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**Report Highlights:**

Israel amended its Public Health Protection Act (Food) to reduce regulatory burdens on food importation. The amendments include the adoption of the European Union regulation for contaminants, cancelation of numerous food standards, and an importation track called the “European Track”. The amendments came into force on January 1, 2023.

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## **Disclaimer**

This report was prepared by the FAS Tel-Aviv for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care has been taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped. FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.

## **Executive Summary**

On November 4, 2021, the Israeli parliament (the Knesset) passed amendments to the Public Health Protection Act (Food) to ease and reduce the regulatory burden on food importation. The modifications include the cancellation of official food standards, the adoption of the European Union regulations on food contaminants, and an importation track called the European Track. The amendments entered into force on January 1, 2023.

It is essential to note that Israel's food and food supplement legislation and standardization systems are increasingly harmonized with European standards due to its importance as Israel's largest market for agricultural and food exports. In many cases, European standards may differ from those in the United States. This report outlines specific requirements for food and agricultural product imports into Israel.

## **Section I: Food Laws**

### **Relevant Agencies**

Four agencies are involved in Israel's food, livestock, and plant safety supervision. These agencies include:

*National Food Control Service, Ministry of Health:* The National Food Control Service's (FCS) job is to assure the safety, quality, and authenticity of food for consumers. The FCS is the regulatory agency responsible for developing food standards and regulations dealing with foods sold in Israel. The agency is also in charge of licensing for food imports.

*Standards Institute of Israel:* The Standards Institute of Israel (SII) is the national standardization body of Israel. The institution is a non-profit, public organization empowered by the Standards Law of 1953, and representatives from large companies and industry associations publicly govern it.

*Israeli Veterinary and Animal Health Services, Ministry of Agriculture (MOAG):* The Israeli Veterinary and Animal Health Service (IVAHS) is responsible for controlling the import and export of animals and animal products, national surveillance of residues in foods of animal origin, and the food safety of animal products.

*Plant Protection and Inspection Service, MOAG:* The Plant Protection and Inspection Service (PPIS) is the authority in charge of permitting the importation of plants and plant products into Israel. The agency manages these imports for both commercial and personal use.

### **Regulations**

Israel's [Public Health Protection Law \(Food\) 2015](#) (Hebrew only) regulates the rights and obligations of all parties involved in the production, importation, and sale of food in Israel. On November 4, 2021, the Israeli parliament (the Knesset) passed amendments to the Public Health Protection Law (Food) 2015 to ease and reduce the regulatory burden on food importation. The amendment addresses SII food standards, the adoption of EU directives, and an importation track called the European Track. The amendments entered into force on January 1, 2023.

The main amendments to the Protection of Public Health Law (Food) 2015 are the following:

- The adoption of the EU regulation stating Europe's requirements in terms of chemical and biological contaminants (with certain exceptions) and pesticide residues (with certain exceptions).
- A new definition of "GIP – good importer practice" –this is a new definition for an importer with HACCP-based procedures regarding food quality and safety.
- A new import route for the "GIP" – the "European Track" enables the import of food based on the declaration, even for some of the products that are "sensitive" food products (see Table 1: "Sensitive" Food Products).
- The removal of trade barriers in Israeli food standards.

See GAIN report [Israel Passes Amendments to Ease Food Imports-updates](#) and the Federation of Israeli Chamber of Commerce “[Review of the New Import Reform in Israel.](#)”

As stated above, the amendment includes the cancellation of many SII food standards, [Public Health Protection Declaration \(Food\) \(Cancellation of Standards\) 2022](#) (Hebrew only), with most SII standards for food products canceled on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. A list of SII standards and a copy of the standards are available on the [SII website](#). As per the adoption of the EU directive, the [Public Health Protection Order \(Food\) \(Application of European Union Directives and Determination of Conditions and Exclusions\), 2023](#) (Hebrew only) determines the conditions in which Israel accepts the EU directives.

In addition to the Public Health Protection Law, there are several specific food regulations such as Public Health Regulations (Food) (Gluten Marking), Public Health Regulations (Food) (Marking a Breast Milk Substitute), Public Health Regulations (Food) (Food Additives), Public Health Regulations (Food) (Pesticide Residues), and the Public Health Regulations (Food) (Nutritional Labeling) 2017. A complete list of regulations is available on the [FCS legislation website](#) (Hebrew only).

The Regulations for the Protection of Public Health (Food) (Nutritional Labeling) 2017 requires front-of-pack labeling for most prepackaged food products which went into force January 1, 2020. See GAIN report [New Nutritional Labeling Regulation - Israel](#).

Due to growing trade with the European Union (EU), the Israeli food legislation and standardization system is increasingly harmonized to European standards. In many cases, European standards may differ from those in the United States resulting in non-tariff trade barriers and a challenging import licensing process.

## **Section II: Labeling Requirements**

Israel has strict marking and labeling requirements which frequently differ from other countries and various food products have specific labeling standards. U.S. exporters are encouraged to work closely with Israeli importers to meet labeling standards.

### **Nutritional Labeling Regulation**

On December 25, 2017, the Israeli parliament's Labor, Welfare and Health Committee approved new regulations, the [Protection of Public Health \(Food\)\(Nutritional Labeling\) 2017](#) (Hebrew only), requiring front- f-pack labeling for most prepackaged food products. The regulations entered into force on January 1, 2020.

