Standard Guidelines for Palletizing Non-Perishable Shipments

In order to minimize the risk of loss or damage during transport of goods between the supplier's facilities and consignees' warehouse, the following are basic instructions for palletizing shipments containing pharmaceuticals, syringes, or medical/lab supplies:

1. Pallet selection

Choose pallets large enough to prevent overhang of shipment pieces.
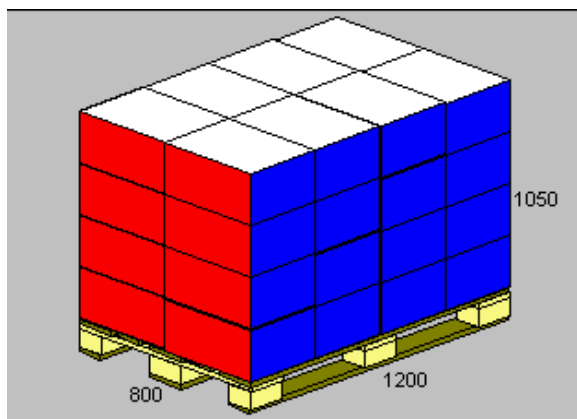Pallets must be sturdy enough to support the load.
- Select pallets with closely-spaced pallet deck boards;
- Never exceed the rated capacity of the pallet;
- Wooden pallets must be fully immunized. (Note that Brazil does not accept wooden pallets.)

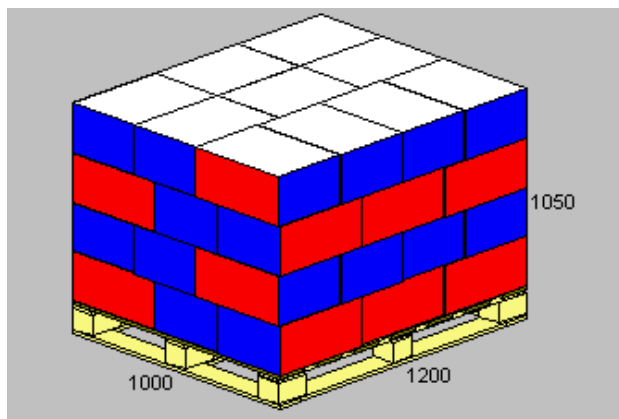Do not select pallets with broken boards or protruding nail heads.
Pallets with four-way forklift entry are preferred as they help to improve handling and reduce damage to the shipment.

The acceptable type of pallets for all PAHO non-perishable shipments must be the Euro Pallet Standard or the US Pallet Standard as shown below:

Euro Pallet Standard (measurements in mm)

American Pallet Standard (measurements in mm)

2. Stacking a Pallet

Ensure cartons are new and of proper strength to withstand stacking.
Securely close, staple and/or seal cartons.
Protect product from internal vibration with proper amounts of dunnage within cartons; leave no void areas/spaces between product or on top of carton.
Affix labels, with complete address information for the shipper and the consignee, to each piece.
Align boxes in columns, corner to corner, for the greatest stacking strength.
Avoid interlocking or rotating layer patterns.
Do not align corners over the spaces between pallet deck boards.
Boxes should not extend past the pallet edges.
Do not pyramid the boxes; keep the top layer flat to prevent damage from top loads.
Use a slip sheet under the load and every third layer when possible to help distribute the weight evenly and protect the bottom layer.

3. Securing Shipment to Pallet
Use strapping or banding to secure shipment to the pallet, and stretch wrap (use a minimum of 60 gauge, five revolutions recommended) to prevent pieces from getting lost or separated from the load.

4. Labeling Pallets
Label each pallet as it is stated on purchase order document (under Special Instructions) and include on marks consignee's complete information as it is shown on front page of purchase order under "Ship To."

5. Protecting Palletized Shipment from Damage

I. Use Top/Bottom Load Protector
Load protectors are layers of corrugated fiberboard or heavy paperboard that help to distribute evenly the weight of shipments that can be stacked upon one another.

II. Use Corner/Edge Boards
Corner boards increase vertical stacking strength, prevent damage to corner edges, and stabilize the load. They should extend to the full height and length of the load, and should be used on all corners.

III. Use Stretch Wrapping
Stretch wrapping is an effective way to keep all pieces of a shipment together. The plastic stretch wrap should first be applied around the pallet and continued upward around the load. Then, do the following:
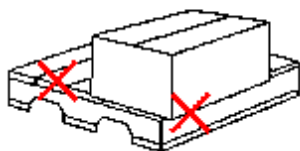- Tighten to prevent load shifting
- Capture the pallet when wrapping bottom layer
- Twist like rope for greater strength

Stretch wrap is designed to stabilize the load, not to secure it to the pallet. Strapping or banding should be used in conjunction with stretch wrap to secure the load to the pallet.

IV. Use Strapping or Banding
Strapping prevents pieces from getting lost or separated from the load. Straps should be drawn tightly to the load, which may require running them underneath the top deck boards of the pallet.
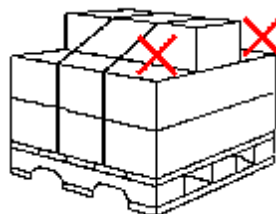
V. Unacceptable Palletized shipments and pallets:

Pallet overhang can reduce compression strength.	Misalignment reduces compression strength.	Damage can occur when a pallet doesn't have a flat-top surface. Place single containers on an outside corner or ship them loose.

INKA Pallets

Plastic Pallets

China Pallets