

EMERGENCY REGULATIONS FOR MEAT AND CHRISTMAS TREES

Meat products and Christmas trees are both subject to emergency *Normas Oficiales Mexicanas (NOMs)*, Mexican official standards, issued in late 1994. These are temporary 6-month regulations, but the meat *NOM* has already been renewed once, and further extensions may be implemented.

Meat products are subject to *NOM-EM-003-ZOO-1994*. Under this regulation, all imported meats are subjected to an organoleptic inspection at the border. Samples will be taken for lab tests, but the shipment will be allowed to enter the country without waiting for test results. Meat products can enter Mexico only through 10 designated ports of entry. This is a temporary 6-month *NOM*, which was due to expire on June 23, 1995.

Christmas trees are covered by *NOM-EM-012-SARH3-1994*, which was issued January 4, 1995. They must have a phytosanitary certificate issued by Canadian agriculture authorities. The certificate must indicate their place of origin including province and country, the plantation's name and location, the exporter's name and the scientific name of the species. Trees will be inspected at the border for pests and damage. They can be imported only through 11 specified ports of entry. This *NOM* expired on June 4, 1995, but other emergency *NOMs* have been extended and exporters should assume this regulation to be in effect unless the importer advises otherwise.

SECRETARIAT OF HEALTH SANITARY IMPORT AUTHORIZATION

The *Secretaría de Salud (SS)*, Secretariat of Health, regulations encompass a variety of processed foods and beverages, chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers and personal or health care products, including cosmetics. Most processed foods no longer require prior authorization.

Under the *Ley General de Salud*, Public Health Act, every food importer must register with *Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería y Desarrollo Rural (SAGAR)*, Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development, and provide notice of all food products that will be imported. Regardless of the product involved, the importer is also responsible for obtaining authorization for products that require a prior sanitary import authorization.

If such registration is necessary, an application form called a *Solicitud de Autorización Sanitaria Previa de Importación*, must be submitted to the *SAGAR*, by the importer, along with the following documentation:

- a sanitary certificate, or if one cannot be obtained, a certificate of origin, Certificate of Free Sale, or a report of physiochemical and microbiology analysis. Some products also require an analysis of metal and peroxide content, vibro cholerae or radioactive contamination;
- the original product labels in Spanish, either for individual packages, or for bulk containers; and
- an invoice or pro-forma invoice.