

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Highlights:**

This report contains a simplified description of facility registration under Decree 248 and answers to frequently asked questions. The most recent list of commodities covered by Decree 248 is attached to the report. This is a modified report. Changes in this report include a strengthened statement that companies should not ship products from unregistered facilities, encouragement to companies to upload required documentation to the Single Window website, a note on GACC's definition of the shipping date, and other minor edits. Because the ELM system has not been modified to accept them, we also cut a point on including CIQ codes in ELM entries.

The *Regulation and Administration of Overseas Manufacturers of Imported Food* (“Decree 248”) took effect on January 1, 2022. The regulation states that overseas food manufacturing, processing, and storage facilities are required to register with the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) to export food products to China. This report attempts to present the decree’s requirements as clearly as possible. Please note that there are significant differences between what the regulation states and how it is being implemented.

Below you will find a description of the facility registration methods under Decree 248, answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ), followed by links to previous FAS China reports on the decree, and other useful links.

There are two different registration methods. Which one you use is based on food product categories. Exporters are encouraged to use the spreadsheet attached to this report, or the listing in the “Single Window” website to determine product category. The second FAQ provides more information.

#### Method 1: Competent Authority Registration

##### 18 Categories

1. Meat and meat products
2. Aquatic products
3. Dairy products
4. Bird’s nests and bird’s nest products
5. Sausage casings
6. Bee products
7. Eggs and egg products
8. Edible oils and fats, oilseeds
9. Stuffed wheaten products
10. Edible grains
11. Milled grain industry products and malt
12. Fresh and dehydrated vegetable, dried beans
13. Condiments
14. Nuts and seeds
15. Dried fruits
16. Unroasted coffee and cocoa beans
17. Foods for special dietary purposes
18. Functional foods

## **Method 1 - Competent Authority Registration Process**

If the product your facility produces falls into the 18 categories, GACC requires you to register your facility through a competent authority in accordance with Article 8 of Decree 248.

- Companies wishing to export meat and poultry products to China should refer to the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service’s (FSIS) export library. It can be found at [China | Food Safety and Inspection Service \(usda.gov\)](#).
- Companies that need to register a facility through a competent authority, except for those exporting meat and poultry, need to request registration through FDA’s Export Listing Module (ELM), which can be found at: [Online Applications for Export Lists | FDA](#) . Contact [cfsanexportcertification@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:cfsanexportcertification@fda.hhs.gov) if you need assistance with the ELM. A video of the ELM process can be found at: [this link](#).
  - FDA has an existing listing process for Seafood, Dairy, and Infant formula products. There are additional requirements, such as third-party audits for these programs. They are listed at [Food Export Lists | FDA](#).

## **Method 2 - Self-Registration Process**

If the product your facility produces does not fall into the 18 categories, GACC requires you to self-register your facility in accordance with Article 9 of Decree 248.

You can access the GACC “Single Window” website to register at “[China Import Food Enterprises Registration](#) (CIFER)”. FAS China has published several guides to the self-registration process. You can access our unofficial guide [here](#). The following report includes GACC’s official guide as an attachment. [Decree 248 Single Window User Manual and Training](#)

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Below is a list of answers to Frequently Asked Questions. U.S. exporters with additional questions may contact FAS at [decree248inquiry@usda.gov](mailto:decree248inquiry@usda.gov).

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*What products does Decree 248 cover?*

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While the regulation states it applies to all food products, some foods are not included within the scope of the regulation, and a small number of whole oilseeds not normally used in food are included. For example, “fresh” fruit facilities do not need to register. Cottonseed production facilities are, however, required to register. There are some products, sorghum for example, that may be covered if their end use is as human food. There are also many products that can fall into one or another of the registration methods depending on the level of processing (i.e., raw vs. roasted nuts).

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*How do I determine if my product is covered by Decree 248 and its registration method?*

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There is a list of products covered by Decree 248 and their 10-digit Chinese HS and 3-digit quarantine codes in the “Single Window” website. It can be found under “Product Category Inquiry” after obtaining account credentials and logging into the registration system. GACC has periodically and without warning modified this list. We monitor the list and publish a report if we observe significant changes. The most recent list is attached to this report, and can be accessed via: [May 9 2022 Decree 248 Codes.xlsx](#)

The 10-digit Chinese HS and 3-digit quarantine codes effectively work together like a 13-digit HS code. They specify products according to their end use in some cases. We encourage exporters to ask their importers what Chinese HS and quarantine code combination they use to import their product into China. Exporters can then use the attached list and the HS and quarantine code combination to determine if they are covered by the decree and which method they should use to register.

