

To: Almond Handlers

From: Keith Schneller

CC: Julie Adams, VP Global Tech/Reg Affairs; Clarice Turner, President & CEO

Subject: MARA Approval of Almond Hull Pellets and Cubes for Livestock Feed in China

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We are happy to advise that China’s Ministry of Agriculture (MARA) finally published definitions for “Almond Hulls” and “Almond Hulls and Shells” in its official feed ingredients catalog on 01/12/24. This clears the way for shipping product to China as follows:

- China’s General Administration of Customs (GACC) currently has 6 US processors on an approved exporter list for pellets and cubes. Other interested exporters will need to work with APHIS to become approved.
- These companies can now start shipping almond hull pellets and cubes to China.
- The definitions are very similar to the AAFCO and CDFA definitions and will cover all forms of raw almond hulls and shells (whole, ground, pellets, and cubes).
- **The current import protocol only covers pellets and cubes.** APHIS is in the process of requesting that GACC implement another protocol to cover bulk, whole and ground almond hull products.
- No further licensing by MARA for manufacturers will be required.
- Exporters will have to apply for phytosanitary certificates from APHIS for all shipments.
- Please find the unofficial MARA Catalog Definition below. The original Chinese version can be found at: https://www.moa.gov.cn/govpublic/xmsyj/202401/t20240112_6445617.htm
- Please contact Keith for more information at kschneller@almondboard.com

No. of Ingredients	Name of Ingredients	Description of Characterization	Required mandatory product labeling
5.2	Fruit or nut and its processed products		
5.2.6	Almond Hulls	Almond hulls are obtained by drying that portion of the almond fruit of which the shell and kernel are removed, and can be ground, extruded or otherwise processed into different forms of products. The soluble sugar shall not be less than 18%, the crude fiber shall not more than 15%, the crude ash shall not more than 9%, and the moisture shall not more than 13%	Soluble sugar Crude fiber Crude ash Moisture
5.2.7	Almond Hulls with Almond shells	Almond Hulls with Almond shells are obtained by drying that portion of the almond fruit of which the kernel is removed, and can be ground, extruded or otherwise processed into different forms of products. The soluble sugar shall not be less than 10%, the crude fiber shall not more than 29%, the crude ash shall not more than 9%, and the moisture shall not more than 13%	Soluble sugar Crude fiber Crude ash Moisture

**PROTOCOL OF PHYTOSANITARY REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S.
ALMOND MEAL CUBES AND PELLETS TO BE EXPORTED TO CHINA
BETWEEN THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF CUSTOMS OF THE
PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

In order to safely export almond meal cubes or pellets from the United States of America to the People’s Republic of China, the General Administration of Customs of the People’s Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as GACC) and the United States Department of Agriculture (hereinafter referred to as USDA) have consulted in a friendly manner and reached the following consensus, based on WTO/SPS measures and principles and the risk analysis results.

Article 1

Almond (*Prunus dulcis*, synonym: *Amygdalus communis*) meal cubes or pellets to be exported to China refers to almond hulls and shells that have been ground and/or compressed, pelletized or cubed, and air dried at a high temperature and a high pressure.

Article 2

Almond meal cubes or pellets to be exported to China must meet the standards established by California state laws and U.S. federal laws, and must comply with China’s related feed safety and sanitary standards. The almond meal cubes or pellets must not carry quarantine pests of China’s concern (See Appendix 1), other live pests and plant seeds, animal feces, animal carcasses, and soil.

Article 3

USDA must ensure that the almond meal cubes or pellets to be exported to China are produced by registered processors that are licensed and regulated by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The processors must be registered in the United States. USDA needs to provide China with the registered processors list. After GACC’s evaluation and approval, GACC will publish the list on its official website.

Article 4

USDA should ensure the approved processors to follow the principles of a good Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), a traceability management system and effective operation, or to implement management based on the quality concept. The processors should strengthen sanitary control on raw materials and accessories, production process, product warehouses, transportation, etc., to avoid contamination of almond meal cubes or pellets by soil, animal carcasses and feces, plant and animal debris, etc. Toxins, hazardous substances, and any animal-derived ingredients are not permitted as additives to almond meal cubes or pellets.

