

Importing fishery products or bivalve molluscs

Guidance on safely importing fishery products or bivalve molluscs into GB, controls at point of entry and information on identification marking.

There are strict rules for the commercial import from outside GB of fishery products, bivalve molluscs and products that contain them.

The following organisms are defined as fishery products:

- crustaceans - prawns, lobsters, crayfish, crabs and shrimps
- cephalopods - octopus, squid and cuttlefish
- aquaculture products - farmed salmon, trout, prawns, shrimps
- fish oils - for human consumption
- tunicates - sea squirts
- echinoderms - sea urchins and sea cucumbers
- gastropods - whelks, winkles and abalone
- bivalve molluscs - oysters, mussels, clams, cockles and scallops

Bivalve molluscs are filter feeders, which means they are at risk of ingesting dangerous bacteria. Because of this risk these species can only be commercially harvested from approved production areas. These areas are monitored to ensure they meet the toxin and microbiological criteria set out in [assimilated?Regulation?\(EC\)?852/2004](#) and assimilated [Regulation 853/2004](#).

If you are importing a product of animal origin (including fishery products and bivalve molluscs) you should check that the exporting country and establishment are approved to import such commodities into Great Britain.

Importing into GB from EU and EFTA countries

[Import risk categories under the BTOM for fishery products imported from the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, the Faroe Islands and Greenland \(EFTA countries\) to Great Britain](#), and the import rules and inspection rates for each category can be found on GOV.UK.

The above link shows the BTOM risk categories and inspection percentages for imports of fishery products from EU and EFTA countries.

Imports will be subject to identity checks and physical checks. The percentage rates of identity and physical checks (the inspection rate) depends on the risk category of the commodity being imported:

- medium risk category commodities will be inspected at a rate between 1% and 30% - read further information on the frequency rates of medium risk commodities
- low risk category commodities will not be subject to routine inspection, but they may be subject to non-routine or intelligence-led checks

All medium risk imported products of animal origin are required to be accompanied by an Export Health Certificate.

You can find further information on the importation of POAO on the [Import food and drink from the EU to Great Britain](#) page on GOV.UK.

Importing into GB from non-EU countries

[Import risk categories under the Border Target Operating Model \(BTOM\) for fishery products imported from a non-EU country to Great Britain](#), the import rules and inspection rates for each category can be found on GOV.UK.

The above link show the BTOM risk categories and inspection percentages for imports of fishery products from non-EU countries.

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Traders must:

- notify the [border control post \(BCP\)](#), that is designated to check your commodity. via the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) in advance of arrival of any consignments of fishery products
- submit the relevant documentation to the BCP for medium risk fishery products, including an original health certificate. The type of certification required is dependent on the product type and country of origin present the goods to the BCP for veterinary checks to take place
- For low risk fishery products, consignments must be accompanied by commercial documents
- pay for all charges for the inspection of the goods retain the CHED, issued upon clearance, for one year at the first point of destination of goods in GB

[Further information on import requirements](#) can be found on GOV.UK.

Imports must:

- come from an approved country
- be accompanied by appropriate signed health certification unless categorised as low risk
- come from an approved fishery product establishment, premises or approved bivalve mollusc production areas
- enter GB through an officially designated Border Control Post (BCP) where veterinary/hygiene checks are carried out by an Official Fish Inspector
- all consignments must be pre-notified to the BCP prior to arrival
- public health conditions for the production and placing on the market of fishery products and bivalve molluscs are outlined in assimilated Regulation 853/2004.

Some approved countries are only allowed to export either fishery products or bivalve molluscs. It is therefore important to know under which category your product falls, see [assimilated Regulation \(EU\) 2019/626](#).

When bringing goods into GB from outside, importers must notify the BCP beforehand. Imports arriving are subject to veterinary checks, this includes documentary, identity and physical checks at the BCP.

A charge will be made for all mandatory random checks required by the legislation, which the importer must pay.

Failure to comply with regulations may result in goods being returned to the exporting country or destroyed - at the cost of the importer.

Bivalve molluscs

In [assimilated Regulation \(EC\) 853/2004](#) bivalve molluscs are defined as filter feeding lamellibranch molluscs. These products are filter feeders which means they are at risk of ingesting dangerous bacteria. If humans eat these fish products carrying dangerous bacteria, it could be dangerous to their health.

Because of this risk these species can only be commercially harvested from approved production areas, which are monitored to ensure they meet the toxin and microbiological criteria.

If your importing products of animal origin, you should check that the exporting country is authorised.

Identification marking

Under Regulation 853/2004, it is a requirement that consignments of fishery products and bivalve molluscs display an identification mark in accordance with Annex II, which applies to most products of animal origin.

It is the responsibility of food business operators to ensure that products do not pose a health risk to the public. The destination food business operator (the UK-based food premises), at its own discretion, will carry out a system of its own checks under a predefined HACCP (food safety management) plan to meet required hygiene standards.

Illegal fishing

Fish imports are subject to new rules under the Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Imports require certification detailing when the fish was caught and that the vessel was acting legally. For further information please see the [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs \(DEFRA\)](#).

Imports of scallops from the United States

Imports of live, frozen or processed bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates and marine gastropods for human consumption from the United States are only permitted from Washington State and Massachusetts.

However, food business operators may import the adductor muscle from pectinidae (scallops) of non-aquaculture origin, completely separated from the viscera and gonads.

Legislation on fish imports

[Assimilated Regulation \(EU\) 2019/626](#) - establishing the lists of third countries and territories from which imports of bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates, marine gastropods and fishery products are permitted.