

CERTIFICATES FOR RADIONUCLIDE CONTENT IN FOODSTUFFS

ESR offers a 5-day (Monday-Friday) service to provide certificates authenticating levels of radioactivity in foodstuffs for the New Zealand export market.

Certificate format

Two different categories of certificates exist:

1. A certificate for goods that are of 100% New Zealand origin. These goods do not require testing. Certificates are issued on the basis of experience as well as ongoing environmental radioactivity monitoring operations. These can be issued promptly.
2. A certificate for goods containing imported components. Such goods require testing for radioactivity levels.
 - All certificates will be printed with a computer-generated unique number.
 - In order to aid identification, the following consignment details are required: a description of the goods and the exporter's address, final destination of the goods, the letter of credit reference number (if applicable) and the vessel or flight number.
 - You may request the inclusion of an additional statement as a customer declaration.
 - The minimum radioactivity concentration for Caesium-134 and -137 is 10 Bq per kilogram of goods. This allows certification without testing of all foodstuffs of 100% New Zealand origin.
 - A declaration is included on certificates for goods of 100% New Zealand origin stating that the goods are, in radiological terms, fit for human consumption. Continuing environmental measurements support this declaration.
 - Certificates include standard declarations. There are only limited circumstances under which these can be altered.

Requesting changes to a certificate

The following amendments are available:

- an additional title printed under the certificate title;
- an additional statement in the form of a customer declaration (usually limited to 3 lines of text);
- an exact translation printed on the reverse of the certificate.

Requirements for a customer declaration

You may need a customer declaration to be added when a letter of credit demands special statements. Any additional statements you request must be supported by documentation supplied by you. Documentation is required if:

- a different radioactivity concentration from that stipulated on the certificate template (less than 10 Bq of Caesium-134 and -137 per kg of goods) is required;
- a country's radioactivity concentration guideline for the importation of foodstuffs is required to be included.

For example, a request to include the following statement as a customer declaration on a certificate requires you to produce documentation that clearly shows the radioactivity guideline levels for the importation of foodstuffs into that country. If such documentation is not supplied, this statement cannot be included on the certificate.

Example: Analyses of similar products have shown that the radioactivity levels do not exceed those required by the Atlantis government (less than 370 Bq/kg of Caesium-137).

When testing is required, the actual ESR-measured Caesium-137 concentration will be included on the certificate.

Any documentation supplied by you will be archived at ESR for one year. ESR reserves the right to request that this documentation be updated.

Information required from you to obtain a certificate

To ensure that the certificate is associated only with the goods described, you must supply us with the following in writing:

- **Goods description and quantity:** An accurate description of the goods must be given. It is your responsibility to supply the correct information. A maximum of 20 items per certificate is allowed.
- **Exporter's name and address:** This must include the company name and full address.

- **Letter of credit number (if applicable):** The letter of credit number for the goods is shown on all certificates.
- **Other identifying number:** If the exporter requires any other identifying number or reference to be included, it must be shown separately from the letter of credit number along with a description of its purpose.
- **Shipping details:** The vessel or flight number is shown on all certificates. In addition the air waybill number, date of departure, voyage number, port of loading, port of unloading, name and address of consignor or consignee etc is shown if requested by the exporter.
- **Final destination:** The location where the consignment is to be delivered: town or city and country.
- **Customer declaration:** Additional statements must be clearly written and supported, if necessary, by documentation.

Additional information sought includes the number of copies required and type of despatch.

The applicant must sign the request form.

A certificate can be requested by fax (03 366 1156) using a *Request for Radioactivity Certificate form* or other suitable format. This form is now available on ESR's web site.

When does your product need to be tested?

Goods which contain any imported components require testing by ESR. ESR reserves the right to require a sample of any goods for testing before a certificate is issued if origin or composition are uncertain.

Testing is also required if the importing country stipulates that an analysis is required, or that an accurate radioactivity concentration must be stated.

In addition to a *Request for Radioactivity Certificate form*, you must complete a *Request for testing form* if testing is required. Information required includes an accurate description of the goods and quantity being submitted to ESR for analysis.

A minimum of 500 g of material is required. Standard analysis is for Caesium-137 (Cs-137). Other radionuclides (eg, Cs-134 and I-131) can be analysed on request. With standard procedures the minimum detectable concentration for both Cs-137 and Cs-134 is less than 5 Bq per kg. Lower limits are obtainable on request.

Americium-241 (Am-241) and Plutonium (Pu-239) can be analysed in a 100 g milk powder sample. The minimum detectable concentration is less than 1 Bq per kg.

For other radionuclides, different sample sizes and different detection limit requirements, contact ESR.

Can a certificate be translated into a different language?

An exact translation can be added to the reverse of a certificate, which will be signed on both sides. Certificates can be translated to other languages and certified by a specialist linguistic consultant. A surcharge will be incurred. Alternatively, you may obtain a certified translation. This will require consultation with ESR.

How long does it take to issue a certificate?

Certificates for goods that do not require testing are issued and despatched within 2 working days providing all the necessary information is supplied. Upon receipt of samples, gamma analyses are completed within 2 working days. The determination of Strontium-90, Americium-241 and Plutonium-239 has a 15 working day turnaround time for completion.

What are the terms of trade?

Each certificate is valid for four months from the date of issue, unless revoked earlier. Certificates can be revoked if they are found to contain erroneous information, or if they are being improperly used.

- Credits will not be issued for certificates returned, unless requested by ESR.
- ESR does not issue multiple certificates in advance of anticipated future shipments.
- Only a draft copy of a certificate can be faxed; all final copies are sent by post or courier.
- If a certificate is recalled for any reason, the certificate should be returned to ESR. If required, a certificate will be re-issued with a new certificate number with the statement "this certificate replaces the invalid certificate No: _____".
- To ensure that your request is clearly understood we would prefer that you use the appropriate form(s). Requests written by hand or in the form of an amended certificate will delay processing.
- Electronic copies of certificates will be archived for 3 years.
- Placing an order with us indicates acceptance of these terms.

Summary of available certificates

Radioactivity assessment certificate:

A certificate for goods that are of 100% New Zealand origin.

Radioactivity analysis certificate:

A certificate for goods containing imported components. Such goods require testing for radioactivity levels.

Customer declaration certificate:

A customer declaration (eg, when a letter of credit demands special statements) can be added.

Language translated certificate:

A certified translation of a certificate can be added to the reverse side of the first 3 certificate types.

Additional certificate copy:

Additional certificate copies with the same certificate number.

Please note:

Certificates can be couriered on request, otherwise they are sent by fastpost.

Summary of available testing services

Gamma-emitting nuclides in foodstuffs:

Determined by gamma spectrometry to less than 5 Bq/kg of Cs-137 for a 500 g sample.

Am-241 and Pu-239 in milk powder:

Determined by alpha spectrometry to less than 1 Bq/kg (each) for a 100 g sample.

Strontium-90 in milk powder:

Determined by liquid scintillation counting to less than 5 Bq/kg for a 100g sample.

Other radionuclide tests:

Please contact us.

What are the fees?

For a current price list please contact ESR.

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