The nutritional labeling regulation requires that red labels be affixed or printed on the front of retail packaging for specific products larger than 25 square centimeters. Impacted products contain levels of sodium, sugar, and saturated fats above the prescribed limits. Paragraph five of the [linked regulation](#) describes the limitations in detail. These front- of-pack labels are in addition to previous nutritional labeling requirements.



High Sugar Level

High Sodium Level

High Saturated Fat Level

The labeling requirements apply for products containing more than 400 milligrams of sodium, 10 grams of sugar, or 4 grams of saturated fats per 100 grams. For foods in liquid form, 300 milligrams of sodium, 5 grams of sugar, or 3 grams of saturated fats per 100 milliliters.

Products not considered prepackaged, such as fruits, vegetables, meats, fresh eggs, and prepared foods purchased at food service establishments, are excluded from the regulation. Additionally, the rule enumerates a list of exempted products, including tea, coffee, yeast, and food extracts. Other specific products may be excluded from certain aspects of the regulation. For example, dietary supplements, infant formula, and intoxicating beverages are not required to include a label denoting sugar content. Further details on exceptions can be found in the [linked regulation](#).

A video clip about nutritional labeling of food products (Hebrew only) can be found [here](#).

### **Pre-packaged Food Labeling**

Israeli standard No. 1145 is a broad standard that regulates the general labeling of all prepackaged food for retail sale, excluding unprocessed fruits and vegetables. The standard also defines requirements for prepackaged food labels not intended for retail sale, such as, food for industrial production, food in



wholesale packaging, and prepackaged food that is a combination of standard packaging units. The standard is available online from the [Standards Institute of Israel](#). Additional marking requirements on specific food products are detailed in particular food standards. Any contradiction between the marking requirements of the SI 1145 and the requirements of marking in a special standard applicable to a particular food or a particular group of foods, is controlled by the prevailing requirements of the special or group regulation.

### **Gluten-Free Labeling Regulation**

Public Health Regulations (Food) (Gluten Marking) regulates the labeling of gluten-free products. Those regulations are available [online](#) (Hebrew only).

### **Infant Formula Labeling Regulation**

Israel's Ministry of Health has specific regulations on labeling infant formula and Public Health Regulations (Food) (Breast-Milk Substitute Labeling) are available [online](#) (Hebrew only). Exporters of these or similar sensitive products are encouraged to work closely with Israeli importers to become familiar with these requirements.

### **Choking Warning Labeling Regulation**

Israeli Public Health Regulations require that choking warning labels be applied to specific retail products. The Public Health Regulations (Food) (Choking Warning Labeling) are available [online](#) (Hebrew only). The regulations require warnings in both Hebrew and Arabic on the following products intended for retail sale: nuts and seeds with or without shells, popcorn, dried corn kernels for popcorn, spreads containing fragments of shelled nuts, and sausages.

### **Labeling of Genetically Engineered (GE) Products**

Currently, Israel has no governmental policy on the labeling of GE products. If passed, current draft regulation (Novel Foods 5773 -2013) would create a mandatory labeling requirement for food items containing GE ingredients.

### **Labeling of Plant Based Meat/Dairy Alternatives**

Currently, Israel has no governmental policy on labeling plant-based meat/dairy alternatives, although a voluntary “Vegan Friendly” label is allowed. More information can be found [online](#).

### **Labeling of Wine and Alcoholic Beverages**

Alcoholic beverages containing more than 15.5 percent alcohol by volume require a warning label. The regulation specifies that wine and spirits having an alcohol content more than 15.5 percent display the following text: “Warning: Excessive consumption of alcohol is life threatening and is detrimental to health!” For products with alcohol content less than 15.5 percent, the following label must appear: “Warning: Contains alcohol - it is recommended to refrain from excessive consumption.”

### **Labeling as Natural**

Israeli regulations allow for labeling a food product as natural if certain requirements are met. The full regulation can be found in SI 1145, annex C.

### **Labeling Requirement for Food Products Containing Certain Sweeteners**

On August 19, 2019, the Israeli parliament's Labor, Welfare and Health Committee approved new regulation, the [Protection of Public Health \(Food\)\(Labeling of Products Containing Certain Sweeteners \) 2018](#) (Hebrew only). The regulation specifies that food products containing Aspartame or Salt of Aspartame-Acesulfame must display the text: "Contains Aspartame (a source of Phenylalanine)." For products with added polyols that account for more than ten percent of the packaged food's weight, the label shall display the following text: "Excessive consumption may lead to intestine dysmotility." In the case of table sweeteners, in addition to the warnings above, the name of the food must contain the text "Table sweetener based on ...". The regulations entered into force on January 1, 2021.

### **Section III: Packaging and Container Regulations**

#### **Food Packaging Materials Regulation**

The Public Health Regulation (Food) (Packaging Materials) regulates food packaging use in Israel. The regulation prohibits the usage of food packaging that may transfer harmful material. The full regulation is available [online](#) (Hebrew only).

The specific requirements ensure that plastic packaging with direct contact with food and beverages complies with Israeli Standard SI 5113 public health regulations. The standard was last updated in January 2019 and is available for purchase [online](#).

#### **Regulation Controlling Plant-Based Packaging**

PPIS Regulations, specifically Section 12, sets out guidelines for packaging materials. The regulation requires that all wooden packing material be marked according to standard International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) 15 of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). This standard includes wood packing material, pallets, and supporting beams. The full regulation is available in English [online](#).

