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Argentina lets breweries send spent grain to outside food plants for drying

A new rule requires processing to begin within six hours, opening a legal path for brewers without drying equipment

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Argentina has changed its sanitary and processing rules for brewer’s spent grain, allowing the wet byproduct from beer production to be dried at an authorized food facility other than the brewery where it was generated. The measure took effect when

Joint Resolution 5/2026 was published in the Official Gazette on Monday, November 16, opening a potential new commercial route for breweries that do not have their own drying equipment.

The change was issued jointly by the Secretariat of Health Management and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, two national authorities that oversee the sanitary and production conditions covered by the rule. According to the resolution and an official government statement released on Monday, November 16, authorized food establishments may now receive brewer’s spent grain from breweries and carry out the drying process there, as long as the material meets transport, identification, traceability and reception requirements.

A central condition in the new rule is timing. No more than six hours may pass between the moment the wet spent grain is obtained and the start of the drying process. The government presented that limit as one of the sanitary safeguards for handling a highly moist byproduct that can deteriorate quickly if it is not processed under controlled conditions.

The decision matters because brewer’s spent grain is produced in large volumes, but many breweries do not have the facilities needed to dry it on site for use in food production. By expressly permitting the drying step to be outsourced to another authorized food establishment, the government has created a regulatory path that could allow more of the material to be processed for food use rather than remaining limited by the brewery’s own infrastructure.

The government used 2025 production figures to show the scale of the byproduct. In its statement, it said that about 350,000 tons of spent grain were generated from 17.5 million hectoliters of beer produced in Argentina in 2025. Those figures are presented as background and not as evidence of current sales or of volumes already entering the human food market. The official material does not estimate how much of that total will now move into the newly authorized drying circuit.

The resolution also does not assign a monetary value to the market opened by the change. It does not quantify savings for breweries, additional revenue, or the number of tons that may ultimately be commercialized under the new arrangement. What it does

is remove a regulatory barrier by allowing a step in the production chain to happen outside the brewery, provided the receiving plant is already authorized as a food establishment and the required controls are met.

Those controls are a key part of the measure. The rule specifically refers to conditions for transport, product identification, traceability and receipt at the destination facility. That means the spent grain must be moved in a way that preserves its sanitary condition and allows authorities and operators to track its origin and handling. The structure of the resolution suggests that the government’s aim is to expand use of the byproduct without loosening food safety oversight.

The resolution was signed on November 5 and became effective upon publication on Monday, November 16. Its immediate effect is regulatory rather than commercial. Breweries and food processors now have a legal framework for a different operating model, but the government has not reported measured business results because the change has just entered into force.

For breweries, especially smaller producers or those without specialized drying systems, the rule may create a practical alternative to investing in their own equipment. For food processors that are already licensed, it may allow them to add a new service or input stream, receiving wet spent grain and converting it into dried material that can be used in food applications if all sanitary requirements are met. The government’s explanation of the measure frames it as a way to support greater utilization of a byproduct from beer manufacturing under controlled conditions.

Argentina’s official communication does not present the change as a guaranteed commercial expansion. Instead, it describes a potential opening. The 350,000-ton figure reflects estimated generation of spent grain, not a market already captured. The importance of the measure lies in the fact that breweries now have a clearer legal option to channel that byproduct into food processing through outside authorized facilities, something the rule now expressly permits under defined deadlines and controls.