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Report Highlights:

- Israel passes amendments to the Public Health Protection Act (Food) to ease and reduce the regulatory burden on food importation. Among the amendments is an importation track called the “European Track” which will come into force on January 1, 2023.
- New temporary provision easing the importation of certain sensitive foods, “Public Health Protection Act Food (Certificate of Release for Certain Sensitive Foods) (Temporary Provision)- 2022.”
- Cancellation of the additional requirements for importing and releasing food products imported without direct contact with the manufacturer.

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Disclaimer

This report was prepared by the Post 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 PRODUCTS 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 amendments include the cancellation of official food standards, and an importation track called the European Track. The amendments are scheduled to enter into force on January 1, 2023.

It is important to point out that the European Union is Israel's biggest market for Israeli agricultural and food exports. As a result, the Israeli food and food supplement legislation and standardization system is increasingly harmonized to European standards. 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 the development of 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. 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 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), which came into force September 2016, regulates the rights and obligations of all parties involved in the production, import and sale of food in Israel. In addition to the Public Health Protection Law, there are a number of 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). A full list of regulations is available on the [FCS legislation website](#) (Hebrew). In addition to the regulations stated above, several food products have SII standards. A list of SII standards and a copy of the standards are available on the [SII website](#).

On December 25, 2017, the Israeli Parliament's Labor, Welfare and Health Committee approved new regulations, Regulations for the Protection of Public Health (Food) (Nutritional Labeling) 2017, requiring front of pack labeling for most prepackaged food products. The regulations replace the current Public Health Regulations (Food) (Nutritional Labeling) and entered into force on 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.

Further Regulations

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. These include the cancellation of official food standards, and an importation track called the European Track. The amendments are scheduled to enter into force on January 1, 2023. See GAIN report [Israel Passes Amendments to Ease Food Imports-updates](#).

Section II: Labeling Requirements

Israel has strict marking and labeling requirements, which frequently differ from those of other countries. Various food products have specific labeling standards. US exporters are encouraged to work closely with Israeli importers in meeting 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), requiring front of 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 are those that contain levels of sodium, sugar, and saturated fats more than the prescribed limits. Paragraph five of the [linked regulation](#) describes the limits 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 any products containing greater 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 are excluded from the regulation. These excluded products may include fruits, vegetables, meats, fresh eggs, and prepared foods purchased at food service establishments. Additionally, the regulation enumerates a list of exempted products, including tea, coffee, yeast, food extracts, etc. 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) can be found [here](#).

Pre-packaged Food Labeling

The marking of prepackaged food products is in accordance with Standard No. 1145. Israeli Standard 1145 is a broad standard that regulates the general labeling of all prepackaged food sales in Israel. The SI 1145 standard was first published in 1982 and has been revised several times. The standard prescribes requirements for labeling prepackaged food intended for retail sale, excluding unprocessed fruits and vegetables. The standard also prescribes requirements for prepackaged food labels that are 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](#).

There are additional marking requirements on specific food products detailed in special food standards. If there is a 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, the prevailing requirements shall be those 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 the labeling of infant formula. 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) is 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. Current draft regulation (Novel Foods 5773 -2013), if passed, would create a mandatory labeling requirement for food items that contain GE ingredients.

Labeling of Plant Based Meat/Dairy Alternatives

Currently, Israel has no governmental policy on the labeling of plant-based meat/dairy alternatives. Though there is a voluntary “Vegan Friendly” label, 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 in excess of 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). The regulation specifies that food products containing Aspartame or Salt of Aspartame-Acesulfame must display the following text: “Contains Aspartame (a source of Phenylalanine)”. For products where polyols were added and 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 following words “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 the usage of food packaging 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 to food and beverages comply with public health regulations in Israeli Standard SI 5113. The standard was last updated January 2019. The standard 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 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 9 US cents) deposit on beverage containers larger than 0.1 liter and smaller than 1.5 liters, with the exception of 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 the packaging waste of their products. The law regulates the production and treatment of packaging and packaging waste. The law was designed to reduce waste, decrease landfill content, and encourage reuse to reduce negative environmental impacts. More details on the Packaging Law are available on the Israel Ministry of Environmental Protection's [website](#).