#### **Deposit on Beverage Containers Law**

The Deposit on Beverage Containers Law, which came into effect in 2001, requires manufacturers, importers, and retailers to collect a 30 agorot (approximately 8.5 US cents) deposit on beverage containers larger than 0.1 liters and smaller than 1.5 liters, except for bags and paper containers. As of December 1, 2021, the law was extended to include large plastic bottles. More details on the bottle deposit system and Beverage Container Law is available on the Israel Ministry of Environmental Protection's [website](#).

#### **Packaging Management Law**

Israel's Packaging Management Law imposes direct responsibility on manufacturers and importers in Israel to collect and recycle their product packaging waste. The law regulates the production and treatment of packaging and packaging waste. The law was designed to reduce waste, lower landfill content, and encourage reuse to reduce negative environmental impacts. The Israel Ministry of Environmental Protection's [website provides more details on the Packaging Law](#).

## **Section IV: Food Additives Regulation**

### **Food Additives Regulation**

The Public Health Regulations (Food) (Food Additives) regulates the use of food additives in Israel. The regulations establish which food additives are permitted for use, the approved quantity, and the mandatory marking or labeling of food additives. The full regulation is available [online](#) (Hebrew only).

### **Additive List**

Based on the abovementioned regulations, the FCS publishes a positive list of approved food additives, including tolerance levels for allowed additives. The online listing [online](#) (Hebrew only) was updated in August 2022. For the most recent updates, refer to FCS's [food additives website page](#) (Hebrew only).

### **Adding New Food Additives to the List**

The approval process for adding new food additives and updating the terms of use of existing food additives is under the [Procedure for Updating the List of Food Additives](#) (Hebrew only). The following documents must be submitted along with the [online application form](#) (Hebrew only):

- Application Form
- Legislative Status Form (explains whether the food additive has been evaluated by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), the United States, or the EU; may also contain literature references, etc.).
- Additional information in accordance with [appendix c](#) (Hebrew only) of the procedure.

A notification of receipt will be sent immediately upon submission of the online form. Israeli regulators give weight to approvals from other countries. In this instance, a U.S., EU, or *Codex Alimentarius* approval will expedite the process. If an additive is approved by two of these three sources, the maximum process time is six months. If the food additive meets only one criterion or does not meet the criteria, the maximum process time is one year.

## **Section V: Pesticides and Other Contaminates**

The amendment to the Protection of Public Health Law (Food) 2015 adopts EU regulation stating the requirements in Europe in terms of chemical and biological contaminants (with certain exceptions) and pesticide residues (with certain exceptions).

As part of the reform, the following European Union (EC) regulations were adopted in principle:

- European Commission Regulations EC No. 1881/2006 of December 19, 2006, establishing maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs, not including sections 7-9.
- European Union Regulations EU No. 2018/73 of January 16, 2018, determining maximum levels of mercury residues in certain products
- European Commission Regulations EC No. 2073/2005 of November 15, 2005, regarding microbiological criteria for food, not including section 6. In Chapter 1 of Appendix I to the regulations, in details 2.1 and 3.1, in the "Limits" column, instead of g/cfu 100, it will read "25g in Absence."
- European Commission Regulations EC No. 396/2005 of the European Parliament, and of the Council of February 23, 2005, on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on the food of plant and animal origin. The regulation does not apply to fresh fruits and vegetables and raw products of animal origin.

Certain types of food are excluded from the adopted provisions. For instance, the adoption of the EU regulation does not apply to meat and its products, raw dairy, honey, and fresh eggs in the shell. Additional exceptions to the adoption of the EC regulations are found in directive [Public Health Protection Order \(Food\) \(Application of European Union Directives and Determination of Conditions and Exclusions\), 2023](#) (Hebrew only), which determines the conditions in which Israel accepts the EU directives. Therefore, it is important to work closely with your importer.

## **Section VI: Other Requirements, Regulations, and Registration Measures**

Israeli regulation requires the registration with Israeli authorities of slaughterhouses producing meat or poultry products. (link to a list of [registered facilities](#) as of March 2023, Hebrew only). This regulation defines a slaughterhouse as a facility that slaughters animals, cuts, cools, or stores meats or entrails. Slaughterhouses must receive authorization from the Israeli Veterinary Service to export to Israel. The registration process begins with submitting an application to the Director of Veterinary Services, as stated in the [Meat and Egg Import Procedure Guidelines](#) (Hebrew only).

### **Invoice Declaration**

To facilitate trade between Israel and the United States, the two parties have agreed to reduce the paperwork burden necessary to take advantage of the United States – Israel Free Trade Agreement. As of January 10, 2018, both sides removed the requirement for a Certificate of Origin for Exporting to Israel and replaced it with an invoice declaration. For further details, see [Certificate of Origin Update GAIN Report](#).

## **Section VII: Other Specific Standards**

It is the policy of the Government of Israel to adopt international standards whenever possible and to implement mandatory measures related to safety, health, and the environment. However, some mandatory standards may favor domestic producers over importers. For example, the Front of Pack (FOP) Labeling initiative favors domestic producers because importers face additional expenses as they need to change their packaging to meet this standard. Interested firms should contact the Standards Institution of Israel for further information on Israeli standards.

### **Organic Standards**

Israel's organic law follows the European Union's organic standards and requirements. Certification to the Israeli standard is not a requirement for importing organic food into Israel. However, if an importer wants to display the Israeli organic seal, then that importer must submit specific information documenting that the product meets Israel's requirements to PPIS.

