail the implementation of the FSL (GAIN Report [VM8016](#)). This Decree makes fundamental changes to the registration and inspection for both domestic and imported food and the assignment of food safety management among MOH, MARD, and MOIT. Decree 15 provides the lists of food products subject to MOH, MARD, and MOIT's jurisdiction in Appendix II, III and IV.

Under Decree 15, the GVN applies a new simplified registration procedure for pre-packaged processed foods, food additives, and food processing aids and authorizes food enterprises to produce, import, and sell these products immediately after the enterprises have published product self-declaration documentation. The GVN also set a new import inspection regime to streamline and synchronize the import inspection methods applied by MOH, MARD, and MOIT. The new inspection regime maintains three inspection methods for all imports - reduced inspection, tightened inspection, and normal inspection, but reduces the sampling frequency, and switches to post-clearance inspection.

Handling of Food Safety Violations

Violations of food safety are subject to severe penalties and additional sanctions under GVN's Decree 115/2018 dated September 4, 2018, on handling administrative violations in food production and trade and food import and export. According to this Decree, organizations or individuals found using expired materials or products, those of unclear origin, or those from animals and plants not yet quarantined for food production will be given fines double the value of the infringing goods. Decree 115/2018 also increases fines for food safety violations up to VND 200 million or seven times higher than the value of

the infringing goods. Additional penalties, such as the revocation of certificates of food safety and the registration of products and the confiscation of materials or the suspension of business operations can also be enforced. Violating businesses are required to destroy their infringing food products and pay all expenses for handling any resulting food poisoning cases. Decree 115 took effect on October 20, 2018.

Under Article 317 of the Penal Code 100/2015/QH13, which took effect from January 1, 2018, a certain violation, such as using banned substances in the manufacture, preparation, processing, or preservation of food, or processing, providing, or selling food with the knowledge that it does not comply with technical or food safety regulations, are considered criminal offenses.

Reform of Food Safety Import Inspection

In January 2021, the GVN approved the Ministry of Finance's (MOF) proposal to reform the food safety and quality inspection for imported goods to improve clearance procedures and facilitate trade. In April 2021, the General Directorate of Vietnam Customs (GDVC) published a draft Decree regulating a reformed specialized inspection scheme of food safety and quality for imported goods (Specialized Inspection (SI) Decree). The draft Decree covered both imported foods and agricultural products and integrated the self-declaration (for food safety) and conformity announcement (for quality inspection) into the registration for import inspection. That resulted in revisions and the replacement of certain parts of Decree 15 on Food Safety and the Decrees guiding the Law on Quality of Goods and Products. Vietnam notified this draft Decree to WTO members as G/SPS/N/VNM/122 and G/TBT/N/VNM/194 in July 2021. As of November 2021, GDVC announced that the SI Decree has been re-submitted to the GVN and is pending the review of the Government members. Post continues to monitor and report on the development of this Decree.

Section II: Labeling Requirements

Food labeling requirements remain unchanged in 2021. Vietnam notified the Amendment of Decree 43 on Goods Labeling to the WTO in April, which proposed additional labeling requirements on the original label of imported goods and nutritional labeling. As of December 2021, the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) submitted the Amendment of Decree 43 to the GVN for consideration.

2.1. General Requirements

Decree 43/2017 on Goods Labeling

Vietnamese law imposes strict requirements on the labeling of goods. On April 14, 2017, the GVN issued Decree 43/2017/ND-CP replacing Decree 89/2009 on goods labeling. Decree 43/2017 provides labeling requirements for all categories of food, beverages, and agricultural inputs circulated in Vietnam, both domestically produced and imported. This Decree went into effect on June 1, 2017 (GAIN report [VM7031](#)).

The FSL also provides specific requirements on the labeling of the shelf life for prepacked food and special provisions for functional food, food additives, irradiated food, and genetically engineered food.

Along with these legal documents, Joint Circular 34/2014/TTLT-BYT-BNNPTNT-BCT issued by MOH, MOIT, and MARD on October 27, 2014 for Guiding the Goods Label for Various Foods, Food Additives, and Aids for Processing Packaged Foods remains in effect (GAIN report [VM5005](#)).

According to Decree 43, labels must be in Vietnamese and cover all mandatory content. Depending on the requirements of each type of food, the content can be included in a foreign language but must match the Vietnamese description, with their font size no larger than the relevant language in Vietnamese.

The mandatory labeling content for food includes: i) name of the goods, ii) name and address of the enterprise responsible for the goods; iii) origin of the goods, and iv) additional details in conformity with the nature of the goods prescribed in Appendix I of Decree 43/2017 and other relevant legal documents. This Decree provides flexible choices for the presentation of expiration dates that may be represented either as a “use by” date or “best before” date. However, the manufacture and expiration dates must be written in the "date-month-year" format (according to the western calendar) and must also be noted in this order if those dates are presented in another order on the product.

Food imported for consumption and circulation in the Vietnamese market must be labeled in either of the following ways: 1) labeling in Vietnamese, including the full mandatory labeling content; or 2) attached to secondary labels, which contain the Vietnamese translation of the mandatory information of the original label, or to supplement other mandatory information according to the nature of the commodity as prescribed in Decree 43/2017. Secondary labels are exempted for food ingredients, food additives, and food processing aids imported for internal production only and not for resale in the market.

On April 26, 2021, Vietnam notified a draft Amendment of Decree 43 on Labeling to the WTO as G/TBT/N/VNM/192. The draft proposed revisions on the mandatory content required on the original label for imported goods, including food and beverages. The additional requirement, requesting the importer’s name to be listed on the original label, has raised concerns about the trade impact. The draft Amendment also proposed labeling of nutritional value for certain food items, including processed foods, supplemental foods, medical foods, and food for special dietary uses. The USG sent official comments to Vietnam in June 2021. As of December 2021, the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) stated that the Amendment is pending for the review of the Government members. Post will continue to monitor and provide updates on the development of the Amendment.

MOST Circular 5/2019 Guiding Decree 43/2017

On June 26, 2019, MOST issued Circular 5/2019 to detail the implementation of a number of articles of Decree 43/2017 on Goods Labeling. This Circular took effect on January 1, 2021. Article 8 of Circular 5/2019 requires that the quantity of an ingredient be shown on a goods label, if its name is shown on the label, to draw attention to the product.

Circular 5/2019 allows for a label to include the terms, “no presence” or “not containing” or “no addition” of an ingredient” only if: i) the ingredient does not exist in the product nor in the materials used to produce the product; or ii) the product does not contain ingredients of the same group with similar properties or uses, unless the nature of the substitution is clearly stated. However, Circular

5/2019 accepts labeling per Codex’s guidance in certain cases, for example, goods are labeled “No sugar” if the sugar content is less than or equal to 0.5g/100g (solid) or 0.5g/100ml (liquid).

