



## **MARKET ACCESS ADVICE**

Reference Number: MAA1612  
Date of Issue: 24 November  
2016  
Date of Effect: Immediate

### **Philippines – Import Permits for Agriculture Products**

<b>Attention</b>	<b>Industries</b>	Seafood
	<b>Department of Agriculture and Water Resources</b>	Central and Regional offices
<b>Affected Markets</b>		<b>Philippines</b>
<b>Further Information</b>		Please contact <a href="mailto:exports@agriculture.gov.au">exports@agriculture.gov.au</a> if you have any queries.

On 23 November 2016, the Secretary of the Philippines' Department of Agriculture (DoA) reportedly ordered the cancellation of all existing import permits for agricultural products (from all markets), as a mechanism to curb smuggling. In particular, the cancellation applies to import permits issued by Bureau of Animal Industry and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, covering all meat, animal products and by-products, and fisheries products. Plant products are similarly affected.

The department understands that existing import permits can be re-validated at the Philippines' DoA office in Quezon City, Manila, prior to a consignment's arrival, in order to get it released. To do so, importers are required to attend in person to request the re-validation, a process which will reportedly take less than 24 hours.

For shipments arriving from 23 November 2016 through to the weekend, importers will have to present their existing import permit documents to a newly established DoA inspection team in the Manila Container Integrated Port or the Manila International Airport. The clearance procedure for consignments arriving in ports other than Manila is unclear. Exporters are advised to liaise with their importers to seek clarification.

Going forward, the department understands that Import Permits will now be issued manually by the Philippines' Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, DoA. The process and timeline for this is unclear, and the department is currently seeking urgent advice.

Given the burdensome administrative processes involved in import permit revalidation/issuance, it is anticipated that there will be significant congestion experienced at the port of entry, and resultant delays in product clearance. The department recommends exporters work closely with their importers to ensure all administrative processes required by the Philippines' DoA are followed to allow smooth clearance of consignments.

The Australian Government will be making urgent high level representation to the Philippines government to express concern regarding this sudden decision, and seek clarification on the process going forward. The department will provide an update as soon as relevant information becomes available.

*The information provided above is current at the time of writing and is intended for use as guidance only and should not be taken as definitive or exhaustive. The Commonwealth endeavours to keep information current and accurate, however, it may be subject to change without notice. Exporters are encouraged to verify these details with their importers prior to undertaking production/exports. The Commonwealth will not accept liability for any loss resulting from reliance on information contained in this notice.*