



CLEANLINESS OF DOWN AND FEATHER PRODUCTS

Many companies are asking about cleanliness of down and feather products, especially from Asia. IDFL offers the following information and guidelines.

Washing, Drying and Sterilizing of Raw Down and Feather Material

The first step of ensuring cleanliness is the down processing plant. Down and feathers are washed at high temperatures to remove all impurities. During the drying process down and feathers are sterilized. An ISO certificate is a good sign that the down processing plant is following proper quality assurance procedures.

In order to sell down and feathers in the USA, the down processing plant must receive a sterilization permit. These permits are usually issued by the State of Pennsylvania. IDFL is authorized by the State of Pennsylvania to complete the necessary plant inspection required before receiving the sterilization permit. Please contact IDFL for help in obtaining the sterilization permit.

Cleanliness requirements of finished products

Finished products must meet minimum requirements for cleanliness as follows:

1. **Oxygen Number:** This test determines the amount of foreign organic matter on the surface of the down and feathers. To qualify as "clean" the oxygen number must be less than 10. (In some countries the limit is 20; Japan has a much stricter standard.)
2. **Turbidity:** This test determines the amount of dust in feather and down products. Clean products must have a turbidity of greater than 300 mm. (Japan has a stricter standard.)
3. **Special Bioburden Tests:** In Europe special microbiological tests can be required to determine levels of various bacteria or other harmful agents.

Please contact IDFL for testing of product cleanliness.

Special Requirements for Claims of Hypo-allergenic, Super-Clean, etc

The generally accepted industry standards for such claims on packaging or advertising of down and feather products are as follows:

1. Oxygen number must be 4.8 or less.
2. Turbidity must be 500 mm or greater.

Registration with State Government Agencies in the USA

All manufacturers, importers and down processors must register properly with government officials in 16 of the 50 USA states.

IDFL LABORATORY AND INSTITUTE

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