

Quotas exist mostly for meat, animals for slaughter, grains and food-grains, potatoes, and bulk wine. Licenses are granted within the quota limits. Other agricultural products are subject to supplementary import charges. The charges are revised in response to world market prices and the health of Swiss agriculture. Products affected include milk and dairy products, grape juice, cut flowers (in summer), fresh fruit and vegetables.

Import licences are generally issued only to companies domiciled in Swiss customs territory.

Import permits are required for certain textile items and for some products which are not subject to quotas but which are covered by hygiene and plant health regulations, quarantine, veterinary rules and protection of the species as outlined in the Washington Convention.

Special Regulations

Imports of foodstuffs and beverages must meet federal regulations which are enforced by the Federal Office for Public Health (Bundesamt für Gesundheitswesen), Bollwerk 27, CH-3001 Berne, and the Federal Veterinary Office (Bundesamt für Veterinärwesen), Schwarzenburgstrasse 161, CH-3097 Liebefeld-Berne.

Certain electrical appliances and equipment must be approved by the Swiss Electrotechnical Association (Schweizerischer Elektrotechnischer Verein), Seefeldstrasse 301, CH-8008 Zurich (see chapter "Doing Business in Switzerland").

Pharmaceutical products must meet the approval of the Intercantonal Office for the Testing of Medicines (Interkantonale Kontrollstelle für Heilmittel, IKS), Erlachstrasse 8, 3000 Berne 9.

Written enquiries concerning import requirements for specific products may be addressed to the organizations mentioned above (preferably in French or German).

Documentation

A commercial invoice (two copies) is usually sufficient for Swiss Customs. Swiss importers will normally advise foreign exporters of any additional documentation requirements such as health certificates, certificates of origin etc. In addition to the usual description and markings, every invoice is normally required to show the ex-factory price of the merchandise, all additional costs including insurance to the Swiss border, net and gross weights, and the name of the country of origin.