

# Pre-Export Check (PEC) certification Frequently Asked Questions

## What does the Pre-Export Check certificate consist of?

The Pre-Export Check (PEC) certificate consists of three parts:

1. Description of the Consignment (Part I)
2. The USDA attestation (Part II)
3. The aflatoxin analysis

## Is PEC Mandatory and why is it important?

No, a PEC certificate is not mandatory. However, consignments going to the EU that do not have a PEC certificate will be subject to sampling controls at the discretion of the importing country. Consignments sent with a PEC certificate will be subject to less than 1% controls at the border.

## What products does PEC apply to?

PEC only applies to bulk and unprocessed products classified under Harmonized Tariff Codes: 0802.11 (inshell) and 0802.12 (shelled). It does not apply to further processed, manufactured or any other product that falls outside these two codes.

The following chart is a general guide as to what products are covered under PEC (e.g. classified under 0802.11 and 0802.12) and what products are not be covered. However, the Almond Board does not guarantee that this is a comprehensive list. Those enrolled in PEC need to work closely with their customs brokers and importers to ensure appropriate product classification.

Covered	<u>Not Covered</u>
In-shell Bulk (0802.11)	Roasted/Toasted Almonds
Shelled Bulk (0802.12)	Almond Butter/Paste/Puree/Oil
Sliced/Diced/Blanched (0802.12)	Almond Beverages
Raw Consumer Packed Products (0802.12 or 0802.11)	Almond Flour/M Meal
	Animal Feed

**What is required to utilize the PEC program?**

Handlers need to enter into a MOU with the Almond Board attesting to their agreement to comply with the program's procedures.

**Once enrolled, what does PEC require?**

PEC requires the same sampling/analysis protocols as under VASP (e.g. 2 x 10KG samples, analysis by a USDA-approved lab, etc.) but the aflatoxin analysis certificate does not need a physical signature. All documentation is completed through the ePEC system.

\*\*Please see an example of the 3 page PEC certificate in Attachment I

**Does the aflatoxin analysis laboratory certificate expire?**

No; but the USDA attestation (Part II of the certificate) expires 4 months after issuance.

**When does the PEC Certificate have to be issued?**

Once all information regarding the consignment is known and ready to be shipped, the PEC Certificate should be issued. While this can be after the consignments has sailed the attestation must be signed within 7 calendar days of the truck B/L.

**What is the Certificate Reference Number in box 1.2?**

This is a unique number assigned by the handler/shipper. It can be the contract number, or other reference number that will facilitate tracing the consignment if it is needed. NOTE: if there is more than one lot, the Certificate Reference Number should reflect the multiple lots (e.g. xxxx-1, xxxx-2).

**What if a handler/shipper is unable to submit the PEC Certificate within the 7 day requirement following the consignment's departure?**

In order to preserve program integrity, certificates will not be signed after the 7 calendar days. A consignment that misses the 7 day requirement will enter the EU absent a PEC certificate and be subject to controls at the import authority's discretion.

**What if a PEC certificate is signed and afterwards the handler/shipper notices an error?**

Unfortunately, a handler/shipper will not be able to change any information once submitted via the ePEC system and finalized.

**What will PEC cost?**

Currently, the CDFA/SPI charge to issue a PEC certificate is \$15.00.

**Who is the Consignee? (Box I.5, Page 2 of PEC Certificate)**

The Consignee is the person or organization the goods are being shipped to. The Person Responsible is the person in the EU who is taking responsibility for the consignment when it arrives at port (Box I.6). This could be the consignee, trader or broker. This information must be available for customs to clear the consignment.

**What if the Person Responsible in the EU is unknown? (Box I.6, Page 2 of PEC Certificate)**

The Person Responsible in the EU is the person who will be taking responsibility once the consignment is presented to customs, and is required on import. If this information is unknown at the time of shipment,

box I.6 can be left blank. Once the information for box I.6 becomes available, the Almond Board has developed a PEC addendum letter\*\* template which the handler, trader or broker can use to submit the updated information. This letter is not required, however; it can help expedite loads held in customs due to a vacant box I.6. The person responsible in the EU must be available for customs authorities to contact should an issue arise during clearance. NOTE: The PEC addendum letter will not replace the aflatoxin analysis or correct any mistakes made on the original PEC documentation.

\*\*An example of the PEC Addendum Letter is in Attachment III

**What if a consignment contains both covered and not-covered product?**

For a consignment that contains product covered under PEC and product that is not, the consignment can still be accompanied by a PEC certificate for the product covered. If the consignment is sent without a PEC certificate, it may be subject to controls at the import authority's discretion.