2.2. Other Specific Labeling Requirements

2.2.1. Labeling Food Additives

In addition to general labeling requirements stipulated in Joint Circular 34, food additives should be labeled as follows:

- Class name and international code (if any) must be enclosed with the name of the food additive.
- If two or more food additives are present in packaging, their names must be listed in the order of proportion by weight.
- The phrase “Use for food” (*Dùng cho thực phẩm* in Vietnamese) must be clearly written below the name of food additive using bold letters with a minimum height of 2 millimeters.

2.2.2. Labeling Irradiated Food

According to the FSL, in the case of food manufactured, processed, or preserved using irradiation, in addition to the mandatory labeling contents, the phrase “irradiated food”, or an internationally recognized irradiation food symbol accepted by Vietnam must be printed on the label.

2.2.3. Labeling Functional Food

The key legislation regarding the labeling of functional foods is the FSL and MOH’s Circular 43/2014/TT-BYT (Circular 43), dated November 24, 2014, regulating the management of functional foods. Circular 43 entered into force on January 15, 2015.

Under Circular 43, functional foods are categorized into four sub-groups: i) supplementary food (*Thực phẩm bổ sung* in Vietnamese); ii) health supplements, food supplements, and dietary supplements (collectively “*thực phẩm bảo vệ sức khỏe*”); iii) food for special medical purposes or medical food (*thực phẩm dinh dưỡng dùng cho mục đích y tế đặc biệt* or *thực phẩm dinh dưỡng y học*); and iv) food for special dietary use (*thực phẩm dùng cho chế độ ăn đặc biệt*).

The labeling of these products must comply with the requirements applicable to foodstuffs. Along with complying with standard regulations, the labeling for functional food must meet the following requirements:

- The specific phrase for the relevant sub-group name must be recorded on the product label (supplemental food, health supplement, food for special medical purposes, and food for special dietary use). The nutrient content (e.g., the quantity of vitamins, minerals, enzymes, fatty acids, amino acids, or biological substances) must be displayed on the label.
- For supplementary food, the label must include the following content: the objective of use, product utility, dosage, and special precautions or side effects of the product (if any);
- For food for special medical purposes and/or for special dietary uses, the label content must include

directions for use and special precautions (if any);

- For health supplements, food supplements, and dietary supplements, the statement "This product is not a medicine, nor effective to replace medicine" must be listed directly after the product's effects or with other recommendations (if any). This phrase must have a contrasting color to the background color of the label and the letters must be at least 1.2 millimeters in height (or at least 0.9 millimeters if one side of the package is smaller than 80 square centimeters). In cases where the product name is the same as one of the main active ingredients, the quantity of that ingredient must be displayed on the label.

2.2.4. Labeling Genetically Engineered Food (GE food)

In addition to requiring mandatory labeling for most GE food, the FSL also requires the phrase "*thực phẩm biến đổi gen*" (genetically engineered food) to be displayed on the product.

MARD and MOST issued Joint Circular 45/2015/TTLB-BNNPTNT-BKHHCN (Circular 45) dated November 23, 2015, guiding the Labeling of Prepacked Genetically Engineered Foods, which details the labeling requirements applicable to food products containing GE organisms and products of GE organisms for sale in Vietnam. This Circular entered into force on January 8, 2016 (GAIN report [VM5088](#)). This Circular applies to pre-packed foods containing at least one GE ingredient that is at least five percent of the total makeup of the product. In instances where Circular 45 is applicable, the Vietnamese phrase "*biến đổi gen*" (genetically engineered) must be printed next to the GE component on the ingredient list of the Vietnamese-language secondary label that is affixed on a product.

The labeling of GE food products as stipulated in Joint Circular 45/2015 does not apply in the following cases: a) food carried by people on entry for personal use within the duty free limit; food in diplomatic bags; food temporarily imported for re-export; food in bonded warehouses; food used as samples for testing and research; and food used during exhibitions or trade shows; and b) materials/food additives/food processing aids, and food packaging material imported for internal production that are not for sale in the market or for internal transportation among warehouses of an enterprise.

Joint Circular 45/2015 also required the supplemental printing of the phrase "*biến đổi gen*" on the label of GE food products which were circulated in the market before this Circular took effect. Pre-packed GE food products lacking labels compliant with Circular 45/2015 are not allowed to be produced, traded, or imported into Vietnam.

Decree 15/2018/ND-CP dated February 2, 2018, keeps the requirements for the labeling of foods containing at least one GE ingredient that exceeds five percent of the product's total makeup and labeling exemptions for GE food in the following cases:

- Pre-packaged food containing GE ingredients without the detection of the modified genes or products of the modified genes in the food;
- Fresh GE foods and unpackaged processed GE foods sold directly to consumers; and
- GE foods used in emergencies, such as natural disasters or epidemics.

Section III: Packaging and Container Regulations

3.1. National Technical Regulations (NTR) for food packages and containers

MOH issued the following National Technical Regulations on food safety and hygiene for packages, containers, and equipment directly in contact with food:

- NTR 12-1:2011/BYT on food safety and hygiene for synthetic resin packages, containers, and equipment in direct contact with food,
- NTR 12-2:2011/BYT on food safety and hygiene for rubber packages, containers, and equipment in direct contact with food, and
- NTR 12-3:2011/BYT on food safety and hygiene for metallic packages, containers, and equipment in direct contact with food.

3.2. Packaging Sustainability Measures

Recycling of Packages

The Vietnam National Assembly adopted the Law on Environment Protection (EPL) 72/2020/QH14 on November 17, 2020. The Law will take effect from January 1, 2022, and will replace the EPL 55/2014/QH13. This Law creates recycling responsibilities for packages with a recyclable value. Accordingly, packages with a recycled value must be recycled by their manufacturers/importers or the manufacturers/importers have to make a financial contribution to the Vietnam Environmental Protection Fund (EFP) to support recycling. The GVN will provide the required rate of recycling and the value of the financial contributions. In August 2021, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MONRE) published a draft Decree to guide the EPL's implementation, which provides the list of packaging that must be recycled with recycling specifications and an implementation roadmap. The list includes packaging of food and beverages, including paper packaging with a content volume of more than 100 ml and packaging containers made from metal, plastic, and glass with a content volume more than 300 ml.

Roadmap to Single-use Plastic Restriction by 2030

According to the EPL, the GVN will prescribe a roadmap to restrict the production and import of single-use plastic products and bio-persistent plastic packaging. Currently, the draft Decree guiding the EPL implementation has proposed a partial ban on the production and import of single-use plastic and bio-persistent plastic packaging starting on January 1, 2026, and a nationwide ban by 2030. This draft Decree is still under the GVN's consideration as industry raised concerns that a total ban of single-use plastic materials and bio-persistent plastic packaging will challenge the health services and food industries. Post will continue to monitor and provide updates on the development of this Decree.

