

Based on information collected up to March 1999

1. TARIFF MEASURES

Structure of the tariff schedule

Kuwait applies a six-digit tariff nomenclature according to the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System.

12 MFN Duties

A flat rate of 4% is applied to most imports. Where imports compete with goods that are locally manufactured by infant industries, protective tariff rates of up to 25% may be imposed. In such cases, tariff reviews and determinations are done on a case-by-case basis. On 17 August 1996, the General Administration of Customs issued a list of non-dutiable goods including all kinds of foodstuffs, books, periodicals and newspapers, live animals, live poultry and birds for human consumption, agricultural soils and seeds, and gold bars. Effective 1 July 1997, the Council of Ministers approved imposing a 70% customs duty on cigarettes, cigars and all tobacco products.

16 Temporary reduced duties

On 17 August 1996, the General Administration of Customs issued a list of goods exempted from customs duties in conformity with various trade regulations. Exempted goods include vessels and ships for commercial purposes, spare parts for ships and planes, provender made of ground shells and used for animals and poultry, movie films and video cassettes, larvas of fish transplant, and palm trees.

Preferential duties under trade agreements

19.1 Interregional agreements

On 19 February 1997, the Economic and Social Council of the Arab League decided to establish an Arab Free-Trade Area over a period of ten years starting from 1 January 1998. During the ten-year period, member countries ought to reduce their respective tariffs by one-tenth every year. As from 1 January 2007, the free-trade area was scheduled to be fully operational. Algeria, Comoros, Djibouti and Mauritania did not join the Agreement. Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen did not start the implementation.

19.2 Regional and sub-regional agreements

As a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) which includes Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait participates in the GCC's free-trade arrangement, providing duty-free access to all goods produced in the GCC countries provided that they meet the GCC's basic local-content requirements of not less than 40% and that the capital of the producing firm is at least 51% owned by citizens of GCC

member countries. The member states agreed to establish a common external tariff but negotiations have not yet been completed.



6. QUANTITY CONTROL MEASURES

Licensing under the authority of
Ministry of Commerce and Industry,
P.O. Box 2944, 13030 Safat,
Kuwait City.

Non-automatic licensing

On 17 August 1996, the General Administration of Customs issued a list of import prohibited goods and a list of restricted goods which are subject to special licences including various legal references.

61.6 Licence combined with or replaced by special import authorization

Recorder appliances may be imported subject to a special licence from the Ministry of Information.

Wireless appliances telephones, fax switch boards, radios, computers, fax machines, modems, mobile telephones and specific corded telephones require a special licence from the Ministry of Communication



61.71 To protect human health

Children toys containing components similar to foodstuffs, drinking water and fruit juices produced in Saudi Arabia or Bahrain, chocolate from Lebanon, food products including honey, tomato pasta and biscuits from Saudi Arabia, and herbal essences from Bahrain may be imported subject to special licences issued by the Kuwait Municipality.

Import of diluted isopropyl and methyl alcohol as well as appliances which emanate electromagnetic X-ray require an approval from the Ministry of Health.

All kinds of manufactured cigarettes and its components, pure tobacco and derivatives need a special licence from the Environment Protection Department.



61.72 To protect animal health and life

The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Sea Resources has responsibility for issuing special licences for veterinary drugs and vaccinations, all kinds of provender used for poultry, stallions and cows for breeding, and animal products such as leather, hair, wool and bowels imported from outside the GCC, live sea species, horses, cats and dogs food.



61.73 To protect plant health

The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Sea Resources is also responsible for authorizing imports of fruits and vegetables, wood, seeds and transplants.



61.76 To control drug abuse

Psychotropic and controlled substances for medical use, and medical

equipment require a special licence from the Ministry of Public Health. The Ministry of Public Health also issues special import licences for all kind of brushes.

61.9 Non-automatic licensing n.e.s

Goods which bear some advertisement for propaganda in the originating country, special stickers showing the validity of food products, and empty bags used for food products require a special licence from the Ministry of Commerce.

Colour photocopying machines need a special import licence.

Prohibitions

63.1 Total prohibition

Publications which are incompatible with public moral, and products which bear images offending religious faith are prohibited.

Mobile and specific cordless telephones, black-cumin oil and products thereof, drain pipes and welded black steel pipes which measure from 6 to 48 inches except those from member countries of the GCC may not be imported.