Under the law, consumers can identify a uniform Israeli organic symbol on organic products as verification that the product was grown and produced according to the organic standard. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has appointed three private companies to oversee the production of organic foods. These firms include Agrior, Skal Israel, and the Institute of Quality and Control (IQC). Israel's organic standard can be found in [Law for the Regulation of Organic Produce](#).

### **Kashrut (Kosher)**

Kosher certification is not a legal requirement for importing food into Israel, except for beef, poultry, and other meat products (1994 Kosher Meat Import Law). However, non-kosher products have a much smaller market share, as most supermarkets and hotels refuse to carry them. In recent years, there has been an increase in demand for non-kosher foods.

Manufacturers who produce kosher products must satisfy Israeli rabbinical demands that all ingredients and processes meet Kosher standards. According to the 1983 Law for Prevention of Fraud in Kashrut, only the Chief Rabbinate of Israel can approve a product as kosher for consumption in Israel. The Chief Rabbinate may also authorize another body to act on his behalf. Exporters should work closely with importers to gain certification.

## **Section VIII: Trademarks, Brand Names and Intellectual Property Rights**

Any proprietor of a trademark used, or proposed to be used in Israel, may apply for registration of the mark. Collective trademarks and certification trademarks are also entitled to registration. Application may be made by the owner of the brand or by the owner's agent. The agent must work in Israel and present written authorization from the owner.

All applicants must present a local address for correspondence and contact; the Government of Israel generally advises foreign trademark owners to engage a local attorney to file their applications. Trademark fees are subject to change. Visit the [Israeli Government's Ministry of Justice Patent Office website](#) for updated information on fees and the length of protection for a trademark.

Case law in Israel prioritizes registration to the first local user of the trademark. Every application for trademark registration must specify goods falling in one class only, according to the International Classification of Goods and Services (ICGS). Under the terms of the Paris Convention, one who applied to register a trade or service mark in another signatory country has a right to claim priority for registration of the same mark in Israel for the same use. The priority application for registration of the trademark must be made within six months from the date of the first application in a convention country.



## **Section IX: Import Procedures**

### **Food**

Food importers must register with the Ministry of Health's Food Control Service (FCS) to import food into Israel. A list of importers holding a valid Importer Certificate is available [online](#) (Hebrew only). In addition, all food products must be registered with FCS for importation into Israel.

FCS divides food imports into two categories: non-animal foods and animal products. Non-animal foods are also categorized into two groups: sensitive and non-sensitive products. Upon registering the food product, FCS determines to which category the product belongs. The [Protection of Public Health \(Food\)\(Declaration of Sensitive Food\) 2019](#) (Hebrew only) lists which food product groups are considered sensitive, and is also shown below.

**Table 1: "Sensitive" Food Products (2019)**

1.	Milk products, and milk products substitutes, that contain milk components
2.	Meat and poultry products
3.	Fish and fish products, including mollusks, crustaceans and marine animals from the echinoderms group
4.	Eggs and egg products
5.	Honey and honey products
6.	Products containing gelatin, or collagen products, or both, including products that contain collagen
7.	Low acid canned food ( $\text{pH} \geq 4.5$ )
8.	Food products that must be stored, kept or transported at a controlled temperature or at a defined temperature, as defined by law, provided that the temperature is less than eight degrees Celsius
9.	Food products for people with special nutritional needs, excluding food marked as "Gluten free", as specified below: a. Foods intended for consumption by infants and toddlers including formulas and foods marked as supplementary foods; b. Designated foods as defined by law, excluding foods marked "gluten free"; c. Foods intended to replace a daily diet, in whole or in part, including athletes' formulas or supplements; d. Dietary supplements as defined by law; e. Vitamins, minerals, and amino acids for use as a nutritional component in the food industry.
10.	Mushrooms and mushroom mixtures, including products in which mushrooms are a main ingredient
11.	Microorganisms for use in the food industry or as a finished product
12.	Bottled drinking water, mineral water and mineral water-based beverages
13.	Edible food colors for the retail market
14.	Khat leaves in their natural form intended for chewing

Source: [Protection of Public Health \(Food\)\(Declaration of Sensitive Food\) 2019](#) (Hebrew only)

## Sensitive Foods

For those products considered sensitive, U.S. exporters are advised to work closely with Israeli importers to meet current regulations. These products may face additional barriers and scrutiny by authorities. The importation of sensitive foods to Israel per the [Public Health Protection Law \(Food\) 2015](#) (Hebrew only), [Protection of Public Health \(Food\)\(Declaration of Sensitive Food\) 2019](#) (Hebrew only), [Import Procedure Guide for Sensitive Foods](#) (Hebrew only), regulations for the [Protection of Public Health \(Food\)\(Laboratory Sample Testing of Shipments of Sensitive Food at the Quarantine Station\) 2020](#) (Hebrew only), and the temporary provisions [Public Health Protection Act Food \(Certificate of Release for Certain Sensitive Foods\) \(Temporary Provision\) 2022](#) (Hebrew only), [Public Health Protection Act Food \(Certificate of Release for Certain Sensitive Foods for GIP<sup>1</sup>\) \(Temporary Provision\) 2022](#) (Hebrew only) .

