

Importing table sauces, preserves, pickles and chutney

Guidance on licensing, labelling, packaging, chemical safety when importing sauces and pickles.

General information

Imports of table sauces which do not contain products of animal origin, preserves (but not honey), pickles and chutneys from third countries must meet the same or equivalent food hygiene and compositional standards and procedures as food produced in GB. You do not normally need a health certificate to import these products.

Import licences

You may not need a health or hygiene licence to import food, but many foods from third countries require licences for trading purposes and may be subject to quotas. For further guidance and information, visit [Rural Payments Agency's website](#).

Food colourings, flavourings and sweeteners

Some sauces, preserves, pickles and chutney 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 GB. For information on food flavourings, sweeteners, colourings and preservatives, please contact our [Food Additives team by email](#).

Labelling

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

For advice on the [labelling of specific products](#), please contact visit GOV.UK to locate your local authority's Trading Standards Department or your local Environmental Health Department.

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 visit GOV.UK to contact the [Organic Imports team](#) at DEFRA. For information on organic regulation and standards within the UK please contact the Organic Strategy team.

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 Materials team](#).

Food hygiene

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

Import restrictions

There are some import restrictions/requirements that can apply to sauces, preserves, pickles and chutneys of which importers need to be aware.

Higher-risk products

Imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin that are considered to be 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.

Read a complete list of [foods \(not of animal origin\) with current EU restrictions](#).

Aflatoxins

As of 1 January 2010 imports of certain foodstuffs from certain third countries such as sauces, preserves, pickles and chutneys that contain any dried fruit, spices or nuts, are subject to special conditions due to contamination risk by aflatoxins. This will mean that consignments can only enter GB through specific ports or airports which are designated BCPs where official controls will be carried out.

Further information for business operators can be found on our [chemical contaminants](#) page as well as our page on [mycotoxins](#).

Soy sauce and HVP (hydrolysed vegetable protein)

The above contaminants legislation sets limits for 3-MCPD in soy sauce and similar sauces and HVP. For information about these limits and the testing procedures please contact [Chemical contaminants](#)

Imports of feed and food from Japan

As of 27 March 2011 imports of all feed and food originating in or consigned from Japan to GB are subject to special conditions. This is following the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Japan in March 2011. This will mean that consignments of feed and food can only enter GB through specific ports and airports where official controls will be carried out.