Section IV: Food Additives Regulations

Vietnam kept its regulations on food additives in 2021. Currently, MOH's Circular 24/2019, dated August 30, 2019, regulates the use of food additives and the lists of permissible additives in Vietnam

(GAIN report [VM2019-0066](#)). Circular 24/2019 took effect on October 16, 2019 and replaced MOH's Circular 27/2012 and Circular 8/2015 on food additives.

Lists of Permitted Food Additives and Maximum Use Levels (MLs) in Food

Vietnam continues to adopt the use of food additives in accordance with Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) STAN 192-1995. Appendix 2A of Circular 24/2019 lists the additives permitted for use in food and their MLs in accordance with GSFA.

In addition, Circular 24/2019 permits the use of additional additives for wine, dairy products, spices, cereal, processed meat, sauces, and fish, which are currently not adopted in Codex standards. The list of additives and MLs that are not prescribed in GSFA, is provided in Appendix 2B of this Circular.

On August 12, 2021, Vietnam notified a draft Circular amending the Food Additives Circular to the SPS Committee as G/SPS/N/VNM/123. The draft Amendment proposes the immediate update of the List of Permissible Food Additives in Vietnam, as soon as Codex updates its standards on food additives.

Flavorings

Vietnam allows the use of flavorings that are evaluated and determined as safe at estimated intakes or acceptable daily intake (ADI) by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA). These flavorings must meet technical requirements on identity and purity prescribed in National Standard TCVN 6417:2010 guiding the use of flavorings.

In the SPS notification G/SPS/N/VNM/123, Vietnam proposes to extend the approval for the flavorings that are on the General Recognized As Safe (GRAS) Lists released by the Flavors and Extracts Manufacturers Association of America (FEMA) and the list of flavorings permitted for use in food by the European Union.

Section V: Pesticides and Other Contaminants

5.1. Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for Pesticides

MRLs for pesticides in food are regulated in MOH's Circular 50/2016/TT-BYT dated December 30, 2016 (GAIN report [VM7026](#)). This Circular, which took effect from July 1, 2017, provides MRLs for 205 compounds for a wide range of foods, including: fruits, vegetables, cereals, nuts, coffee, tea, meat, fat, skin, offal, eggs, milk and dairy products, dried food, vegetable oils, and spices. MRLs for a number of compounds, currently banned from use in Vietnam (e.g., endosulfan, endrin, lindane) are maintained in accordance with Codex standards.

Vietnam continues to maintain the MRLs for glyphosate, even as Vietnam banned the domestic use of glyphosate on July 1, 2021. The Vietnam Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Office confirmed to FAS in June 2020, that the maximum residue limits (MRLs) for glyphosate, prescribed in MOH's Circular 50/2016, remain unchanged.

5.2. Maximum Limits for Mycotoxin and other Contaminants

MOH has promulgated the following National Technical Regulations (NTR) regulating the tolerance of contaminants in food:

- NTR 8-1:2011, promulgating the tolerance of mycotoxin contamination in food. This regulation sets up the maximum limits of aflatoxin, ochratoxin A, and other mycotoxins in many types of food, including, nuts, corn, rice, raw milk, milk powder, spices, food formula for babies, etc.
- NTR 8-2:2011, promulgating the tolerance of heavy metal contamination in food. This regulation establishes the safety limits for levels of contamination of arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury, methyl mercury and zinc allowed in food.
- NTR 8-3:2012/BYT, promulgating the tolerance of microbiological contamination in food. This regulation prescribes the limits of microbiological contamination in food for milk and dairy, eggs, and products from eggs, meat and products from meat, aquaculture products, nutrition products for children aged 0 to 36 months old, bottled natural water, bottled water and instant-use ice, cream, vegetables and fruits, and products from vegetables and fruits.

5.3. Maximum Residue Limits for Veterinary Drugs

On September 7, 2016, MOH announced the amendment of Circular 24/2013/TT-BYT, dated August 14, 2013, regulating MRLs for veterinary drugs in food. The amendment proposed zero tolerances for a number of compounds in food, including ractopamine, trenbolone acetate, and zeranol.

In response, the USG and other countries requested Vietnam not deviate from its past practice of following Codex standards and urged MOH to maintain its current MRLs for ractopamine and other veterinary drugs. On May 31, 2017, the United States and Vietnam announced a resolution of the veterinary drug MRLs issue in a Joint Statement issued by the U.S. President and the Vietnamese Prime Minister. On November 9, 2018, MOH confirmed they reached an agreement with MARD to temporarily suspend the amendment of Circular 24/2013 and maintain the current MRLs for veterinary drugs in food.

On November 28, 2019, MARD issued Circular 21/2019 Guiding a number of Articles of the Animal Husbandry Law on Animal Feed. The Circular removes ractopamine, trenbolone acetate, and zeranol from the list of chemicals banned for domestic use in Vietnam (GAIN Report [VM2019-0065](#)).

5.4. Maximum Limits (MLs) of Contaminants in Feed

MARD issued National Technical Regulation on Maximum Limits (MLs) of Undesirable Substances in Feed and Feed Ingredients (NTR190) on March 9, 2020. NTR190, was initially going to enter into force on July 1, 2020, set a zero tolerance for *Salmonella* and renewed MLs for heavy metals in feed and feed ingredients, including grains and oilseeds for both livestock and aquaculture feed (GAIN Report [VM2020-0016](#)).

As the United States and other trading partners raised concerns about the negative trade impacts of NTR190, MARD notified it to the WTO as G/SPS/N/VNM/113. On June 30, 2020, MARD issued Circular 08/2020 postponing the implementation of the zero tolerance for *Salmonella* and MLs for heavy metals in feed ingredients of plant origin until June 30, 2021, to allow time for further review and assessment.

Starting on July 1, 2021, Vietnam eliminated the zero tolerance for *Salmonella* and tolerances for heavy metals in feed ingredients of plant origin in National Technical Regulation (NTR)190:2020 (GAIN Report [VM2021-0057](#)). The revision helps to avoid increasing testing costs and ensure the trade flow of grain and oilseed products, including soybean meal, distillers dried grains with solubles (DDGS), and corn gluten feed.

Section VI: Other Requirements, Regulations, and Registration Measures

Vietnam requires several kinds of certificates for imported food and agricultural products. The list of export certificates and certification requirements relevant for each group of food and agricultural products are detailed in the FAIRS Export Certificate Report. Generally, Vietnam requires Export Certificates for meat, poultry, and seafood, and Phytosanitary Certificates for plant products. A Certificate of Free Sale or Health Certificate is required for health supplements, medical foods, food for special dietary uses, dietary products for children up to 36 months, genetically engineered (GE), and irradiated food. A Certificate of Analysis (COA) is required for feed ingredients, including grains and oilseeds. There are no mandatory requirements for a COA, but Vietnamese importers usually request a COA containing test results of key specifications prescribed in national technical regulations on food/feed safety.