**What if a customer/importer requests a PEC certificate for a product not covered under PEC?**

The ePEC system is pre-programmed for the specific two harmonized tariff codes covered under the program: 0802.12 shelled almonds and 0802.11 inshell almonds. Therefore, a PEC certificate cannot be issued for a product that is not covered by the program nor will SPI sign the certificate for a consignment not covered under the program.

**Will EU import authorities know PEC is voluntary and that absent a PEC certificate should not mean automatic rejection?**

The Almond Board is working closely with industry, FAS and authorities in the EU to ensure broad understanding of PEC, that it is voluntary and that a certificate is not required for entry. The European Commission has issued a notification through the Rapid Alert (RASFF) system stating PEC is not a condition of import.

**Is PEC recognized in non-EU European countries, for example, Norway?**

While non-EU countries often adopt or recognize EU regulations and programs, this is not automatic. Norway has adopted a regulation recognizing the PEC system but Switzerland has not.

**Does PEC encompass other sanitary procedures and risks for almonds?**

No, PEC is only applicable to U.S. control procedures for aflatoxin. It does not apply to any other measures for other health risks (e.g. salmonella). EU-bound consignments will need to adhere to all EU import requirements.

**Why was the VASP program replaced?**

VASP was not a permanent program. It was implemented in 2007 as a result of U.S.-origin almonds being placed on EU Special Measures due to concerns that U.S. aflatoxin controls were insufficient. Since being removed from Special Measures in September 2014, VASP was no longer required but maintained until PEC was in place. PEC is the only program recognized by EU authorities.

**Attachment I**  
**PEC Certificate – Part I**

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ANNEX

COUNTRY:

Part 1: Details of dispatched consignment	I.1. Consignor Name Olson Acre Address 2230 Almond Avenue Modesto, CA United States Tel. No		I.2. Certificate reference number PO 789156	I.2.a
	I.5. Consignee Name Almond Trader Address 785 We Buy Almonds St. Los Angeles, CA United States Postal Code 90020 Tel. No		I.3. Central Competent Authority USDA AMS	I.4. Local Competent Authority CDFA/SPI/ABC
	I.7. Country of origin USA		ISO code US	I.8.
	I.11. Place of origin Name Test Handler Company Address 111 Main St Chico, CA 95979 United States		Approval number OLSO0716	I.12.
	I.13. Place of loading California, USA		I.14. Date of departure 09/18/2015	I.10.
	I.15. Means of transport Aeroplane <input type="checkbox"/> Ship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Railway wagon <input type="checkbox"/> Road vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		I.16. Point of import in EU EU Port	I.17.
	I.18. Description of commodity Almonds Shelled		I.19. Commodity code (HS code) 0802.12	I.20. Quantity 44,000
	I.21. Temperature of product Ambient <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chilled <input type="checkbox"/> Frozen <input type="checkbox"/>		I.22. Number of packages 20	I.24. Type of packaging Fiber Bins
	I.23. Identification of container/seal number HPAG1681631		I.25. Commodities certified for: Human consumption <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Animal feedingstuff <input type="checkbox"/> Further process <input type="checkbox"/>	
	I.26.		I.27. For import into EU <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	I.28. Identification of the commodities Batch number 12345 Treatment type Almonds Shelled			

PEC Certificate - Part II

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

ALMONDS - PRE-EXPORT CHECK

Part II: Certification	<p>II. Health Information</p> <p>According to the provisions of Commission Implementing Regulation EU 2015/949 approving the pre-export checks carried out by the United States of America on almonds as regards to the presence of aflatoxin, I, the undersigned official inspector, authorized representative of the competent authority referred to in Article 1 certifies that the commodities described in Part I of the certificate have been produced, sorted, handled, processed, packaged and transported in line with good hygiene practices and have been subject to a pre-export check, as approved by Commission Implementing Regulation EU 2015/949 and ensures that the commodities covered by this certificate will be transported to the European Union in a container, which is in line with good hygiene practices.</p> <p>From this consignment samples for aflatoxin analysis were taken on <u>09/18/2015</u>, subjected to laboratory analysis on <u>09/18/2015</u> in the <u>USDA Test</u>, and the details of sampling, methods of analysis used and all results are attached.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>This certificate is valid for 4 months after issuance</p> <p><b>Part I:</b></p> <p>Box reference I.11: <i>Approval number</i>: only if applicable</p> <p>Box reference I.19: Use the appropriate HS code of WCO or CV code</p> <p>Box reference I.20: Indicate total weight</p> <p>Box reference I.25: Further process means "subject to sorting or other physical treatment before human consumption." Indicate total gross weight and total net weight.</p> <p>Box reference I.28: Batch number: 12345</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%; padding: 2px;">II.a. Certificate reference number PO 789156</td> <td style="width: 40%; padding: 2px;">II.b.</td> </tr> </table>	II.a. Certificate reference number PO 789156	II.b.
II.a. Certificate reference number PO 789156	II.b.			
<p><b>Official Inspector</b></p> <p>By signing this certificate, the inspector is verifying that the handler is a signatory of the Pre-Export Check program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) administered by the Almond Board of California.</p> <p>Name (in capital letters): _____ Qualification and title: CDFA/SPI Inspector</p> <p>Date: _____ Signature: _____</p> <p>Stamp: _____</p>				

