

MARKET ACCESS CONDITIONS

Because of its dependence on foreign markets, Switzerland follows a policy of trade liberalization without compromising its neutrality and its basic principles of democracy. Switzerland is not yet a member of the European Economic Community, but, EEC membership is being considered as an option for the turn of the century. By its membership in European Free Trade Association (EFTA), Switzerland retains full autonomy in matters of labour mobility, economic policies, commercial laws, and political relations. Switzerland is also a member of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

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.

Various pieces of documentation are required for imports into Switzerland. They include: nine copies of the air waybills on standard (IATA) forms; a bill of lading with no regulations and may be made out "To Order"; two copies of the commercial invoice; four copies of the shipper's export declaration for shipments with a value above \$500 U.S.; and no certificate of origin is required. In addition, every import shipment must be accompanied by a health certificate in compliance with the Appendix (88/132). The certificate must be prepared in one of the official languages of Switzerland, or in English. Official translations into one of these languages are acceptable. The health certificate must be presented to the veterinary inspector at the border. Copies of the certificates may be accepted if they are related to shipments parts which have been sent to other countries. In such cases, the certificates must be accompanied by a note ("...kg for export to Switzerland") and be legally sanctioned.

No special authorization is required to import the [fish] meat or preparations made from the meat of fish, crustaceans, mollusc and echinodermata, provided that the Federal Veterinary's Office (OVF) has given professional importer's approval. Applications for professional importer's approval must be sent to the competent cantonal veterinary, who will forward them to the OVF with his prior approval.