Imported food and agricultural products are subject to relevant specialized inspections, including food safety inspection, quarantine inspection, and quality inspection at points of entry. Testing of safety indicators (per national technical regulations on food safety) is required for meat, poultry, seafood, and dairy products. Vietnam carries out testing to monitor residues of pesticides in imported fruits and vegetables. Imported foods are also subject to food safety monitoring in the domestic market.

COVID-19 Food Inspections

On November 24, 2020, MOH requested border inspection agencies to carry out food packaging sampling to test for SARS-CoV-2 virus, especially on frozen foods imported from countries identified as high risk based on their COVID-19 status. In response to the United States and other trading partners' questions regarding the scientific basis for such measures as well as their trade impacts, the Vietnam Food Administration (VFA) stated that the testing was for monitoring purposes and would not affect trade. According to industry sources, Vietnam's Department of Animal Health (DAH) took samples for COVID-19 testing randomly at the same time as the quarantine check.

In March 2021, DAH reported that there was no detection of SARS-CoV-2 virus in packaging of imported meat, poultry, and seafood. DAH suspended the SARS-CoV-2 virus test after reporting no detections.

6.1. Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Facility Registration

Vietnam requires exporters of meat, poultry, and seafood to be registered on the list of establishments eligible for export of foodstuffs of animal origin and seafood prior to exporting these products to Vietnam. Starting from July 18, 2017, the Department of Animal Health (DAH) assumed responsibility for the registration of establishments (GAIN report [VM7036](#)).

As mentioned in Section I of this report, GVN's Decree 15/2018 consolidates import requirements for food derived from aquatic animals and terrestrial animals. Accordingly, Vietnam requires a two-step registration process for the export of meat and seafood to Vietnam:

- Exporting countries are required to register to be included on the list of countries and territories approved for export to Vietnam.
- Exporters of food derived from aquatic animals and terrestrial animals, except for processed and prepackaged products, are required to register to be included on the list of establishments approved for export to Vietnam.

On July 18, 2017, DAH assumed responsibility for the registration of establishments (GAIN report [VM7036](#)). DAH considers heat-treated meat, poultry, and seafood products to be processed products, and thus establishments wishing to export these products do not need to be registered.

DAH approves establishments' application packages on a case-by-case basis, within 30 days of receiving an application. U.S. exporters of meat and poultry products wishing to register an establishment or update a registration should reach out to aghanoi@fas.usda.gov or usda4circ25@gmail.com. FAS/Hanoi will provide exporters with the application packet or information needed to update a current registration.

U.S. seafood exporters should refer to the guidance of the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration's Seafood Inspection Program at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/export-requirements-country-and-jurisdiction-n-z#vietnam>

The list of establishments eligible to export meat and meat products to Vietnam is available at: <https://cucthuy.gov.vn/web/guest/danh-sach-cac-doanh-nghiep-cua-22-nuoc-du-dieu-kien-xuat-khau-thuc-pham-co-nguon-goc-dong-vat-tren-can-vao-viet-nam>

The list of establishments eligible for exporting seafood to Vietnam is available at: <https://cucthuy.gov.vn/en/web/guest/danh-sach-doanh-nghiep-xk-thuy-san>

6.2. Product Registration

6.2.1. Self- Declaration for Processed and Pre-packaged Food

Decree 15/2018 requires food enterprises to publish a Product Self-Declaration to clarify quality specifications, labeling information, product shelf-life and other technical information prior to manufacture and/or import of these products.

Article 4.2 of Decree 15 allows products and raw materials imported for processing for re-export or for internal production that are not for domestic sale to be exempt from self-declaration. On March 9, 2018, the Directorate of Customs instructed local customs authorities to allow this exemption based on the importer's declaration on the purposes of use for imported shipments. Importers are fully responsible for the use of imported shipments in accordance with their declaration (GAIN Report [VM8016](#)).

6.2.2. Product Declaration for Health Supplements and Dietary Product

Decree 15/2018 requires a Product Declaration for the following products:

- Health supplements, medical foods, and food for special dietary uses.
- Dietary products for children up to 36 months.
- Mixed food additives with new usages, food additives that are not on the permitted list, or food additives not intended for use for the food categories as prescribed by MOH.

Importers are required to submit applications for Product Declaration to either VFA or the provincial competent authorities. Within seven working days (for unregistered food additives, medical foods, food for special dietary uses, and dietary products for children up to 36 months) or 21 working days (for health supplements) from the day the competent authorities receive an application, the authorities will verify the application and issue a Certificate of Registered Product Declaration. An application for product declaration consists of:

- Certificate of Free Sale, or Certificate of Exportation, or Health Certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of origin/exporting country, which has a safety assurance statement for users or permits the free sale of the products in the country of origin/exporting country (the certificate must be consular-notarized);
- Original copy or certified true copy of the testing results, completed within 12 months up to the date of the document submission, issued by recognized laboratories or ISO 17025 accredited laboratories. The testing results must specify the safety indicators prescribed by MOH according to the risk management principles per international regulations or standards applied by the supplier, if relevant MOH regulations are not available.
- An original or authenticated copy of documentation of scientific evidence of the effects of the product or ingredients.

An authenticated copy of a Certificate of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) or an equivalent certificate for health supplements is required as of July 1, 2019.

6.2.3. Registration for Import Inspection of Foodstuffs of Plant, Animal Origin, and Seafood

Vietnam requires foodstuffs of plant, animal origin, and seafood to be registered for import quarantine and food safety inspection prior to importation to Vietnam. The procedures are detailed in Section 6.3.

6.2.4. Registration for Import of Live Aquatic Animals for Consumption

Vietnam allows imports of live aquatic animals for human consumption if they are listed in the Appendix VIII of Government's Decree 26/2019 guiding the implementation of the Law on Fishery - the list of aquatic animals eligible for trade in Vietnam. DAA does not require U.S. exporters of live aquatic animals to register for export to Vietnam.

Risk Assessment for Live Aquatic Animals

For the initial import of live aquatic animals that are not included in the list of aquatic animals eligible for trade, the live aquatic animal's environmental impacts must be evaluated by the Directorate of Fisheries (DFISH). According to MARD's Circular 25/2018 regulating risk assessments and granting import permits for live aquatic animals, importers must submit applications to DFISH for their evaluation. The application consists of:

- An application for import permit.
- A description of the biological characteristics of imported live aquatic animals.
- A plan for the management and observation of imported live aquatic animals (using the form issued together with Circular 25/2018).