Article 5

Almond meal cubes or pellets to be exported to China should be stored separately from raw materials and other products. There must be effective measures to prevent pests such as rodents, insects, and birds from entering the warehouse.

Article 6

Packing bags to be used for the export of almond meal cubes or pellets to China should be clean and sanitary. All methods of conveyance for almond meal cubes or pellets should be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized when necessary.

Article 7

Each container or vessel cabin (if in a bulk shipment) of each consignment of almond meal cubes or pellets to be exported to China must have at least one packaging label with the name and the registration number of the processor and such printing on the label as “Almond meal cubes or pellets from California (U.S.A.) to be exported to the People’s Republic of China” in both Chinese and English.

Article 8

USDA or USDA authorized personnel should inspect annually the registered processors to review facility and program requirements. USDA or USDA authorized personnel should carry out the regulatory inspections on the registered processors and conduct certification inspections with each

shipment. Additionally, USDA or USDA authorized personnel will respond to problems that occur at the location, to ensure the product safety and sanitary conditions.

Article 9

Prior to departure of almond meal cubes or pellets, USDA or USDA authorized personnel should conduct an on-site inspection on the almond meal cubes or pellets to be exported to China, according to the requirements of this protocol. If live pests are detected during the inspection, the consignment of almond meal cubes or pellets is not allowed for export to China. USDA permits only the almond meal cubes or pellets that passes the on-site inspection or the fumigation treatment to be exported to China. The fumigation treatment is only required for shipments that have live pests detected during the phytosanitary inspection. The fumigation treatment technology shall comply with the requirements of Appendix 2.

Article 10

Each consignment of almond meal cubes or pellets to be exported to China must be attached with a USDA phytosanitary certificate issued according to international standards. The phytosanitary certificate's additional declaration should state: "This shipment does not carry any quarantine pest of China's concern, and complies with the Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for U.S. Almond Meal Cubes and Pellets to be Exported to China Between The General Administration of Customs of The People's Republic of China and The Department of Agriculture of The United States of America". Each consignment should be labeled with the name and the registration number of the processing facility, container number or vessel name (if in a bulk shipment), etc., and the treatment information including the method if treated prior to or during transportation.

Article 11

The almond meal cubes or pellets that arrives at the port of entry of China may be treated by GACC according to the following provisions:

1. Corrected, returned or destroyed; if do not meet the requirements of Article 7,
2. Returned or destroyed; if the phytosanitary certificate does not meet the requirements,
3. Disinfection, returned or destroyed; if do not meet the requirements of Article 2 or Article 4,

4. Returned or destroyed; if it does not meet the feed safety and health standards of China,
5. Be handled in accordance with the relevant provisions; if any other non-compliance with the requirements of China's entry plant quarantine.

Once the noncompliance above is found, based on their seriousness, GACC will take such additional measures, such as temporary suspension of the relevant facility, growing areas, or the whole trade.

Article 12

This protocol will take effect on the date of signing in Chinese and English languages, in duplicated copies. Both the English and Chinese versions are equal in validity. Should there be any interpretation discrepancies, it will be settled through negotiation. This protocol is valid for two years. If neither side proposes to revise or terminate six months prior to the valid date, its validity automatically extends indefinitely.

Representative of	Representative of
The General Administration of Customs	The United States Department
of the People's Republic of China (GACC)	Of Agriculture (USDA)

Appendix 1

Quarantine pests of China's concern

No.	Scientific Name
Insects	
1	<i>Cadra figulilella</i>
2	<i>Trogoderma granarium</i>
3	<i>Tribolium destructor</i>

Appendix 2

Technical requirements for fumigation of almond meal cubes or pellets

Scheme 1. Fumigation with phosphine at atmospheric pressure

Temperature	Dosage Rate (g/m ³)	Minimum Concentration (g/m ³)			
		0.5 hour	2 hours	24 hours	168 hours
10°C or above	2.12	1.59	1.06	0.53	0.53

Scheme 2. Fumigation with methyl bromide

With the temperature at 15°C (59°F.) or above, 32 g/m³ lasting 16 to 24 hours under atmospheric pressure, or 40 g/m³ in vacuum lasting 3 hours.