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 permitted quantity, and the mandatory marking or labeling of food additives. The full regulation is available [online](#) (Hebrew only).

Additive List

Based on the regulations mentioned above, the FCS publishes a positive list of approved food additives, including tolerance levels for allowed additives. The listing is available [online](#) (Hebrew only) and was updated in July 2020. 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 in accordance with 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 to [appendix c](#) (Hebrew only) of the procedure.

A notification of receipt of 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 at all, the maximum process time is one year.

Section V: Pesticides and Other Contaminates

Pesticide Residues Regulation

Israel's Ministry of Health regulates the use of pesticides in foods and applicable maximum residue limits (MRLs). The regulation, [Public Health Regulations \(Food\) \(Pesticide Residues\)](#) (Hebrew only), is updated regularly due to changes in the mix of materials licensed for use in food production, along with the results of ongoing toxicological studies and newly performed

risk assessments. The regulation was last amended in 2017; see [Amendments to Israeli Pesticide Residues Regulation GAIN Report](#).

Mycotoxins in Food Regulation

Israel's Ministry of Health regulates the mycotoxin content in food products. The full regulation, Public Health Regulations (Food) (Mycotoxins in Food) is available [online](#) (Hebrew only).

Heavy Metals in Food Regulation

The Israeli Ministry of Health oversees the limits for various heavy metals in food. The limits were last updated May 2016 and are available [online](#) (Hebrew only).

Section VI: Other Requirements, Regulations, and Registration Measures

Israeli regulation requires that slaughterhouses producing meat or poultry products be registered with the Israeli authorities (link to a list of [registered facilities](#) as of June 21, 2022, Hebrew only). For the purpose of this regulation, a slaughterhouse is defined as a facility that slaughters animals, cuts, cools, or stores meats or entrails. Slaughterhouses must receive authorization from the Israeli Veterinary Service in order to export to Israel. The process of registration begins with the submission of an application to the Director of Veterinary Services, as stated in the [Meat and Egg Import Procedure Guidelines](#) (Hebrew only).

Invoice Declaration

In an effort 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 standards related to safety, health, and the environment. In practice, however, some mandatory standards may favor domestic producers over importers. For example, the Front of Pack (FOP) Labeling initiative which favors domestic producers because importers face additional expenses as they need to change their packaging to meet this standard. For further information on Israeli standards, interested firms should contact the Standards Institution of Israel.

Organic Standards

Israel's organic law follows the European Union organic standards and requirements. Certification to the Israeli standard is not a requirement for importing organic food into Israel. However, if an importer would like 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 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 at [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 be able to 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 in order 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 trademark or by the owner's agent. The agent must work in Israel and must present written authorization by the owner.

All applicants must present a local address for correspondence and contact, as such the Government of Israel generally advises foreign trademark owners to engage a local attorney to file their applications. The fee for a trademark application changes periodically. 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 gives priority of 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 has made an application 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. An application for registration of the trademark claiming such priority 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 to be imported 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 molluscs, 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 to be sensitive, U.S. exporters are advised to work closely with Israeli importers to meet current regulations. These products may face additional barriers to trade and scrutiny by authorities. The importation of sensitive foods to Israel is in accordance with the [Import Procedure Guide for Sensitive Foods](#) (Hebrew only) and the regulations for the [Protection of Public Health \(Food\)\(Laboratory Sample Testing of Shipments of Sensitive Food at the Quarantine Station\) 2020](#) (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 to the FCS import department a preliminary application 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, etc.). The inspecting engineer will then decide whether to issue a preapproval for the importation of the sensitive food or to reject the request. The official may ask the importer to perform tests in recognized laboratories in Israel for the purpose of completing and verifying information prior to issuing the approval. In addition, verification of the information appearing in the document may be required by the product manufacturer or a competent authority.
- Approval of Product: If the food product is approved, a signed import certificate will be sent to the importer. 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 by the tester
- Original package of the product as sold in the manufacturing country. For a product that is specially produced for Israel, 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)
- 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 regulation, 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 of 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) 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.
- Mixed shipment including dairy products will be sampled at a frequency of once every three months if all of 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 of 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 molluscs, crustaceans, and marine animals from the echinoderms group
 3. Eggs and egg products
 4. Honey and honey products
 5. Products containing gelatin, or 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 at 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 main 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)

To ease the importation of Sensitive Foods, a new temporary provision was established, “[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 was submitted, unless the results of a laboratory test 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, or collagen products, or both, including products that contain collagen
4. Low acid canned food (pH \geq 4.5)
5. 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
6. Mushrooms and mushroom mixtures, including products in which mushrooms are a main 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)

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.

