

Importing High-Risk Food and Feed of Non-Animal Origin (HRFNAO) into Great Britain

Defining what a high-risk product is, guidance on aflatoxin levels in imported food, current Great Britain restrictions and guidance for importing certain products from defined countries.

Please note that any links provided in this document are for information purposes only and may not be the most current version.

All products imported into Great Britain (GB) must comply with our food and feed safety requirements. These laws are put into place to protect public health.

There are certain types of food which are considered a serious risk to public health (high risk). If you are involved with importing them, then you must be aware of this guidance.

If imported products fail to meet the correct standards they will not be allowed into GB. It is important to note that high-risk food and feed of non-animal origin (HRFNAO) can only be imported through [Border Control Posts \(BCPs\)](#), where documentary checks must be carried out and physical checks may be required prior to release. You must check that the BCP is designated to receive HRFNAO.

Please note that the import controls on HRFNAO sits outside of the scope of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM) risk categorisation process and all risk-based checks are based on those prescribed in the assimilated controls.

Products may be considered high-risk if they contain non-compliant levels of:

- contaminants - mycotoxins and aflatoxins
- pesticides
- microorganism that presents a risk to public health, such as *Salmonella* or *Listeria*

Information on high-risk products, country of origin and the frequency of checks can be found in assimilated [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1793](#) as amended. This regulation contains the controls that are applied to certain imported HRFNAO from certain countries.

When HRFNAO products are exported from the country of origin into another country without being processed and before coming to Great Britain, this would be considered 'triangular trade'. In this instance, the country of origin has not changed and the GB restrictions would continue to apply.

Please note that when HRFNAO products are exported from the country of origin into another country first and are further processed before coming to GB, they become a product of that country. In terms of food law, 'processing' means any action that substantially alters the initial product. Mixing a listed product with another (non-controlled) commodity would change the description and could take it outside of the scope.

Products that are controlled at the border may be permitted, with agreement of the port health authority, to move inland pending the results of laboratory tests (onward transportation). However, arrangements must be put in place to ensure that the consignment remains under the continuous control of the competent authorities and cannot be tampered with in any manner pending the results of the laboratory checks.

Until the results of the laboratory checks are known, the consignment must be stored at a customs-controlled warehouse or a UK External Temporary Storage Facility (ETSF). If you have any questions, please email imported.food@food.gov.uk.

See the [current list of ETSF operators](#).

Important

It is essential to pre-notify authorities in Great Britain before importing HRFNAO. Importers and import agents must use the online Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) to do this.

[Guidance on the import of high-risk food and feed not of animal origin from the EU to Great Britain](#) is available on GOV.UK.

Foodstuffs with current restrictions

Please be aware that import restrictions may be updated due to changes in policy or legislation. It is the food business operator's responsibility to ensure they have the latest information.

These controls exist to protect public health and may either suspend imports or specify conditions of import. Consignments may only be imported through border control posts (BCPs), documentary checks must be carried out and sampling and analysis or examination may be required prior to release. View the list of [foodstuffs with GB import restrictions](#).

Aflatoxin levels in imported food

Aflatoxins are a type of natural toxin produced by certain moulds, which are found in food and are linked with cancer when eaten at high levels. Some spices, nuts, dried fruit and cereals, including cereal products like breakfast cereals, can contain high levels of aflatoxins.

There are limits on the levels of aflatoxins that can be in foods imported into GB and some products might need to be tested before being exported.

Pesticide levels in imported food

Certain products of non-animal origin from certain third countries are controlled due to the risks of contamination with pesticides residues, which have permitted levels in food.

Restricted food stuffs

Below is a summary of other products that are subject to restrictions.

Soy sauce containing 3-MCPD

Some soy sauce contains a dangerous chemical called 3-MCPD. There are limits on the levels of 3-MCPD that can be present in products imported into GB.

These are:

- soy sauce can contain levels of 3-MCPD no higher than 0.02mg/kg
- this is for the liquid product containing 40% dry matter, which corresponds to a maximum level of 0.05 mg/kg in the dry matter

Import ban on jelly sweets

There are restrictions on the additives permitted in certain jelly confectionery because there is a risk of choking:

- the use in jelly mini-cups of certain additives specified in Annex II of assimilated [Regulation \(EC\) 1333/2008 as amended](#), and the sale of these jelly mini-cups, is prohibited
- in addition, the use of E425 konjac in all jelly confectionery, including jelly mini-cups, and the sale of such confectionery, is not permitted under Regulation 1333/2008
- these provisions are enforced by way of [The Food Additives, Flavourings, Enzymes and Extraction Solvents \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

Kava-kava import ban

Kava-kava, a member of the pepper family, is as a traditional herbal remedy for the treatment of anxiety. The herb has been prohibited since 2003. This is because of concerns about its toxic effect on the liver. Kava-kava supplements or foods containing this herb cannot be imported into GB.

Illegal dye in spices and palm oils

Certain spices are at risk of contamination by illegal dye levels. If they are found at or above 0.5 parts per million (0.5ppm) they are non-compliant.

Spices at risk of contamination from illegal dye include:

- dried chilli
- chilli products
- curry powder
- palm oil