



AVA TO ENHANCE FOOD SAFETY SURVEILLANCE OF PROCESSED FOOD IMPORTS

For swift action to be taken to ensure food safety in Singapore, it is important to have in place a surveillance system that facilitates quick tracing and recall of food imports. Such a system will require the setting up of a comprehensive registration system for all food importers.

To enhance its ability in tracking and source tracing of processed food imports, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) will require importers of processed food to be registered with effect from 1 April 2003. With this new measure, AVA will only approve import permits for processed food from AVA-registered importers.

Currently, only importers of fresh food such as meat, fish and vegetables are subject to registration requirements. This new requirement will thus allow the registration system to be extended to importers of processed food. Registration of importers facilitates effective communication and helps in fast identification of importers who may have brought in unsafe food products. This will in turn enable swift implementation of appropriate measures to prevent unsafe food from entering Singapore.

Registration is free-of-charge. Importers can obtain the application form for registration online through the AVA website (www.ava.gov.sg, under "Application Forms" or <http://www.ava.gov.sg/JAVASCRIPT/module7/circular/processedFood.doc>) or at AVA's Food Control Division at MND Complex, Tower Block #18-00, 5 Maxwell Road, Singapore 069110.

Importers have been notified to register with AVA as early as November 2002. They were informed at industry meetings, through their trade associations as well as through several rounds of notification via the TradeNet system. AVA had started the process of registration early so that importers can avoid unnecessary delays in their application of import permits. Those who have not already done so are advised to register with AVA anytime before they apply for import permits.

To ensure successful application, importers are advised to include their AVA Registration Numbers when applying for import permits through the TradeNet from 1 April 2003. They should also use the correct AVA food product codes (which can be downloaded from the AVA Website at [http://www.ava.gov.sg/JAVASCRIPT/module7/circular/AVA\(FCD\)AHTNHSPProductCodes.pdf](http://www.ava.gov.sg/JAVASCRIPT/module7/circular/AVA(FCD)AHTNHSPProductCodes.pdf))

Enquiries pertaining to the registration may be sent to the email address: AVA_reg_Importers@ava.gov.sg. Importers may also contact AVA Officers at Tel 63250783 and 62215056 for further clarification.

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