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 for the release of 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:

- Name and address of the manufacturer, importer’s details
- Name of product
- Purpose of product (end consumer, raw material, etc.)
- 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:

- 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 required by Israel authorities. Note that additional documents may be required, depending on the product. All documents should be retained for at least one year after the end of the product’s shelf life.

- Copies of labels (from 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.

- Health and sanitary certificates (free sale, health certificate, GMP, etc.)
- Shipping documents (import declaration, release certificate, bill of lading, packing list, etc.)

The [additional requirements for importing and releasing food products imported without direct contact with the manufacturer](#) were canceled (Hebrew only), thus easing their importation.

Animal Food Products

Animal Food Products- food derived from animals, fish, and fish products, meat products or other food, which contains meat or fish and is 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 each and every product).
- The importer must submit an application 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 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 (invoice, photocopy of GATEPASS, bill of lading, packing list, etc.);

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 sampling will be performed by the veterinarian 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 date of sampling.
 2. Fresh processed food or frozen/processed raw food:
The sampling will be performed by a veterinarian from the veterinary unit and 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 veterinarian responsible for the sampling. The sampling will be carried out within a maximum of seven working days, from the date of the importer's request to coordinate the sampling date, or within 30 working days from the date of issuance of the permit.
 - 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 not correct, a notice will be given to the importer, who can decide 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 must be obtained for each shipment. Plants and plant products may not be brought into Israel without 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 be found 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 the import of all plant material, pests, and regulated products. These include fresh produce (fruit, vegetables, cut flowers, etc.), 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 requirement for an import permit and phytosanitary certificate may be exempted 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 aforementioned schedules, an import permit application must be submitted in respect thereof. Following a pest risk assessment (PRA), it will be decided whether to approve the application and under what restrictions. Such goods must be accompanied by an import permit, phytosanitary certificate and visual inspection at the port of entry as a condition for release from the port of entry.

Animal Feed

The [2014 Control of Animal Feed Law](#) (Hebrew only) entered into force in March 2017. The law regulates the production and marketing of animal feed, guaranteeing the safety and quality of animal products throughout the production chain. The responsibility for the implementation of the new feed law was moved from the PPIS to the Israeli Veterinary and Animal Health Service (IVAHS). Imports of animal feed require an approved import permit issued by the IVAHS, as well as 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) is the procedure put in place for controlling 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 with a veterinary health certificate issued not more than ten days prior to arrival. That certificate should be issued by a veterinarian that is accredited by the USDA 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](#).

The Department of Customs has Customs Houses assigned with the subjects that they are 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 for the importation of all live animals. Israel recently begun 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 or not the product is considered sensitive by the Israel. 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. For agriculture and food products, the most common reason for delay 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. It is advised to work closely with the importer to ensure all technical requirements are covered prior to 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.
64739, Tel Aviv, Israel
<https://www.health.gov.il/English/>
Tel: +972-8- 6241010
Fax: +972-2-5655969
Email: call.habriut@moh.health.gov.il

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

PO BOX 12
Beit Dagan 50250, Israel
Tel: +972-3-968649
Fax: +972-3-9605194
E-mail: shlomoga@moag.gov.il

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

PO Box 78
50250, Bet Dagan, Israel
Tel: +972-3-9681561
Fax: +972-3-9681582

Standards Institution of Israel (SII)

42 H. Levanon St
69977, Tel Aviv, Israel
Web Site: www.sii.org.il
Tel: +972-3-6465154
Fax: +972-3-6419683
E-mail: library@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