

# Directly importing food

Goal	Why?
<p>Act requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food must be safe and suitable.</li> <li>• Records must be maintained to ensure traceability and to demonstrate that processing and handling requirements are being followed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone who imports food needs to comply with food safety laws.</li> <li>• All food imported for human consumption must be safe to eat.</li> <li>• Certain foods have to be cleared by MPI for food safety reasons before entering the country.</li> <li>• Food entering the country needs to be correctly labelled so that the nature of the food can be assessed.</li> </ul>

**How this is done**



Food that a business imports into New Zealand needs to be safe. An importer can help to ensure this by:

- sourcing food from operators who can show how they keep food safe;
- making sure that safety of food can be maintained during storage and transport to New Zealand, and until it is on-sold.

Food brought into New Zealand for sale can only be imported by a food importer registered with MPI.

Food safety information provided with, or about, food is subject to verification (auditing) to confirm that it is correct.

**Importer registration**

The business must be registered with MPI to import food.

The business must import food through a registered importer.

The person who is responsible for making sure that imported food requirements are met is: (insert name and/or position)

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**Identifying safe food to import**

The following steps must be taken when selecting products to import:

- food, ingredients and manufacturing/handling practices must be checked to make sure they comply with New Zealand food safety standards
- food composition and labelling must be checked to make sure that they can meet requirements of the Food Standards Code
- suppliers must be asked to provide assurances and product specifications
- checks must be made that food can be kept safe during storage and transport to New Zealand
- regular checks must be made of the food during storage and transport to New Zealand
- records of checks (e.g. temperatures) must be kept to show how food safety has been managed.

**How this is done**

Information on each consignment must be provided, in English, through the Joint Border Management System or to a Food Safety Officer. If providing information to a Food Safety Officer use the *Record – Imported food consignments*:

- the name of the vessel or the number of the flight on which the food is imported; and
- the country of origin of the food; and
- the name of the port of loading of the vessel or aircraft in the country of export; and
- the date of importation of the food into New Zealand, and the port of discharge; and
- a detailed description of the food, product type, and, where applicable, brand name and details of any batch or lot identification in relation to the
- consignment; and
- the name of the importer importing the food and the contact person for the importer (including, in each case, a physical or postal address, telephone number, and email or fax details). If the importer is not the registered importer for that particular consignment provide the details for the registered importer instead; and
- the name and contact details of the supplier, manufacturer, or producer of the food; and
- the broker associated with the consignment, if relevant; and
- the applicable tariff code; and
- the number of packages (if any) in the consignment and the weight of each package; and
- the total weight of the consignment; and
- the unique consignment reference.

**High or increased regulatory interest imported foods**

Certain foods need to have been sampled and tested before they can be sold in New Zealand. This is because they present a greater risk to health than other foods. Examples include: smoked fish, histamine-susceptible species of fish, bovine meat and meat products, pate, peanut butter, shrimps and prawns, tahine, bivalve shellfish, pepper, paprika and spices.

Further information about these foods and the standards that they need to meet is at:  
[www.foodsafety.govt.nz](http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz)

**Using imported food**

The business must have a system to be able to trace where food came from and where it has gone in the event of a recall.

### What if there is a problem?

- If the supplier cannot confirm that food has been produced using safe practices, it must not be imported.
- If food has not been stored or transported correctly and has been made unsafe, it must not be imported.
- If the food is incorrectly labelled (e.g. information is not in English) the food cannot be sold until it complies with the Food Standards Code. Information about the Code is at: [www.foodstandards.govt.nz](http://www.foodstandards.govt.nz)

## Write it down

Keep a record of the results of the assessments you carry out to confirm that the food you've imported is safe and suitable. This assessment must be done at the point at which you take responsibility for the imported food.

See Recall of food and recall of items in contact with food and Transporting food

Complete the Imported food consignments record for each batch of imported food to show the checks carried out confirm that the food meets imported food requirements. (This information will need to be kept for four years.)