### *Importation Process for Sensitive Foods*

Prior to arrival, **the importer must obtain preapproval for sensitive food products.** The process is as follows:

- Submission of application: The importer (a registered food importer) must submit a preliminary application to the FCS import department for authorization to import the food product and attach all the required documents detailed in the form (listed below).
- Receiving the application: The application will be recorded in the computer system, and the importer will receive a request number.
- Application review: The documents will be reviewed by the import department. The department will verify the details and validity of the importer. If all the documents have been submitted and are found to be valid, the request will be forwarded to a food engineer.
- Inspection: The food engineer shall examine the application in accordance with the existing legislation (including standards, regulations). The inspecting engineer will then decide whether to issue a preapproval for the sensitive food importation or reject the request. The official may ask the importer to perform tests in recognized laboratories in Israel to complete and verify information prior to issuing the approval. In addition, the product manufacturer or competent authority may require verification of the information appearing in the document.
- Approval of Product: A signed import certificate will be sent to the importer if the food product is approved. The certificate must be obtained once a year and can be extended to four years.
- Rejection of Request: If the food product is not approved, the request for import of the product will be rejected and returned to the importer accompanied by a rejection form detailing the reason for the rejection.

### *Required Documentation for Preapproval*

The documents must be originals and signed by the submitting entity (manufacturer, supplier, laboratory, authorized entity). The following documents and any other document requested by FCS should be submitted in duplicate:

- Product composition (from the manufacturer)
- Chemical and microbial tests, signed by the manufacturer or the tester
- Original package of the product as sold in the manufacturing country. For a product that is specially produced for Israel, a declaration by the manufacturer should be added that the product is produced for Israel, and the labeling of the product should meet the Israeli labeling regulations (SI 1145)

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<sup>1</sup> GIP- Good Importer Practice

- An approval document from an authorized entity confirming that the producer is under its inspection, GMP (from an accredited body listed on <http://www.iaf.nu/>), Free Sale Certificate, Health Certificate, Phytosanitary Certificate
- For low acidity products ( $\text{PH} \geq 4.5$ ), the producer must describe the production process in a Low Acid Canned Food (LACF) declaration
- Decoding of codes, if applicable.

*Release from Quarantine Station*

Protection of Public Health (Food) (Laboratory Sample Testing of Shipments of Sensitive Food at the Quarantine Station) 2020 (Hebrew only) regulation sets the frequency in which sensitive food shipments at the quarantine station need to be tested in a laboratory in Israel. According to the rule, every shipment of sensitive food products must be tested in Israel upon arrival at the quarantine station. The regulation sets the conditions in which the shipment does not need to be tested:

- Exclusively, dairy product shipment will be sampled at a frequency of once every three months (every twelve months if intended for the food industry) if all the following have been met:
  - The product was sampled in a laboratory in Israel within the last three months (every twelve months if intended for the food industry) before the submission of the application for a certificate of release of shipment;
  - The results of the laboratory tests complied with the requirements of the food legislation.
- Mixed shipment, including dairy products, will be sampled at a frequency of once every three months if all the following have been met:
  - The product was sampled in a laboratory in Israel within the last three months prior to the submission of the application for a certificate of release of shipment;
  - The results of the laboratory tests complied with the requirements of the food legislation.
- Sensitive foods from the list below will be sampled at a frequency of once every six months (every twelve months if intended for the food industry) if all the following have been met:
  - The product was sampled in a laboratory in Israel within the last six months (every twelve months if intended for the food industry) prior to the submission of the application for a certificate of release of shipment;
  - The results of the laboratory tests complied with the requirements of the food legislation.
    1. Canned meat and meat products
    2. Canned fish and canned fish products, including mollusks, crustaceans, and marine animals from the echinoderms group
    3. Eggs and egg products
    4. Honey and honey products
    5. Products containing gelatin, collagen products, or both, including products that contain collagen
    6. Low-acid canned food ( $\text{pH} \geq 4.5$ )
    7. Food products that must be stored, kept, or transported at a controlled temperature or a defined temperature, as defined by law, provided that the temperature is less than eight degrees Celsius, excluding butter and butter spreads with added vegetable fat
    8. Foods intended as a substitute for the daily diet, in whole or in part, including formulas or nutritional supplements for athletes
    9. Dietary supplement as defined in the law
    10. Vitamins, minerals, and amino acids for use as a nutrient in the food industry

11. Mushrooms and mushroom mixtures, including products in which mushrooms are a primary ingredient
12. Microorganisms for use in the food industry or as a finished product
13. Bottled drinking water, mineral water, and mineral water-based beverages
14. Edible food colors for the retail market

*Release from Port of Entry*

The following documentation is required to release the product:

- Bill of landing
- Invoice
- Packing list
- Importer certificate
- An approved early approval request
- Certificate of analysis
- For refrigerated products, a graph with the container’s temperature
- Other required documentation (see Appendix II)

New temporary provisions were developed to ease the importation of sensitive foods , “[Public Health Protection Act Food \(Certificate of Release for Certain Sensitive Foods\) \(Temporary Provision\) 2022](#)” (Hebrew only). According to the provision, a release certification will be granted online no later than one day after the request is submitted unless the laboratory test results in Israel show that the product does not meet the requirements of food legislation.

