







BB

479100  
4310

M.G.W.  
TARE

30,480 KGS.  
67,200 LBS.  
3,770 KGS.  
8,310 LBS.

## FTA Certificates of Origin

To claim an FTA tariff preference for reduced or eliminated tariffs, a product must first qualify as having origin, and is eligible for an FTA Certificate of Origin.



# FTA Certificates of Origin

Claiming FTA preference allows qualified U.S. products to be more competitive through reduced or exempted duties (tariffs), although local taxes still apply. FTA certifications are optional, and not required for shipments to clear customs. However, goods shipped without one may be assessed standard tariff rate, so be sure to include an FTA certification of origin. For shipments below \$2,500, the exporter should indicate on an invoice that a product is of U.S. origin and qualifies for an FTA. For Israel, U.S. exporters or producers may need to complete and sign the *U.S. Origin Invoice Declaration*.

[Download Video: Free Trade Agreement \(FTA\) Certificate of Origin](#)  
[11MB]

Video Disclaimer: Note that this educational video was produced prior to the USMCA entering into force. At this point, none of the FTA's require hard copy of the certificate of origin.

## I. Free Trade Agreements Certificates of Origin

FTA certificates or declarations should only be issued if your good qualifies for the FTA. Not all FTA agreements require specific forms. Most FTA partners can accept declarative statements that contain specific data elements including information stating how the product qualifies for an FTA. However, importers may still ask exporters to use a specific format. While the form/format is optional, the information is required for the importer to make a claim of preferential customs treatment. Always communicate with your buyer and shipper/freight forwarder on the needed documentation. Detailed FTA certification requirements for claims of preferential tariff treatment under the FTA are usually found in its rules of origin (ROO) chapter. There are three ways to locate the specific ROO chapter for a particular FTA partner, read the section on [Where to Find Your Rules of Origin](#) in the FTA Rules of Origin article. [A sample Certificate of Origin template](#) may be accessed via the CBP website. Note, you will need to download the file to your computer and then open the file using "Adobe Acrobat."

If no specific format is required, you should include the following data elements in a declaration to the buyer. This is their documentation the product qualifies and allows them to make the claim for FTA preference when importing, see "Who Claims FTA Preference" section further below. Please consult the specific FTA Rules of Origin chapter to confirm the required data elements.

- the name of the certifying person, including as necessary contact or other identifying information;
- tariff classification under the Harmonized System and a description of the good;
- information demonstrating that the good is originating; see [FTA Rules of Origin](#).
- date of the certification; and
- in the case of a blanket certification, the period that the certification covers, not to exceed 365 days.

Any party to the export transaction may ask for an FTA certificate/declaration. For example, a U.S. producer may be asked for a certificate by an exporter (if exporter is not the producer), by a distributor, an importer or Customs authorities.

## **Notes on FTA Certificates and Declarations:**

- FTA certificate/declarations are optional. You can still ship products to FTA partner countries without claiming the FTA preference. If the importer plans to claim the FTA preference, however, then you must provide the information to the buyer in the form of a CO or declaration.
- FTA certificates/declarations by the exporters are not required for shipments to clear customs according to the FTA text, but that may be different in practice. Work with your buyer and shipper/freight forwarder on the needed documentation.
- Certificates should include only FTA qualifying products. Non-FTA eligible goods should not be added to the certificate even if packed/shipped together. All goods belong on the invoice, but only qualifying products belong on the FTA certificate or declaration. Components/materials/ingredients already incorporated into products should not be listed on the certificates. [Spare parts and accessories](#) are an exception to this.
- Certificates should not be provided just because someone asks. You should only provide a certificate if the product meets the FTA requirements. The product must be evaluated and qualified for each FTA according to its specific rules of origin. Many are similar, sometimes identical, but each must be investigated.
- Not all FTA certificates/declarations require using specific letter codes for Preference Criteria. For example, do not write Preference Criterion B on a Korea FTA form just because this was the letter criterion used for USMCA shipment.
- FTAs benefits are not transferable. Just because a product may qualify for one FTA, it may not necessarily be the case for another one (or a product may qualify under a different rule). Therefore, exporters should not use the same certificate for shipments to different FTA countries.
- Certificates may be for a specific shipment or multiple shipments. Certificates issued for multiple shipments will include a date range, i.e., “blanket period” during which certification will be valid. The blanket period can be for a maximum of 365 days. Certificates may either include products currently being shipped or include a list of all eligible products that may be shipped during the blanket period.

## **II. Who fills out the FTA certificate of origin or declaration?**

FTA certificates/declarations are self-certified by a party who is knowledgeable about the transaction. Generally, this is the exporter of the product. The exporter may or may not be the producer. The producer, however, is in the best position to have the necessary knowledge about how a product qualifies under the rules of origin (ROO), as highlighted in the [FTA Rules of Origin](#) article. For this reason, a producer may be asked for an FTA certificate or declaration even if they are not the exporter.

## **III. Who claims preference for the FTA?**

- The importer or buyer will make the claim of FTA preference when clearing customs for import but will rely on information provided by the exporter in the certificate or declaration. The importer may need that documentation to prove the claim to their local customs authority.
- All Free Trade Agreements provide for a process of advance rulings by each country’s national customs authority. This can be especially useful for complex issues or where interpretation is required. The rulings are binding and will affect all future shipments of that product to that market. Details found in the FTA



text ([USTR FTAs](#)), usually in the chapter titled Customs Administration and Trade Facilitation. Information may also be available on the local customs authority website for that country.