



Department of Agriculture

## Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

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### FISHERIES MEMORANDUM

ORDER NO. 001

Series of 2000

SUBJECT: Guideline in the processing of applications for importation for fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products

In consonance with the provisions of Fisheries Administrative Order No. 195, series of 1999, and to provide for a procedure in the processing of applications for importation for fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products, including validation of importers and products to be imported, the following guideline in the processing of applications and issuance of import permits for fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products is hereby promulgated:

1. Scope and Objective. This guideline covers importation of fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products intended only for purposes of canning, processing, and those imported by institutional buyers, that is, for specialized restaurants, hotels, airline catering, and for personal consumption. To insure that importation for such purposes is strictly observed, the Bureau reserves the right to reject applications to import fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products which it deems contrary to the purpose stated. Specifically, importation for direct selling to the wet market is not within the scope of this guideline, and applications for such purpose, or with such intent, will not be considered until the Secretary of Agriculture issues a Certificate of Necessity to Import. Further, importation of fish and fishery products covered by this guideline will largely depend on the species and volume to be imported, in relation to the purpose of such importation. Finally, this guideline does not preclude the Director of Fisheries from issuing further policies aimed at clarifying issues and enhancing this guideline.

2. Qualification of Importers. - To maintain the integrity of purpose of importation for canning, processing, and of institutional buyers, only the following may be allowed to import fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products.

- a. Canning purpose. Only companies or corporations engaged in the business of canning shall be allowed to import fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products. Importation by suppliers and/or indentors to canneries shall not be allowed. As an aid for further enhancement of policies on importation by this sector, canneries are required to submit, in determined periods, their production schedules, volume requirement, types and sizes of canned products, and monthly production output. Technical personnel from this Bureau shall be provided access to canneries in conducting inspections and for validation of information.

b. Processing purpose. Importation for processing purpose shall be undertaken only by the processor or processing company themselves. Importation by suppliers may be allowed only upon submission of document by processor acknowledging an existing arrangement with the supplier. Fisheries products that may be allowed for importation for processing purposes are the following:

- 1) squid - cleaned/gutted/headless or in fillet form
- 2) fish - minced fish meat or in fillet form
- 3) semi-processed fishery products (semi-dried, frozen or in powder form), particularly intended for noodle soup preparation, and processing into pet foods and other food preparation
- 4) products from other aquatic organisms, provided cleaned and gutted

c. Institutional Buyers. Importation by institutional buyers shall consist of the following kind/type of fish or fishery/aquatic products:

- 1) Species of fish and aquatic animals, not endemic or cannot be found in the Philippines
- 2) Fish and fisheries products that may be found in the Philippines but not available in sufficient quantity; or with uncertain or unpredictable availability; or of unacceptable quality; or harvested from contaminated areas, or areas with red tide history
- 3) Those fish and fishery/aquatic products that will not significantly compete with the harvest/produce of our local fishermen and aquaculture farm
- 4) Semi-processed fish and fishery/aquatic products, or those prepared with added value

3. Documentary requirements and fee for filing of application for importation of fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products. Qualified importers shall accomplish the following requirements in applying for an Import Permit:

a. Importer shall accomplish the form Application to Import and submit same with the following supporting documents:

- 1) Copy of Company SEC Registration and Articles and By-Laws (once only), in case the applicant is a company or corporate entity; Permit to Operate issued by the City/Municipal Mayor's Office for single proprietorship
- 2) Copy of Pro-Forma Invoice
- 3) Affidavit of undertaking (original copy), stating that the fishery product to be imported will not be sold to the wet market

b. Payment of Application to Import in the amount of P 150.00

4. Evaluation of applications for importation. All applications for importation of fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery aquatic products shall be subject to evaluation by the Import Evaluation and Qualification Committee (IEQC), created for the purpose, prior to the issuance of the required Permit to Import. The IEQC shall be composed of the following:

- a. Chairman - Chief of the Fisheries Regulatory & Quarantine Division
- b. Vice-Chairman - Chief of the Fisheries Post-Harvest Technology Division
- c. Member - Representative from the Legal Division
- d. Member - Officer-In-Charge of the Foreign Trade Section

The IEQC shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

- a. Evaluate and validate qualification of importers
- b. Evaluate and determine the volume and kind of fisheries products to be allowed for importation. Volume or quantity of fisheries products to be imported shall be regulated in relation to species or kind of fish or fishery products and intended purposes of import;
- c. Recommend to the Director of Fisheries actions to be taken on unusual situations arising from importation of fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery aquatic products, such as, but not limited to: presence of contaminants, diseases, viruses, or the like which renders the imported product unfit for human consumption or its intended use; and, when such importation is inimical to public interest;
- d. Formulate measures to further enhance policies on importation of fresh/chilled/frozen fish and fishery/aquatic products.

4. Issuance of Permit to Import. Once the Application to Import has been evaluated and approved, the Permit to Import shall be issued after the payment thereof of P 1,500.00. Permits issued under FAO 195 shall cover individual shipments, and no single Permit shall apply to partial shipments. Each shipment shall require a separate Permit to Import.

5. Effectivity This guideline shall take effect immediately and shall remain in force unless amended or revoked in writing.

  
MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.  
Director