

Exporting to Barbados? Here's What You Need To Know

By Omar González

Importers in Barbados want U.S. agricultural and food products. The good news is that there are no laboratory testing, special certification or pre-market approval requirements on the vast majority of imports. However, detailed labeling is necessary. Labeling rules are enforced at the port of entry, with random checks made at retail and wholesale outlets.

What Goes—On the Label, That Is

Barbados' labeling regulations are quite extensive. All labels must be in English, the official language. Multilingual labels are acceptable as long as English is one of the languages. Standard U.S. labels are generally suitable. The importer in Barbados may add a stick-on label to fully comply with specific information requirements not entirely met by the U.S. label.

All labels on prepackaged foods must contain the name of the food; list of ingredients; net contents and drained weight; name and address of the manufacturer; country of origin; lot identification; date marking and storage instructions; instructions for use; and grade designations, if any.

The net contents must be shown in the metric system—by volume for liquid foods and by weight for solid foods. In addition,

Documentation Required for All Food Imports

- Commercial invoice
- Bill of lading or air waybill
- Packing list
- Insurance certificate
- Import license (if applicable)



many U.S. labels state only the manufacturer's or packer's city and state. Barbados authorities require the country of origin to be explicitly stated as part of the address.

Nutritional labeling, including recommended daily intake information, is voluntary. Terms such as "high fiber," "low fat" and "reduced sugar" are acceptable. However, health claims are prohibited. Labels and advertisements of artificial, imitation, substitute or synthetic foods must state the nature of the product as an integral part of the name of the food. Any additives must be explicitly stated on the label.

Import Procedures

Generally speaking, customs clearance takes about three to five days for most food products. However, delays caused by a shortage of inspectors are not uncommon. It is sometimes necessary for exporters to pay overtime fees to expedite the process. Employing a knowledgeable customs broker helps facilitate the process. ■

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For details of the report on which this story was based, see FAS report BB2002. To find it on the Web, start at www.fas.usda.gov, select **Attaché Reports** and follow the prompts.

Additional information is also available at:

Barbados Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office: www.caipo.gov.bb

Barbados Customs Brokers Association: www.barbadoscustombrokers.org