Import of Live Lobsters to Vietnam

DFISH issued Decision 540/QD-TCTS-TTKN, dated September 7, 2015, recognizing American lobsters (*Homarus americanus*) as approved under a risk assessment. The Decision is available at: <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Thuong-mai/Quy-dinh-540-QD-TCTS-TTKN-tom-hum-nhap-khau-thuy-san-song-da-duoc-danh-gia-rui-ro-289629.aspx>. This decision permits the importation of American lobsters (*Homarus americanus*) into Vietnam for food use, but importers are required to obtain an import permit for each shipment from DFISH (Article 6 of Circular 25/2018).

6.2.5. Approval of Genetically Engineered (GE) Food and Feed

GE products are required to obtain a Certificate of Approval for Food and/or Feed Use (Food and Feed Certificate) prior to importation, production, and trade in Vietnam.

Under Decree 69/2010/ND-CP dated June 21, 2010, on Biosafety for Genetically Modified Organisms, MARD is responsible for reviewing applications and granting Food and Feed Certificates for GE products. The conditions for import and trade of GE food and feed, previously prescribed in Decree 69/2010, are consolidated in Decree 123/2018 dated September 17, 2018, amending and supplementing conditions for agricultural trade and business.

The process for applying for a Food and Feed Use Certificate is detailed in MARD's Circular 2/2014 dated January 24, 2014. The Circular also regulates the process to revoke Food and Feed Use Certificates.

6.3. Specialized Import Inspection

6.3.1. Food Safety Inspection

Decree 15/2018 set a new import inspection scheme to streamline and synchronize inspection methods conducted by MOH, MARD, and MOIT. The new inspection regime includes three inspection methods: reduced inspection, tightened inspection, and normal inspection, which reduce the amount of required sampling, mainly through document examinations (GAIN report [VM8016](#)).

Exemption from Food Safety Import Inspection

As mentioned in Section I - General Food Laws, Decree 15/2018 establishes a broader range of foods exempt from of import inspections. According to Article 13 of Decree 15/2018, the following products are exempted from import inspection:

- The product has a Certificate of Registered Product Declaration.
- Food in hand luggage of inbound passengers that is sent before or after arrival to serve the passengers' personal needs or travel purpose, gifts within duty-free allowances.
- Imports for personal use of people eligible for diplomatic immunity.
- Products in transit, temporarily imported for re-export or in bonded warehouses.
- Samples for testing or research whose quantities are suitable for these purposes and confirmed by the owners.
- Products used for display at exhibitions or fairs.
- Products or raw materials imported for production or processing for export or internal production that are not for domestic sale.
- Temporarily imported products for sale at duty-free shops.
- Imports serving emergency purposes under orders of the Government or the Prime Minister.

6.3.2. Import Quarantine for Plants and Plant Products

Plant Quarantine

Plant quarantine is governed by the Law 41/2013/QH13 on Plant Protection and Quarantine. This law entered into force on January 1, 2015. The Plant Protection Department (PPD), under MARD, is currently the agency responsible for import quarantine of products of plant origin. The list of its inspection bodies is specified in Appendix II of this report. Under the Law on Plant Protection and Quarantine, MARD released Circular 30/2014/TT-BNNPTNT (dated September 5, 2014), Circular 33/2014 (dated October 10, 2014), and Circular 35/2014/TT-BNNPTNT (dated October 31, 2014).

Circular 30/2014 published the list of articles subject to plant quarantine and the list of articles subject to pest risk analysis before importation into Vietnam. This Circular outlines that articles subject to plant quarantine must be quarantined at the Vietnamese port of entry in order to be granted customs clearance (GAIN report [VM4057](#)). Circular 33/2014 provides guidance on quarantine procedures for import, export, and in-transit consignments of plant origin. Circular 35/2014 circulated the list of quarantine pests (GAIN report [VM4067](#)). All of these Circulars entered into force on January 1, 2015.

MARD releases the Harmonized Schedule (HS) codes for imported goods subject to its jurisdiction, including the HS codes for regulated articles subject to plant quarantine in 2015. The list is revised annually or biannually. On September 20, 2021, MARD issued Circular 11/2021 to revise the list of HS codes for imported goods. The list of HS codes for regulated articles subject to plant quarantine are promulgated under Section 9, Appendix I of Circular 11. Should U.S. exporters have any questions on the HS codes, please email to aghamoi@fas.usda.gov

6.3.3. Import Quarantine for Animals and Animal Products

Animal quarantine is governed under the Law on Animal Health, which entered into force on July 1, 2016. DAH is currently the agency in charge of both quarantine and food safety inspections for imported food of animal origin. DAH follows the GVN's Decree 15/2018 on Food Safety as well as Circular 25/2016 (GAIN report [VM6065](#)) and Circular 26/2016 (GAIN report [VM6053](#)) for inspection procedures for the quarantine of terrestrial and aquatic animal products.

The inspection bodies responsible for quarantine and food safety inspection for imported food of animal origin are the Regional Offices of Animal Health (RAHO) under DAH. These inspection bodies are listed in Appendix II of this report.

Quarantine of Terrestrial Animals and Animal Products

The quarantine inspection process for terrestrial animals and animal products, is detailed in MARD's Circular 25, dated June 30, 2016 (GAIN report [VM6065](#)). The list of products subject to animal quarantine and their HS Codes has been revised in Appendix I, Section 1, of MARD's Circular 11/2021. Accordingly, MARD removed processed products under HS codes 19, 21 and 22 from the list of products subject to animal quarantine. Post notes that imported animal products, including processed meat and poultry, dairy products, and egg products are subject to both food safety and quarantine inspection.

Quarantine of Aquatic Animals and Aquatic Animal Products

The quarantine inspection process for aquatic animals and aquatic animal products is prescribed in MARD's Circular 26/2016 (GAIN report [VM6053](#)) and MARD Circular 36/2018 (GAIN report [VM9020](#)). The list of aquatic animals and aquatic animal products subject to quarantine and their HS codes has been revised in Appendix I, Section 5 of MARD's Circular 11/2021. MARD removed

processed fishery products including, smoked, salted, brined and heat-treated products from the list of products subject to quarantine.

Section VII: Other Specific Standards

7.1. National Technical Regulations on Food Quality and Safety

MOH has promulgated National Technical Regulations (NTR) setting quality specifications and safety limits for food products, including:

- NTR for nutritious cereal products for children ages 6 to 36 months,
- NTR on supplemental formula products for children ages 6 to 36 months,
- NTR on special medical-treatment products for children ages 0 to 12 months,
- NTR on micronutrient fortified food,
- NTR on natural mineral water and bottled water, and
- NTR on food additives including acidity regulators, firming agents, artificial sweeteners, antifoaming agents, antioxidant agents, and others.