**Table 2: Certain “Sensitive” Food Products**

1. Eggs and egg products
2. Honey and honey products
3. Products containing gelatin, collagen products, or both, including products that contain collagen
4. Low-acid canned food (pH ≥ 4.5)
5. Food products that must be stored, kept, or transported at a controlled temperature or a defined temperature, as defined by law, provided that the temperature is less than eight degrees Celsius
6. Mushrooms and mushroom mixtures, including products in which mushrooms are a primary ingredient
7. Microorganisms for use in the food industry or as a finished product
8. Bottled drinking water, mineral water, and mineral water-based beverages
9. Edible food colors for the retail market

Source: [Public Health Protection Act Food \(Certificate of Release for Certain Sensitive Foods\) \(Temporary Provision\) 2022](#) (Hebrew only)

Following the amendment of the [Public Health Protection Law \(Food\) 2015](#) (Hebrew only) and the [Public Health Protection Act Food \(Certificate of Release for Certain Sensitive Foods for GIP\) \(Temporary Provision\) 2022](#) (Hebrew only). GIP can import certain sensitive foods through the “European Route.”

## Non-Sensitive Foods

The [Public Health Protection Law \(Food\) 2015](#) (Hebrew only) eases the importation processes of non-sensitive foods and allows the importer to submit the food import forms online.

As a result of the amendments to the Public Health Protection Law, GIP importers can now import through the “European Track.” The required documentation for importation depends on the chosen import track.

### *Importation Process for Non-Sensitive Foods*

- Prior to Arrival: The importer must submit a [virtual import declaration](#) (Hebrew only) and receive an Approval of Declaration Receipt from FCS. In addition, the importer must sign a letter of commitment, pay import fees, and gather the required import documents.
- Near Arrival: The importer must submit a virtual request to release the non-sensitive food. A certificate of release may be requested online.
- Upon Arrival: The release is based on the automated “Approval of Declaration Receipt” and certificate of release. A random inspection of no more than five percent of total shipments per annum may apply.

### *Import Declaration*

An import declaration is required. The document must include the following:

- Name and address of the manufacturer, importer’s details
- Name of the product
- Purpose of the product (i.e., end consumer, raw material)
- Weight and packaging
- Name and country of origin of the supplier (if the food is not imported directly from the manufacturer)

### *Letter of Commitment*

A letter of commitment signed by the importer must now accompany the shipment. That document will include the following:

- A commitment that the details of the declaration are true and applicable to future shipments
- A commitment that the products are compliant with all relevant food legislation
- A commitment from the importer that he is responsible for any manufacturer recalls
- The importer must declare that he has all necessary certificates
- The importer must declare if they do not have direct contact with the manufacturer

### *Release from Port of Entry*

Under the updated regulations, release from port will:

- Be based on the automated Approval of Declaration Receipt
- Certificate of release will be automatically issued (no later than 24 hours)
- Random inspection of no more than 5 percent of total shipments per year
- Additional restrictions may apply

### *Required Documentation*

The list below provides a general overview of the documents Israeli authorities require. Note that additional documents may be necessary, depending on the product. All documents should be retained for at least one year after the product's shelf life ends.

- Copies of labels (from the country of origin and Israel)
- Lab results or documentation regarding the food composition and the compliance of the batches in the shipment with the product specification. Each batch will be accompanied by tests (Certificate of Analysis) that indicate the suitability of the product to the food legislation in Israel.
- A declaration of compliance with the EU regulatory requirements for the food product.
- Health and sanitary certificates (i.e. free sale, health certificate, GMP.)
- Shipping documents (import declaration, release certificate, bill of lading, packing list, etc.)

### *European Track Documentation*

Either of the following must be provided:

- A certificate attesting that the food production is overseen by an entity authorized to do so in the country of production, issued by this competent entity (should be from the EU)
- Free trade certificate is relevant only for a free trade certificate that deals with a sale within the EU and is issued by a competent European entity
- Health certificate issued by an entity authorized to do so in the country of production (should be from the EU)
- A certificate mentioned in Article 52 (of the Protection of Public Health Law - Food) attesting that the food was produced following GMP in the country of production.

In addition, either of the following must be provided:

- Sale invoice from or to a European retailer;
- Shipping certificate to a European retailer;
- Free trade certificate issued by a competent authority within an EU country.
- In the matter of a manufacturer, for which the importer presented a health certificate from a competent authority within the EU or one issued by a competent authority within the EU overseeing the production of the food, there is another alternative, which is a food producer;
- A declaration of compliance with the EU regulatory requirements for the food product.

## Animal Food Products

Animal Food Products are foods derived from animals, fish, and fish products, meat products, or other food which contains meat or fish stored at a controlled temperature. Animal food products are under the supervision of the FCS's veterinary unit.

### *Importation Process Animal Food Products*

- The importer must obtain an importer registration certificate.
- The importer must obtain an import permit (for every product).
- The importer must apply for the handling and delivery of animal food products according to the following steps:
  1. Issuance of a permit to transfer the shipment from the port;
  2. Food inspection;
  3. Issuance of a permit for the import of the shipment to Israel.

### *Required Documentation for Every Request for an Import Permit*

- A certificate from a competent authority external to the country of origin, which disseminates the information, results, and conclusions openly and available to the general public via the Internet, such as an EU certificate;
- Product-specific label including cutting shapes, coatings, and red markings as required by the front of pack labeling;
- Processed Animal Food Products must also include the following:
  1. Technical specifications from the factory - including food additives, microbial levels, chemical pollutants, and chemical residues in the final product, and an indication of nutritional values;
  2. Analyses;
  3. Flow charts and critical control points in the product manufacturing HACCP program.

