

Importing nuts

Guidance on labelling, contaminants and what to look out for when importing nuts.

General information

Imports of nuts from third countries must meet the same standards of food hygiene and go through the same procedures as food produced in GB. You do not normally need a health certificate to import nuts, unless they are subject to Emergency Control Procedures – see Import restrictions below.

Labelling

You will find general information about [food labelling](#) in the GOV.UK website.

For advice on the labelling of specific products, please contact your local authority's Trading Standards Department or Environmental Health Department.

You can find [contact details for these](#) online.

Organics

If you are importing organic products (live or unprocessed agricultural products, processed agricultural for use as food or feed and vegetative propagating material and seeds for cultivation), from third countries, please contact the Organic Imports through DEFRA's website.

For information on organic regulation and standards, (including labelling) within GB please contact the [Organic Strategy team](#) also through DEFRA's website.

Packaging

Food contact materials and articles, including those used for food packaging, are controlled by retained UK law. This legislation is particularly thorough in its control of plastic materials and articles intended for food use.

For information on the safety of packaging please contact the Food Contact Material Team [through our online form](#).

Food hygiene

For general enquiries on food hygiene please contact the Food Hygiene Policy Team.

Contaminants

A guidance note on the Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2013, which make provision for enactment and enforcement of retained UK law which set out limits for contaminants in food (nitrate, mycotoxins, metals, 3-MCPD, dioxins and PAHs), can be found at on [our website](#).

Import restrictions

There are some other import restrictions/requirements that apply to nuts of which importers need to be aware and these are as follows:

Higher-risk products

Since 25 January 2010 imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin that are considered higher-risk can only enter GB through specific ports and airports which are designated [border control posts \(BCPs\)](#) where official controls will be carried out. A higher-risk product is feed or food that is either known to be, or is, an emerging risk to public health.

Aflatoxins

Imports of certain foodstuffs from certain third countries such as the import of peanuts from Brazil, China, Egypt, Ghana and India, hazelnuts and pistachios from Turkey, pistachios from Iran, and Brazil nuts from Brazil are subject to special conditions due to contamination risk by aflatoxins.

This means that consignments can only enter GB through specific ports or airports which are designated BCPs.

Further information for business operators can be found at our webpage on [Mycotoxins](#).

Importers should also be aware that approval under [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2015/949](#) for the USA to carry out pre-export checks on their peanuts and derived products, immediately prior to export. Therefore consignments from the USA of peanuts, and products derived from peanuts, should be accompanied by a certificate signed by an official of the USA competent authority, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), stating that the consignment complies with maximum levels of aflatoxins and providing results of the sampling and analysis carried out.

For further advice on these decisions and aflatoxin testing requirements please contact the Mycotoxins Team [through our online form](#).