63.71 To protect human health

The following products are prohibited for human health protection reasons: chewing tobacco, insecticides, food products containing cyclamate substance in its ingredients, drinking water coolers which have cooling pipes inside the water tanks, asbestos products, magnetic equipment used for medical treatment and which is not based on a scientific source, anaesthetic substances, medical products containing oxpenistine and phenformin hydrochloride, pharmaceutical goods for vaginal uses, medical and industrial oxygen except that produced in member states of the GCC.

63.72 To protect animal health and life

Live chicken except one-day old may not be imported.

63.75 To protect wildlife

Ring-necked parakeet or rose-ringed parakeet, all kinds of birds from Africa, monkeys and wild animals may not be imported for wildlife protection reasons.

63.77 To ensure human safety

All kinds of gas cylinders, and regulators except those imported by Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) are prohibited.

The importation of small buggies is prohibited as well as motor vehicles older than five years.

63.78 To ensure national security

Components for fireworks, arms and ammunition, uniforms similar to military uniforms, related medals and all kinds of ready-made garments resembling police uniforms are prohibited.

63.8 Prohibition for political reasons (embargo)

As a member of the League of Arab States, Kuwait applies the different degrees of the embargo decreed by this institution in 1954 as amended with regard to products originating in Israel.

63.9 Prohibitions n.e.s.

Candy shaped as cigarettes and kept in boxes similar to those of cigarettes may not be imported.

Chemical tearful components with awful smells which are sold in markets for fun articles are prohibited.

Various items may not be imported for religious reasons. These include alcoholic beverages, non-alcoholic beverages similar to beer, and alcoholic vanilla solution.

7. MONOPOLISTIC MEASURES

Single channel for imports

71.2 Sole importing agency

The petroleum market of Kuwait is limited to the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation which is also responsible for authorizing imports of petroleum products that need a prior approval.

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation
P.O. Box 26565
Safat 13126
Kuwait

Imports of wheat and wheat flour is usually restricted to the Kuwait Flours Mills & Bakery Company, except under special approval of the Ministry of Commerce.

Kuwait Flours Mills & Bakery Company
Jamal Abdul Naser St.
Kuwait 13007

8. TECHNICAL MEASURES

Standards are formulated and enforced by

Ministry of Commerce and Industry - Industrial Affairs, Standards, and Metrological Department,
P.O. Box 2944, 13030 Safat, Kuwait City.

81.1 Product characteristics requirements

A certificate of origin is required for all imports. Certificates of origin shall be attested by the appropriate chamber of commerce.

81.11 To protect human health

Food products require a health certificate. The standards used are based on the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization (WHO/FAO) Codex Alimentarius recommendations.

Kuwait has some very specific regulations which restrict the import of food products based on the expiry date and age of the products relative to its production date. Shelf life requirements are in conformity with the municipal notice No. 102/86.

Medical and industrial oxygen imported from member states of the GCC require a certificate of quality from the Gulf Specification Authority or an approved international certificate of origin.



81.12 To protect animal health and life

Animals imported into Kuwait require a veterinary health certificate.



81.13 To protect plant health

Plants and plant products imported from non-member countries of the GCC require a health certificate under art. 2 of the decree No. 9/1985.



81.17 To ensure human safety

Imported tyres require an examination certificate from the country of origin.



81.19 For purposes n.e.s.

Pork tissues or lard are not permitted in formulated products.



81.2 Marking requirements

Cigarettes and tobacco products must bear a warning against the health damages of tobacco.



81.3 Labelling requirements

Kuwait strictly enforces labelling requirements. All food products must carry a label in Arabic or English/Arabic stating the name of the manufacturer, the brand name and the name of the product, a list of ingredients and additives, net and gross weight in metric units, country of origin and its production and expiry dates. All fats and oils used as ingredients must be specifically identified on the label.



81.1 Product characteristics requirements

81.3 To protect plant health

All imported meat and poultry products require a health certificate from the country of origin and a halal slaughter certificate issued by an approved Islamic centre in the country of origin. Tinned meat and poultry must carry a label indicating that the goods have been produced in conformity with Islamic way of slaughtering animals.



81.5 Testing, inspection and quarantine requirements

In conformity with the resolution No. 167 of 1989, pharmaceutical products must be registered with the Drug Control & Registration Administration. Veterinary medical products must be registered in accordance with the decree No. 146/1989.