The NTRs are available at: <http://www.vfa.gov.vn/van-ban.html>

7.2. Micronutrients and Fortified Food

The GVN issued Decree 9/2016/ND-CP, dated January 28, 2016, regulating the mandatory fortification of salt, wheat flour, and vegetable oils (GAIN report [VM6012](#)). Accordingly, the following foods must be fortified with the relevant micronutrients:

- Edible salt and salt used for food processing must be fortified with iodine,
- Wheat flour used for food processing must be fortified with iron and zinc, and
- Vegetable oils which contain one of the following ingredients: soy oil, palm oil, rapeseed oil, and peanut oil, must be fortified with vitamin A, except for vegetable oils used for food processing.

MOH issued Circular 44/2015/TT-BYT, dated November 30, 2015, promulgating the List of Micronutrients Allowed for Supplementation and Fortification in Food Products. However, this Circular is not applicable for nutritional formula products for children (GAIN report [VM6005](#)).

7.3. Plant-based Meat and Dairy Alternatives

Plant-based meat and dairy alternatives are regulated under the FSL and Decree 15/2018. Depending on the products' ingredients, the product may be subject to specific NTRs on maximum limits of contaminants in foods. For example, dairy alternatives are subject to NTR 6-2:2010 on maximum limits of heavy metals, microorganisms and mycotoxins for non-alcohol beverages. Dairy alternatives are also subject to regulations on pesticide MRLs in foods. Importers must follow regulations on food import inspection and self-declaration for dairy alternatives.

Plant-based meat, primarily made from soybeans and green peas, such as “*giò chay*” or “*chả lụa chay*” have been consumed in Vietnam for centuries for religious reasons. Products, like pea protein based

burger patties or sausages have recently been introduced to the Vietnam market. Vietnam currently has no specific requirements on these products. Generally, these products are subject to NTRs on maximum limits of contaminants in food, e.g., NTR 8-3:2012 on maximum limit of microbiological contaminants.

These products are also subject to regulations on food additives and flavors and regulations on labeling and advertising. Should U.S. exporters have any questions, please contact aghamoi@fas.usda.gov

Section VIII: Trademark Law, Brand Names, and Intellectual Property Rights

Copyright and trademarks are protected under the Intellectual Property Law and related legislation. MOST's National Office of Intellectual Property of Vietnam (NOIP), is the relevant Vietnam trademark authority.

On November 12, 2018, Vietnam became the seventh member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) to ratify the agreement, which includes greater protection of intellectual property rights. On June 30, 2019, Vietnam and the European Union signed the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA), which provides safeguards for protected designation of origin products like cheese, cognac, and wine (GAIN report [VM2020-0059](#)).

8.1. Laws on Intellectual Property (IPL)

- Law 50/2005/QH11 issued on November 29, 2005, on Intellectual Property (the English translation is available at <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/details.jsp?id=5005>), stipulates copyrights, copyright-related rights; industrial property rights; rights for plant varieties, and the protection of these rights. This law entered into force on July 1, 2006.
- Law 36/2009/QH12 issued on June 19, 2009, amending and supplementing a number of articles of the Law on Intellectual Property (the English translation is available at <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/details.jsp?id=6566>). This law entered into force on January 1, 2010.

8.2. Related Regulations on Trademark Registration

- Decree 103/2006/ND-CP issued on September 22, 2006, detailing and guiding the implementation of a number of articles of the Law on Intellectual Property regarding Industrial Property, details provisions and guidelines for implementing certain articles of the 2005 Intellectual Property Law concerning industrial property rights, including rights to trademarks, geographical indications, industrial designs, and patents. The Decree entered into force on October 21, 2006 (see details at: <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/details.jsp?id=5011>).
- Circular 1/2007/TT-BKHCN issued on February 14, 2007, guiding the Implementation of the Government's Decree 103/2006/ND-CP from September 22, 2006, details provisions on the procedures for the registration of industrial property rights. The Circular entered into force on May 6, 2007 (available at: <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/details.jsp?id=5013>).

- MOST's Circular 18/2011/TT-BKHHCN issued on July 22, 2011, amending and supplementing several provisions of Circular 1/2007/TTBKHCN issued on February 14, 2007, on procedures for the registration of industrial property rights (available at: <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/details.jsp?id=14703>).
- Decree 99/2013/ND-CP dated August 29, 2013 on Sanctioning of Administrative Violations in Industrial Property, specifies administrative violations in industrial property, sanctioning forms and levels, remedies; procedures for filing written requests for handling of violations; competence and procedures for settling written requests for handling of violations; sanctioning competence and procedures and enforcement of decisions to sanction administrative violations in industrial property. The Decree entered into force on October 15, 2013 (available in Vietnamese at: http://www.noip.gov.vn/vi_VN/web/guest/van-ban-phap-luat-quy-che).

Section IX: Import Procedures

9.1. Law on Customs

Vietnam's National Assembly promulgated the Law on Customs 54/2014/QH13, which entered into force on January 1, 2015. Accordingly, live animals, plants, goods difficult to preserve, or deemed as other special goods shall be prioritized for customs inspection. Importers will conduct the customs declaration before the date that the commodities arrive at the border checkpoint or within 30 days from the date on which the commodities arrive at the border checkpoint.

According to the Law on Customs, the customs declaration is made electronically. A paper declaration is only allowed for following exceptions:

- Imported and exported goods of border residents.
- Imported and exported goods in excess of the limit of tax exemption applied to incoming and outgoing persons.
- Cargo for the purpose of emergency assistance and humanitarian aid.
- Cargo that is personal gifts, presents, properties.
- Cargo that is equipment containing goods according to the temporary importation/re-exportation, temporary exportation/re-importation rotation method.
- Cargo to be temporarily imported and re-exported or exported and re-imported and carried by incoming and outgoing persons for working in the pre-determined time.
- If the customs electronic data processing system or electronic customs declaration system fail to carry out transactions which may be caused by the operational failure of one or both systems or caused by other reasons. In cases where the electronic data processing system fails to carry out the customs procedures, customs authorities shall be responsible for making an announcement at least 1 hour from the time when such failures take place.
- Other cargo, as stipulated by the Minister of Finance.

The Customs electronic data processing system can receive, examine, register, and handle electronic customs declarations 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

9.2. Decrees and Circulars Guiding the Law on Customs

The GVN issued Decree 08/2015/ND-CP, dated January 21, 2015, promulgating the implementation of the Law on Customs, regarding customs procedures, customs supervision, and inspection. Decree 08/2015 entered into force on March 15, 2015.

On April 20, 2018, the GVN issued Decree 59/2018/ND-CP that revises and supplements a number of articles of Decree 08/2015/ND-CP on the regulations and enforcement rules for customs procedures, audits, and inspections. Decree 59/2018/ND-CP amends and supplements content on customs declaration; valuation methods for import goods; customs inspection authority; customs procedures for temporary import and export goods, in-transit goods, etc. Decree 59/2018 took effect from June 5, 2018. The Vietnamese version of this Decree is available at: <http://vbpl.vn/botaichinh/Pages/vbpq-van-ban-goc.aspx?ItemID=128827>

In December 2020, GDVC published the first draft of the Amendment of Decree 08/2015 and Decree 59/2018, providing revisions of guidance on enforcement of the Customs Law on customs-related procedures, examination, and supervision and control measures. The second draft of the Amendment of Decree 08/2015 was published on the GVN's website in September 2021 for public comments. FAS Vietnam continues to monitor the amendment of these Decrees and provide updates on new developments.

