

Importing bakery products

Guidance on licensing, labelling, packaging, and chemical safety when importing bakery products.

Imports of bakery products such as bread, cakes, biscuits and cookies from countries outside the EU must meet the same or equivalent food hygiene and compositional standards and procedures as food produced in the UK or other EU Member States.

You do not normally need a health certificate to import these products.

Import licenses

Although you don't usually need a health or hygiene licence to import food, many foods from countries outside the EU do require licences for trading purposes and may be subject to quotas.

The Rural Payments agency (RPA) [provides further information on import licenses](#)

Labelling

General information about food labelling can be found on GOV.UK

For advice on labelling of specific products, contact your local authority's [Trading Standards Department](#) or Environmental Health Department.

Packaging

Food contact materials and articles, including those used for food packaging, are controlled by a comprehensive EU legislation that is implemented in the UK.

The legislation is 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 Materials team](#)

Food hygiene

For general enquiries on food hygiene please contact the [Food Hygiene Policy Team](#)

Additives

Some bakery products may contain food colourings, flavourings or sweeteners.

Although these may be approved by the food authority in the country of origin, some of them may not be approved in the EU.

For information on food flavourings, sweeteners, colourings and preservatives, please contact [the food additives team](#)

Chemical safety

Contaminants

A guidance note on the Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2013, which make provision for enactment and enforcement of Commission Regulations setting regulatory limits for the following contaminants:

- nitrate
- [mycotoxins](#)
- metals
- 3-MCPD
- dioxins
- [polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons](#)
- [acrylamide](#)

Pesticides

The Health and safety Executive's Chemicals Regulation Directorate provides [information on pesticides safety levels for imports](#)

Aflatoxins

Imports of certain foodstuffs from certain non-EU countries, including some bakery products, are subject to special conditions due to contamination risk by aflatoxins. This will mean that consignments can only enter the EU through specific ports or airports which are designated points of imports (DPIs) where official controls will be carried out.

We provide further business guidance on [mycotoxins](#) and further information for business operators on our website.

Fusarium toxins

There is European Commission legislation covering fusarium toxin contamination in bakery products. For advice on this legislation and fusarium toxin testing requirements, contact [the chemical contaminants team](#)

Advertising nutrition and health claims

[Information on advertising nutritional and health claims on foods](#), can be found on the DH customer service centres website.

Organics

If you are importing the following organic products from outside the EU:

- live or unprocessed agricultural products
- processed agricultural for use as food or feed
- vegetative propagating material
- seeds for cultivation from outside the EU
- You need to [seek further advice](#) from DEFRA

DEFRA provides [information on organic regulation, standards and labelling within the UK](#).

Products of animal origin

Although cakes, biscuits and pastries can contain small amounts of products of animal origin such as eggs, butter or suet, their import would also normally be covered by The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009. Due to the processes used to make cakes, biscuits and pastries (mixing then cooking), these are not normally considered to be products of animal origin.

If, however, the cake, biscuit or pastry you wish to import has a fresh cream or butter cream topping or filling, then they will be considered to be POAO and different, stricter rules apply.

Amongst other requirements, this will require certification of the product, the premises that produce the product being licensed by the EU and veterinary checks at the point of entry to the UK.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) provides [information on the rules for importing a cake, biscuit or pastry with a fresh cream or butter filling or topping](#). APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).