### *Release from Port of Entry*

The process for releasing an import shipment consists of three steps:

- Issuance of a permit to transfer the shipment from the port. The following documentation is required:
  1. [Application for the issuance of a permit for the transfer of a shipment from the port and the importation of the shipment to Israel](#) (Hebrew only);
  2. Valid importer registration certificate;
  3. Shipping documents (i.e. invoice, photocopy of GATEPASS, bill of lading, packing list);
  4. Original health certificate only;
  5. Cargo temperature recordings (except for the delivery of fresh fish);
  6. Receipt for the payment of the fee;
  7. Copies of labels;
  8. Refrigerated transport license.
- Food inspection:
  1. Fresh raw food:

The veterinarian will perform the sampling at the time of the shipment inspection. The importer must send samples, transferred refrigerated, to a recognized laboratory within a maximum of 12 hours from the sampling date.

2. Fresh processed food or frozen/processed raw food:

A veterinarian from the veterinary unit will perform the sampling will be transferred by the importer to a recognized laboratory selected by the importer (except in exceptional cases specified in the procedures) for testing. After receiving the permit to transfer the shipment from the port, the importer will coordinate a sampling date with the responsible veterinarian. The sampling will take place within seven working days from the importer's request to coordinate the sampling date or within 30 working days from the date of permit issuance.t.

- Issuance of a permit for the import of the shipment to Israel: If the lab analysis results are adequate, a permit will be issued. If the results are incorrect, notice will be given to the importer who can decide whether to re-sample.

The specific produce guidelines for importing animal food products are available [online](#) (Hebrew only).

### **Plants and Plant Products**

The [Plant Import Regulation](#) regulates the importation of plants, plant products, and plant by-products to Israel. Permits are mandatory to import fresh produce, plants, plant products, seeds, propagation material, and biotic material; permits are necessary for each shipment. Plants and plant products may only be brought into Israel with a valid permit issued by PPIS. Exporters may request an import permit by contacting the PPIS Import Department.

Applications for the import permit should be submitted a minimum of 45 days prior to import. The permit request forms, according to the import type (fresh produce, plants, plant products/ seeds/ Biotic material), can in the [Plant and Plant Products Import Procedure Guidelines](#) (Hebrew only).

The permit will include the following:

- Import terms for the specific product
- Additional importation terms
- Requirements for additional statements

Any requested statements should appear in the phytosanitary certificate accompanying the shipment from the country of origin. A copy of the import permit should be sent to the suppliers to ensure compliance with all the conditions specified in that permit.

Israel's plant protection regulation controls importing all plant material, pests, and regulated products. These include fresh produce (i.e. fruit, vegetables, cut flowers), propagation material, potted plants, growth media, vegetable feed for animals, and edible kernels.

In general, importers of plant material must first apply for and receive an import permit from PPIS. All shipments to Israel must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate issued by the country of origin. Importers are required to notify PPIS of incoming shipments. Any arriving shipment will be subject to mandatory inspection for pests upon arrival.

In some cases, the import permit and phytosanitary certificate requirements may be exempt if the risk is deemed minimal. Israel divides imported plant products into three groups based on pest risk:



- Third Schedule: Goods listed in this schedule are exempt from an import permit and a phytosanitary certificate but must be accompanied by a Certificate of Origin (from the United States, an Invoice Declaration is sufficient). Their release is conditional on a visual inspection at the port of entry and on being pest-free.
- Fourth Schedule: Goods listed in this schedule are exempt from an import permit but must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate from the country of origin, complying with all the import requirements specified in the body of the schedule. Their release is conditional on the approval of all the accompanying documents, a visual inspection at the port of entry, and compliance with all the import terms.
- Licensed import: As for goods not appearing in the schedules mentioned above, an import permit application must be submitted. Following a pest risk assessment (PRA), whether to approve the application and under what restrictions will be decided. Such goods must be accompanied by an import permit, phytosanitary certificate, and visual inspection at the port of entry as a condition for release.

### **Animal Feed**

The [2014 Control of Animal Feed Law](#) (Hebrew only) was enacted in March 2017. The law regulates animal feed production and marketing, guaranteeing animal product safety and quality throughout the production chain. The responsibility for implementing the new feed law was moved from the PPIS to the Israeli Veterinary and Animal Health Service (IVAHS). Animal feed imports require an approved import permit issued by the IVAHS and testing and certificates applicable to the commodity. Requirements vary between products.

### **Animal Food Containing Animal**

The [Procedure for the Importation of Animal Feed](#) (Hebrew only) controls the import of animal products intended for animal feed.

### **Live Animals**

Importation of Live Animals (including semen and embryos) is regulated under [Animal Disease Regulations \(Imports of Animals\) 1974](#). Israel requires that live animals be accompanied by a veterinary health certificate issued not more than ten before arrival. That certificate should be issued by a USDA accredited veterinarian and endorsed by USDA/APHIS after issuance.

### Day Old Chicks and Hatching Eggs

The Israeli Import Procedure for Day Old Chicks and Hatching Eggs (Hebrew only) is available [online](#).

### Cats and Dogs

More details on exporting pets to Israel can be found [here](#). In addition, the Israeli Import Procedure for Cats and Dogs (Hebrew only) is available [online](#).

## **Section X: Trade Facilitation**

### **Advance Rulings**

Israeli Customs provides [free pre-ruling classification information](#). A request for early classification determinations for commercial goods can be submitted to the [Department of Customs, Tax Authority, Israel Ministry of Finance](#) through the [Application for Preliminary Information - Classification of Goods in Import](#).

