

PRESS RELEASE

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Korean Premium Pet Food Gains Access to the Canadian Market

Sejong, 3 August 2026 — In September 2019, Korea and Canada began diplomatic and technical quarantine negotiations on the export of pet food containing Korean meat ingredients to Canada. On 13 July, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) announced that the two sides reached agreement after nearly seven years of negotiations.

The agreement enables Korea to export premium heat-treated freeze-dried pet treats made entirely from chicken breast, beef liver, salmon, and Alaska pollock, without additives, to Canada. This paves the way for Korean manufacturers to break into the North American market.

The Ministry requested that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) initiate its import approval process in 2019. Since then, the Ministry has worked through Canada's rigorous quarantine and sanitary verification process by

submitting detailed responses to import risk assessment questionnaires and facilitating remote inspections of manufacturing facilities via live video. As a result, Canada approved selected Korean pet food processing establishments for export in June of this year. The two countries subsequently reached final agreement on bilateral quarantine and sanitary requirements and the format of the export health certificate.

The major outcomes of the negotiations are as follows:

1. Pet Food Exporter Approved for Canada

One Korean export facility operated by Ocean Co., Ltd. has received final approval from the Canadian quarantine authorities. This follows years of technical quarantine consultations and remote video inspections. The company is already an established exporter of cat food and other pet products to Taiwan, Chile, and Ecuador, with exports totaling USD1.42 million in 2025.

2. Ingredient-Specific Heat Treatment and Microbiological Standards Established

Sanitary requirements were established that comply with international standards and Canadian requirements. To address the different risk profiles of various raw materials, the agreed processing standards require poultry ingredients to be heat-treated to a core temperature of at least 70°C for a minimum of 3.6 seconds and beef ingredients to be heat-treated at 70°C or higher for at least 30 minutes. The two sides also agreed to adopt the internationally recognized statistical sampling method ($n = 5$)* for microbiological testing. This establishes a standard sanitary benchmark that can also be applied by other Korean pet food manufacturers seeking to export to Canada.

* Five samples are randomly selected from each export production lot for microbiological testing. The lot is rejected if any test result exceeds the allowable limits.

3. Export Health Certificate Finalized

The two governments also agreed on the format of the export health certificate required to verify compliance with the agreed sanitary requirements. The certificate will be issued by quarantine inspectors of the Animal and Plant Quarantine Agency (APQA) and will officially certify the information required by the Canadian authorities, including the origin of raw materials, confirmation that animals supplying meat ingredients underwent the required slaughter inspection, and compliance with the prescribed heat-treatment process.