



NEW ZEALAND  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE  
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# Spain Modernises Sanitary and Phytosanitary Controls at the Border

MARKET INTELLIGENCE REPORT

# Summary

- On 1 October 2024, a new Spanish regulation entered into force that reorganises sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) controls for food and agricultural products at Designated Border Control Posts (BCPs) at the Spanish border. Once this regulation is fully implemented, New Zealand companies exporting these products to Spain will benefit from more streamlined and efficient processes at BCPs.

# Report

A new regulation introduced by the Spanish Government establishes a common and integrated system for the export and import of food products and other agri-food and fishery products. It aims to make the SPS control process more efficient; it does not change inspection requirements.

The new regulation puts all BCP procedures related to agri-food products under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture (MAPA). Previously, the control of agri-food products came under the control of both MAPA and the Ministry of Health (SANIDAD), with inspectors for animal and vegetable products from both ministries who worked independently from each other.

When a product which fell under both Ministries arrived at the Spanish border, it had to be inspected by the two different ministries which substantially increased the number of administrative procedure and waiting times for importers and exporters. In addition, Spain was one of the few EU member states which had different border control procedures for live animals and for products intended for animal consumption.

The new regulation (Orden PJC/756/2024) puts labelling, the 140 plant health inspectors and 340 veterinarians, and all the procedures for animal and vegetable products, under the control of MAPA.

It is important to note that inspection requirements remain unchanged, but now a single inspector or veterinarian can carry out multiple inspections of consignments. This should substantially reduce waiting times while maintaining the same standards. MAPA has also streamlined its communications channels.

MAPA is on track to take over fully SANDID's responsibilities in these areas within a year. Once completed, a review of existing procedures is planned to further increase efficiency and eliminate red tape.

A major concern of importers and exporters has been that inspectors' criteria at different ports of entry have been inconsistently applied. The new changes will increase predictability through a more consistent approach, although bedding in the new system will take a bit of time.

MAPA trialled the new system at BCPs at the Port of Algeciras –Spain's leading port and the fourth in Europe in terms of the total volume of goods handled. MAPA considered the pilot project to be a success, with importers and exporters welcoming the reduced waiting times and simplified communications.

MAPA plans to roll out its new programme over the next year beginning with the main ports of entry to Spain followed by the less busy ones. The next launch will be at the port of Barcelona in late November/early December - the third largest in Spain. MAPA has postponed the roll-out in Valencia - the country's second largest port - due to the recent devastating floods.

A number of countries, including New Zealand, have welcomed these changes. The new procedures are in line with legislation in other European Union Member States and respond to the demands of the agri-food sector. Once the new regulation is fully implemented, New Zealand companies will benefit from more streamlined and efficient processes at BCPs when exporting food and agricultural products to Spain.

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