



IMPORTING FOOD IN AUSTRALIA

FACT SHEET

Australia has a strict biosecurity system managed by the Department of Agriculture Water and Environment.

The Department provides a generic information system online otherwise known as [BICON](#).

BICON is a good starting point to determine whether your goods will require an import permit or be subject to any restrictions to protect Australia's unique environment from unwanted pests and diseases.

DOCUMENTS

All documents, including commercial documents, need to have relevant information in English.

IMPORT PERMITS

- Valid for 2 years.
- If the goods have more than 10% egg or dairy or contain fresh or unprocessed ingredients an import permit is required.
- If goods require an import permit and arrive without a valid permit being in place at the time of arrival, Quarantine will direct the goods for export or destruction.

HEALTH CERTIFICATES

- Will often be outlined as a required document on an import permit.
- Details the Health and origin of animal-based products and ingredients.

PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES

- Will often be outlined as a required document on an import permit.
- Government Certification of treatment of plant based ingredients.

MANUFACTURERS DECLARATIONS

- Must contain ingredient listing by %.
- Must contain statements as required by the Import Permit and/or BICON.
- Should state that the goods are commercially prepared and packaged.
- If the goods are canned and retorted, the goods should include details of the preservation process and a statement that the goods are canned and retorted.
- More detail is outlined on the below links:

<https://bicon.agriculture.gov.au/BiconWeb4.0/ViewElement/Element?elementPk=1076580>

<https://bicon.agriculture.gov.au/BiconWeb4.0/ViewElement/Element?elementPk=1140729>

- If the goods are for human consumption it should include an end use statement: goods are for human consumption.
- Must have a consignment link on every page.
- Cannot be dated more than 6 months prior to shipment.
- Must contain the details of the company representative who signed the declaration – Name, Position/Title and signature.

IMPORTER DECLARATIONS

- May be requested to confirm the end use of the imported products.
- The declaration may also be required to confirm that goods will not be used for any other purpose.

LOT CODE LISTINGS

- Lot codes are batch numbers or best before dates – These are generally listed on the packing list or done as a separate lot code declaration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PRODUCER CODE REPORTING

When clearing food products, our brokers are required to report the manufacturer/producer details in our declaration to Quarantine.

We get this information from the manufacturer declaration or Health Certificates.

GST – EXEMPT FOOD:

Some food products and food ingredients are GST exempt.

LABELLING

Food labels must contain information as outlined by the Food Standards Code as follows:

- Accurate description of the goods and details of processing
- In English
- Prominent and legible
- Country of origin
- Correct weight
- Supplier or Importer address/contact details
- Ingredient listing totalling to 100%
- Health and Nutrition
- Allergy Statement

WHAT CLIENTS CAN EXPECT

1. Expect Quarantine intervention.
2. All food shipments will be subject to Quarantine document processing. At the discretion of the officer further information about the product, its manufacturer and end use may be requested. The information outlined above covers most of these concerns, however, additional information may be requested on any shipment.
3. Food inspections are usually permitted at the clients premises, however, if your product needs to be tested, the Department will direct it to an appropriate testing facility.

EXPORTS

The Department of Agriculture has a website dedicated to providing export advice. This has links to documents and industry specific information. The MICoR link is a reference for exporters and contains guidance on the importing requirements of various countries.

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/export>

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/export/micor>