**PEC Aflatoxin Certificate of Analysis (Completed and Submitted by the Laboratory)**

**Lab Name & Address:**  
USDA Test  
123 Main St  
CA, Chico 95926



**ePEC Certificate Number:** 101401  
EU Pre-Export Certificate  
Almonds Pre-Export PEC Program  
Commission Decision: EU 2015/949

**Date Sampled:** 09/18/2015

**Date Received:** 09/18/2015

**Date Analyzed:** 09/18/2015

**APPLICANT NAME AND ADDRESS:** Test Handler Company  
111 Main St  
Chico, CA 95979

**PRODUCT ANALYZED:** ALMONDS SHELLLED

**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:** USA

**PRODUCT IDENTITY:**

**STATE:** CA

**CROP YEAR:** 2015

**LOT ID:** 12345

**LOT SIZE:** 44,000 (lbs)

**Results of Analysis** **LAB SAMPLE ID:** LAB64565

**TEST METHOD:** AOAC 991.31

SUBSAMPLE	B1	B2	G1	G2	TOTAL AFLATOXIN
	ppb	ppb	ppb	ppb	ppb
1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
2	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1

The 44.0 lbs. aggregate sample collected from the lot must all be mixed together to be sure that each sub-sample contains portions of the whole lot. Grinding should be accomplished by a method which not only reduces the particle size but also is effective in thoroughly mixing the particles to a homogenous grind and conforms to the USDA/AMS Laboratory Approval Program procedures. Representative incremental samples have been collected from throughout this lot to equal an aggregate sample weight in accordance with the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 401/2006, as amended.

Sample has been analyzed using HPLC with a limit of quantification (LOQ) of 0.1 ppb for total Aflatoxin Quality Control/Spike

Recovery sample analyzed using HPLC gave recoveries of 97 % for total Aflatoxin and 92 % for Aflatoxin B1.

This is a USDA/AMS-Approved Laboratory for Aflatoxin Analysis in almonds. Official methods of the AOAC as approved by the USDA/AMS are used in all analyses unless otherwise stated. Reported results are not corrected for recovery or expanded measurement of uncertainty. Reports are for the exclusive use of the applicant. We certify to the truth and accuracy of this report as applying to the samples tested only. Unless otherwise noted, all samples were received in acceptable condition.

Reviewed and Approved by: Test Rep  
Lab Representative

**Attachment II**

**BE SURE YOUR LETTERHEAD IS ON THIS LETTER**

Month XX, 20XX

ADDRESSEES NAME  
ADDRESSEES TITLE  
ADDRESSEES AGENCY

This letter contains updated shipment information in relation to a recent consignment of almonds to COUNTRY NAME HERE .

COMPANY NAME HERE is submitting this addendum to the original Pre-Export Check (PEC) certificate documentation for the following consignment:

Batch/Lot #

Container #

Due to the nature of almond trading the Consignee (box I.5), Person Responsible (box I.6), Country of Destination (box I.9) and Point of Import in EU (box I.16) may not be known at the time the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) representative signs the PEC certificate. The commercial details contained in Annex I of the PEC certificate do not affect the validity of the health information of Annex II or the analytical information provided by the USDA-approved laboratory on the Aflatoxin certificate. Please accept the corrected information below:

Addendum to Annex I of Pre-Export Check (PEC) Certificate			
		I.2 Certificate reference number	
I.5 Consignee		I.6 Person responsible for the consignment in EU	
Name		Name	
Address		Address	
Postal code	Tel No.	Postal code	Tel No.
I.7 Country of origin	ISO code	I.9 Country of destination	ISO code
USA	US		EU
		I.16 Point of import in EU	

Please feel free to contact:

COMPANY NAME

PHONE NUMBER

Many thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME HERE

YOUR TITLE HERE