MOF Details Customs Procedures

On April 20, 2018, MOF issued the following Circulars on Customs procedures:

- Circular 39/2018/TT-BTC amending and supplementing a number of articles of Circular 38/2015/TT-BTC, dated March 25, 2015, on customs procedures, customs supervision, inspection, export tax, import tax, and tax administration applied to exported and imported goods.
- Circular 38/2018/TT-BTC regulating the identification of the origin of imported and exported goods.

For goods subject to food safety inspection, Clause 21 of Circular 39/2018 requires imported goods to be held at checkpoints, in-land ports, or warehouses for inspection, except in the event that the specialized inspection body allows the goods to be inspected at other designated places; or in the event that the imported goods are brought to a storage place at the request of the customs declarant.

On October 26, 2021, MOF published a draft Circular amending Circular 38/2015 on customs procedures, customs supervision, inspection, export tax, import tax, and tax administration applied to exported and imported goods. This Amendment will replace MOF's Circular 39/2018. Post will continue to monitor and provide updates on the development of this Amendment.

Certificate of Origin

For animal products in HS Code Chapters 2, 15, and 16, due to Circular 38/2018/TT-BTC, a Certificate of Origin (C/O) is required for meat and poultry products since June 5, 2018 (GAIN Report [VM8062](#)). This C/O must contain the following required information including: i) Name of exporter; ii) Name of importer; iii) Means of transport; iv) Goods description and HS codes; v) Quantity, weight, or volume of goods; vi) Countries, groups of countries, or territories of origin; vii) Date of issuance; and viii) Signature of the person in charge of issuing the C/O.

In October 2020, FAS Vietnam engaged with GDVC to address their questions on the authenticity of the C/O issued by U.S. authorities not containing a stamp. On October 28, 2020, the GDVC issued Official letter 6932/TCHQ-GSQL instructing Customs Departments at entry points, that a C/O is not required to bear a stamp of the issuing authority. A signed C/O from a certifying authority is accepted without a stamp.

Customs Valuation

Clause 9 of Decree 59/2018 stipulates that if an importer's declared customs value was rejected during the Customs' valuation process, the importer has five working days to adjust their documentation. If the importer does not adjust the relevant declarations within this timeframe, the Customs authorities will adjust the customs value at their own discretion and impose the tax and duty assessment. This process also applies in cases where the customs authorities doubt the importer's declared customs value and conducts a consultation meeting with the importer. Following a consultation meeting, the importer has five working days to adjust the declared customs value, or the Customs authorities will adjust the customs value at their own discretion and impose the tax and duty assessment.

On August 30, 2019, MOF issued Circular 60/2019 to revise a number of articles of Circular 39/2015 on the determination of customs value for imported and exported goods. Accordingly, the Customs authorities shall determine the customs value of imported goods by using either: a) the transaction value of imported goods (actual price paid by the buyer); b) the transaction value of identical imported goods; c) the transaction value of similar imported goods; d) the method of deduction value; d) the method of calculation value or e) the method of inference. The Directorate of Customs manages the list of exported and imported goods with risk of the value being declared at a lower price than the actual transaction price, which is the basis for customs authorities to compare and check the declared value of the customs declarant.

Customs valuation is an issue of concern as the GDVC continues to use reference pricing to value U.S. meat and poultry imports. FAS Vietnam recommended GDVC fulfil its WTO Customs Valuation Agreement obligations by notifying their national customs valuation legislation. Should U.S. exporters have any questions, please contact aghamoi@fas.usda.gov

Section X: Trade Facilitation

The MOF is the focal point for the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in Vietnam. MOF is also the implementation agency of the Trade Facilitation Project (TFP) funded by USAID, which is working with MOF to complete the legal framework for the implementation of the TFA, promote the implementation of the National Single Window to improve the customs clearance procedures, promote the application of risk management principals, and reform the specialized inspection system for imported goods.

Pre-clearance Program

Currently, Vietnam has no pre-clearance program for food and agricultural products exported from the United States.

National Single Window and E-Customs System

Vietnam implements the registration for specialized inspections of imported and exported goods via the National Single Window (NSW). Up to date, single-window procedures are applicable for most food and agricultural products, including quarantine and food safety inspection for meat, poultry, and seafood, quarantine inspection for plant products, quality inspection of feed ingredients, quarantine and food safety inspection for plant products used for food, and food safety inspection for processed and packaged foods.

Customs procedures are managed through an e-Customs system, “Vietnam Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System/ Vietnam Customs Intelligence Information System (VNACCS/VCIS)”. There are six key functions within VNACCS/VCIS: e-Declaration; e-Manifest; e-Invoice; e-Payment; e-Certificate of Origin; and Selectivity. The Selectivity function automatically assigns imported shipments to one of three channels, green, yellow, or red. Each channel is subject to a different level of customs inspection based on the assessment of the importers’ history and the risks of the specific commodity.

E-certificates

DAH accepts Export Certificates for U.S. meat and poultry products, issued by the U.S. Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), with digital signatures starting from December 21, 2020, when FSIS updated its animal health attestations in the certificates.

For plant products, PPD requests original certificates on paper. However, due to logistical challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, PPD accepts paper copies of certificates while importers must provide original copies at a later day.

Port Fees

Port fees vary from port to port. Major fees include but are not limited to storage fees; repair and maintenance fees; lift-on and -off fees; fees for transferring goods to the inspection yard; unloading fees

related to manual inspections, and sampling. Large ports usually publish their fee schedules on their respective websites. Information on service fees at major ports are available at:

- Quang Ninh: [Cai Lan International Container Terminal](#)
- Hai Phong: [Hai Phong Port \(in Vietnamese\)](#)
- Da Nang: [Da Nang Port](#)
- Ba Ria Vung Tau: [Cai Mep International Terminal](#)
- Ho Chi Minh City: [Saigon New Port Cooperation \(in Vietnamese\)](#)

Average Release Times

Release times for goods depends on a number of factors, including but not limited to, timing of specialized inspections, freight operations, and timing of customs inspection at the points of entry.

