

issued in the name of the exporting company, reason for which it usually is the exporter who pays for the registration fees, which range between \$150 and \$725 U.S.dollars for a five year period. It is also possible to obtain a special permit to import a relatively small quantity of foods, beverages or toiletries to test the Mexican market before the registration procedures are undertaken. Once the goods are shipped, the importer or the customs broker need to obtain an import franchise from the Secretariat of Health on every shipment. This is granted with the presentation of the invoice, packing list, bill of lading and Secretariat of Health registration letter and the payment of a 1% fee on the invoice value.

As of June 14, 1991 the Secretariat of Health issued new regulations superseding previous ones, simplifying the importation of all foodstuffs through the elimination of the sanitary registration number previously required from all importers.

Due to the complexity of sanitary and health regulations, at least three months before shipping agricultural products, livestock and foodstuffs and beverages, the exporter should contact the Mexican importer or his customs broker to inform him about the goods he intends to ship, so that he can initiate the necessary formalities. These include, first of all, making the necessary applications for import authorizations or registrations with the various ministries (see list in Appendix 1). Once the authorization is issued, it must be sent to the exporter so that he can comply with all the necessary requirements as stated on the authorization. The authorization will usually be valid for 90 days once issued. Never ship livestock and/or seeds, plants, food products or beverages without the necessary authorizations and certificates, since they will not be allowed into the country without them.

Occasionally, a quality certificate is required for parts and components exported to Mexico, which will be assembled locally. All chemicals and minerals require a certificate of analysis determining the composition of the goods.

5. IMPORT PERMITS

At present, only approximately 300 of the total 11,960 items on the Harmonized System of Tariff Nomenclature, adopted in January 1988, still require an import permit. Some of these items are subject to an import quota. Items requiring an import license include some used machinery and cars; some agricultural products vital to Mexico's economy, such as corn and certain grains, seeds, beans, certain fruits, tobacco, oils, sugar, cocoa, poultry, eggs, milk and cheese; natural gas, petroleum and gasoline; cars, trucks and tractors and some of their parts; some chemical and pharmaceutical products; arms and guns; and some luxury items.