According to the Chapters of the Customs Tariff, the Department of Customs has Customs Houses assigned to the subjects responsible for classification purposes, according to the Chapters of the Customs Tariff. Each Customs House provides classification on different Customs Headings. See Appendix I for the relevant Custom Houses and contact information for agriculture and food products.

When requesting classification information, you should send a detailed description of the goods and include a catalog and/or prospects which contain the technical information and or any other relevant information. In addition, you may be requested to submit one or more of the following:

- A sample of the material/product
- Laboratory results
- Authorizations from institutes/authorized government agencies
- Importation License
- Other documents as required by the specific Customs Houses

The customs duties that must be paid upon import of a product depend on the tariff classification applicable to the product. The Israel Tax Authority [Custom Book](#) is available online in English.

### **E-certificates**

Israel accepts ePhyto from APHIS; see [APHIS's Electronic Phytosanitary Certification](#). In addition, Israel accepts the [Veterinary Export Health Certification System \(VEHCS\)](#) certification to import all live animals. Israel recently began to exchange information with the [International Plant Protection Convention Secretariat \(IPPC\) Hub](#).

### **Release Times**

The release time for agriculture and food products depends mainly on whether Israel considers the product sensitive. The release time for sensitive products is longer than that of non-sensitive products. Release times are also longer near the Jewish High Holidays, which occur in March/April and September/October each year., The most common reason for the delay for agriculture and food products is incomplete documentation or discrepancies within the required paperwork. A common delay in Israel is getting the wrong certificate issued or leaving off required statements/declarations. Please work closely with the importer to ensure all technical requirements are covered before shipping.

## **Appendix I: Government and Regulatory Agency Contacts**

### **Custom Houses, Israel Tax Authority, Ministry of Finance**

- **Eilat Custom House**, Gaby Schwartz, Telephone: +972-74-7611535, Fax: +972-2-6668846. Covering Live Animals.
- **Ben Gurion Airport Custom House**, Haim Steinberg, Telephone: +972-74-7611779, Fax: +972-2-6668965. Covering Animal Products, Vegetable Products Animal or Vegetable Fats and Oils and their Cleavage Products; Prepared Edible Fats; Animal or Vegetable Waxes, Prepared Foodstuffs; Beverages; Spirits and Vinegar; Tobacco and Manufactured Tobacco Substitutes, Prepared Foodstuffs; Beverages; Spirits and Vinegar; Tobacco and Manufactured Tobacco Substitutes.

### **Food Control Service (FCS), Ministry of Health**

12 Ha'arba'a St.

6473912, Tel Aviv, Israel

Tel: +972-8- 6241010

Fax: +972-2-5655969

Email: call.habriut@moh.health.gov.il

Website: [https://www.gov.il/en/departments/units/food\\_control\\_unit/govil-landing-page](https://www.gov.il/en/departments/units/food_control_unit/govil-landing-page)

### **Israel Veterinary and Animal Health Services (IVAHS), Ministry of Agriculture**

PO Box 30

5025001, Beit Dagan, Israel

Tel: +972-3-9688981

Fax: +972-3-9681657

E-mail: [sharonl@moag.gov.il](mailto:sharonl@moag.gov.il)

Website: <https://www.gov.il/he/departments/Units/2vet>

### **Plant Protection & Inspection Service (PPIS), Ministry of Agriculture**

PO Box 30

5025001, Bet Dagan, Israel

Tel: +972-3-9681500

Fax: +972-3-9681507

E-mail: [Ppis\\_web@moag.gov.il](mailto:Ppis_web@moag.gov.il)

Website: <https://www.gov.il/he/departments/Units/2ppis>

### **Standards Institution of Israel (SII)**

42 H. Levanon St.

69977, Tel Aviv, Israel

Tel: +972-3-6465154

Fax: +972-3-6419683

E-mail: [library@sii.org.il](mailto:library@sii.org.il)

Website: <https://www.sii.org.il/>

## **Appendix II: Sensitive Food Products that Require Additional Documentation**

- Milk products
  - Manufacturer's declaration on the manufacturing process. Certificate of Analysis that includes Phosphate and Microbiological test results.
  - MRL test results
  - Veterinary Certificate
- Meat products
  - USDA Certificate or EU Certificate
- Low Acid Products (PH  $\geq$ 4.5)
  - LACF Certificate
- Raw Materials for Nutritional Supplements
  - GMP
  - Certificate of Analysis
  - Self-life signed by the manufacturer
- Medical Food and Baby and Infant Formulas
  - Certificate from an accredited body that the manufacturing facility is under supervision
  - Free Sale Certificate, in the case the manufacturer does not have a FCS the manufacturer must provide reasoning
  - GMP or HACCP
  - Original packaging, as sold in the manufacturing country
  - Complete product composition
  - Nutritional values
  - Medical foods must include nutritional values according to the purpose of the product
  - Microbiological testing
  - Chemical testing
  - Declaration with a list of food additives and their quantity
  - Stability Test or Shelf Life declaration signed by the manufacturer
  - Decoding of codes
  - Manufacturer declaration of the intended usage of the product, including age
  - For liquid foods
    - § Product density
    - § LACF Certificate
  - If the manufacturer is making product claims, the manufacturer must provide scientific proof supporting the claims

### **Attachments:**

No Attachments