According to current regulations, if imported goods are subject to specialized inspection, customs must inspect the cargo within eight working hours upon receipt of the specialized inspection result. In special cases involving extremely large volumes, diverse products, or complicated inspection processes, customs can extend the cargo inspection, but not more than two days. The use of electronic documents via the NSW has helped enterprises to save time and customs clearance costs. A survey on cross-border trade transactions in 2020, showed that the average total time to carry out customs procedures for imported goods at entry gates is around 27.2 hours, down 43 percent compared to 2019; and the average time to prepare import documents took half the time compared to 2019, at 27.6 hours. Time required for specialized inspections vary depending on the applicable lab tests. According to industry sources, the release times for frozen meat and poultry shipments is between three to five working days. For processed foods, the release times could be up to three working days if the products are subject to required tests. For grains and oilseeds, the release times are around three to five working days.

In July 2021, industry warned about delays in cargo clearances as Vietnam imposed a nationwide lockdown due to a surge of COVID-19 cases. The largest container port in HCMC reported that they were unable to clear cargo as they struggled to function with half of the workforce. The port had to relocate stuck containers to nearby ports and inland container depots and requested shipping lines to adjust their arrival and departure schedules to ease congestion. As southern Vietnam relaxed its strict social distancing regulations starting in October, port operations in the South have returned to normal.

Common Delays

Delays in a shipment release can occur for various reasons, including but not limited to documentation issues, quarantine pests, or regulatory changes. For meat and poultry, shipments can be detained due to discrepancies between export certificates and product labels, parts of the shipment sourced from an unlisted facility, or facility numbers that do not match with the export certificate and DAH's approved list. For dairy products, the main reasons for detainments include certificates issued after the date on the bill of lading, shipments for food use that have an APHIS certificate (for feed use) instead of an AMS certificate, or discrepancies in the product description between the sanitary certificate and other export documents. For grains and oilseeds, if there is a suspected issue with quarantine pests, shipment

clearance may take up to four working days, depending on lab test results times and the endorsement of plant inspection certificates. In some cases, new regulatory requirements, especially those without clear guidance and sufficient lead time, can cause delays or detained shipments at ports.

APPENDICES

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

International Cooperation Department (ICD)

(MARD) 2 Ngoc Ha Street, Hanoi,

Contact: Ms. Nguyen Do Anh Tuan, Director General,

Email: htqt@mard.gov.vn

Plant Protection Department (PPD)

149 Ho Dac Di, Hanoi

Website: www.ppd.gov.vn

Contact: Mr. Hoang Trung, Director General,

Email: htqt.bvtv@mard.gov.vn

Department of Animal Health (DAH)

15/78 Phuong Mai-Dong Da Hanoi

Website: www.cucthuy.gov.vn

Contact: Mr. Pham Van Dong, Director General

Email: TY@mard.gov.vn;

DAH/Animal Quarantine Division

Contact: Nguyen Hoang Tung, Deputy Head of Animal Inspection Division

Email: kiemdich.cty@dah.gov.vn

Directorate of Fisheries (DFISH)

10 Nguyen Cong Hoan, Hanoi

Email: tcts@mard.gov.vn

Department of Livestock Production (DLP)

16 Thuy Khue, Tay Ho, Ha Noi

Email: cn@mard.gov.vn

National Agro-Forestry and Fishery Quality Assurance Department (NAFIQAD)

10 Nguyen Cong Hoan, Hanoi;

Contact: Mr. Nguyen Nhu Tiep, Director General

Email: nafiqad@mard.gov.vn;

MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MOH)

Vietnam Food Administration (VFA)

138A Giang Vo, Hanoi

Email: vfa@vfa.gov.vn;

Website: www.vfa.gov.vn;

Contact: Mr. Nguyen Thanh Phong, Director General; Ms. Tran Viet Nga, Deputy General Director.

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (MOIT)

Department of Science and Technology

54 Hai Ba Trung, Hoan Kiem, Ha Noi

Website: www.moit.gov.vn

Email: VKHCN@moit.gov.vn

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

National Office of Intellectual Property of Vietnam (NOIP)

386 Nguyen Trai, Thanh Xuan, Hanoi;

Website: www.noip.gov.vn

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

General Department of Vietnam Customs

Block E3 - Duong Dinh Nghe street, Yen Hoa, Cau Giay, Hanoi

Website: <https://www.customs.gov.vn/home.aspx?language=en-US>

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts

Processed and Packaged Foods

National Institute of Food Control

65 Pham Than Duat, Cau Giay District, Hanoi

<http://nifc.gov.vn/index.php/en/>

Quality and Certification Centre 1

8 Hoang Quoc Viet, Cau Giay District, Hanoi

<https://quatest1.com.vn/>

Quality and Certification Centre 2

02 Ngo Quyen, Son Tra District, Da Nang.

<http://quatest2.gov.vn/en/>

Quality and Certification Centre 3

49 Pasteur, District 1, HCMC

<http://www.quatest3.com.vn/>

Ho Chi Minh City Institute of Public Health

159 Hung Phu, District 8, HCMC

<http://www.iph.org.vn/>

National Institute of Nutrition

48B Tang Bat Ho, Hai Ba Trung district, Hanoi

<http://viendinhduong.vn/>

Food Industry Research Institute

301 Nguyen Trai, Thanh Xuan district, Hanoi

<https://firi.vn/>

Plant Products

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2 Tran Quang Khai, Hai Phong

Email: kdtv1hp@yahoo.com

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PPD/Plant Quarantine Sub-Department of Region II

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Email: kdtv2hcm@vnn.vn

PPD/Plant Quarantine Sub-Department of Region III

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PPD/Plant Quarantine Sub-Department of Region IV

66 Le Hong Phong, Quy Nhon, Binh Dinh

PPD/Plant Quarantine Sub-Department of Region V

149 Ho Dac Di, Dong Da, Hanoi

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PPD/Plant Quarantine Sub-Department of Region VI

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Email: chicuckdtv7@gmail.com

PPD/Plant Quarantine Sub-Department of Region VIII

7 Nguyen Hue, TP Lao Cai

PPD/Plant Quarantine Sub-Department of Region IX

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Animal Products

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23 Da Nang, Ngo Quyen District, Hai Phong

Email : tonghoptyv2@gmail.com

Website : <http://raho2.gov.vn/>

DAH/Regional Animal Health Office III

51 Nguyen Sinh Sac, Vinh City, Nghe An

Email : hcthtyv3@gmail.com

DAH/Regional Animal Health Office IV

12 Tran Quy Cap, Hai Chau district, Da Nang

Email : tyvdm@vnn.vn

DAH/Regional Animal Health Office V

36 Phạm Hùng - TP. Buôn Ma Thuột - Đắk Lắk

Email: phongtonghoptyv5@gmail.com

Website: <http://raho5.com/>

DAH/Regional Animal Health Office VI

521/1 Hoang Van Thu, Tan Binh District, Ho Chi Minh City

Email : rahcmc@hcm.fpt.vn

DAH/Regional Animal Health Office VII

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Email: coquanthuyvung7@gmail.com

Attachments:

No Attachments