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*How are the registration requirements under Decree 248 enforced?*

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The Chinese facility registration number issued by GACC is required to clear customs in China. A single facility may have more than one Chinese registration number if it produces products in more than one “product category.” A Chinese facility registration number is only valid for the specific Chinese HS and quarantine code combinations that are registered.

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*Can I export products to China from an unregistered facility?*

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Companies should not export food products that require facility registration to China from unregistered or improperly registered facilities. Products from such facilities may not be able to clear customs.

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*What if I use more than one facility, which one should I register for?*

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The requirement only applies to the last production facility in the production chain.

Temperature-controlled warehouses that handle products exported to China and operate as a separate facility from the production facility are required to register. Ambient temperature warehouses are not required to register.

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*What if I produce products that are categorized both within and out of the 18 categories? Should I use both methods to register?*

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It is possible for a facility to produce some products that require registration through a competent authority and some products that are self-registered. GACC recommends that such facilities first register through a competent authority and then add their self-registered products to that account. However, the time required for the competent authority registration process has caused many companies to self-register products that can be self-registered without waiting for the competent authority registration process to conclude.

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*How long is my registration valid for?*

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Five years. The expiration date of your registration can be found at <https://ciferquery.singlewindow.cn/>.

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*What is the renewal policy?*

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An application for renewal needs to be filed through the Single Window website three to six months before the registration expires. Registration of facilities will be revoked if they fail to apply for the renewal of registration as required. Companies are responsible for noting the expiration date of their registration and applying for renewal.

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*Are there any additional documentation requirements?*

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The Single Window website registration process requires significant documentation. However, facilities registered via the submission of lists in late 2021 and early 2022 have generally not submitted the documentation GACC is requesting. GACC told competent authorities that it expects registrations to be complete by June 30, 2023. Companies are encouraged to upload the required documentation as soon as possible.

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*If my production date was before January 1, 2022, can I still export to China?*

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In December 2022 GACC told us that:

1. Products manufactured and shipped prior to January 1, 2022 do not need to meet the labeling requirements and do not need to include the Chinese registration number on the import declaration form.

2. Products manufactured prior to January 1, 2022 but shipped after that date do not need to meet the labeling requirements, but must have the Chinese registration number included on the import declaration form. Note: In June 2023 GACC told us that they consider the shipping date to be the date the cargo was put on the ship, not the date the cargo was shipped from the factory. End Note.

3. Products manufactured after January 1, 2022 must meet all requirements enumerated in Decree 248.

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*Are there labeling requirements?*

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Decree 248 includes a requirement that exported products include the Chinese or U.S. facility registration number on their inner and outer packaging. The inner packaging is generally defined as the smallest saleable unit.

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*Is there an English-version of the Single Window website for self-registration?*

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The Single Window website toggles between English and Chinese. You can select English by clicking on the EN icon at the top of the page.

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*How to search for facility registration numbers issued by GACC?*

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Companies are encouraged to review the registration information for their facilities on the GACC's website: <https://ciferquery.singlewindow.cn/>.

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*Can I edit information in the Single Window website after I submit it?*

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Self-registered facilities can correct most errors in the Single Window website where they initially registered (<https://cifer.singlewindow.cn>). There are, however, two stages to the registration process. Each has fields that cannot be changed.

Under the user account, the following fields cannot be changed: username; country/region; and foreign registration number. A new account would need to be created to change this information.

In the registration, the following fields cannot be changed: facility address; legal representative (owner); or foreign registration number. If the firm needs to change this information, they will need to apply for a new registration.

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*What should I do if my shipment gets detained at the port?*

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If you are a U.S. exporter with a detained shipment you are encouraged to contact one of our offices. Guidance on clearing shipment detained due to Decree 248 issues can be found in the following report: [Clearing Detained Shipments](#).

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*How do I register my facility if I am a frozen fruit producer?*

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Frozen fruit was one of several products that GACC added to the scope of the Decree 248 after the decree was announced. Unlike most products, whether a frozen fruit facility needs to be registered through a competent authority or be self-registered is dependent upon the country the facility is located in. As of publication, the Single Window website had not been fully modified to accommodate this.

U.S. frozen fruit facilities can self-register. Companies wishing to register such facilities will proceed through the self-registration process. When it is time to select their commodity category they will find it in the competent authority section, but unlike the other competent authority registered items they will be able to access it. When they submit their registration, it will be submitted to GACC directly rather than to FDA.

Note: GACC maintains a FAQ list in Chinese for Decree 248 which can be accessed [here](#).

### **Existing Reports on Decree 248 and 249**

FAS China has published the following reports on Decrees 248 and 249 to inform and educate U.S. food and agricultural stakeholders.

- [Health and Special Dietary Foods and Decrees 248 and 249 - May 10, 2022](#)
- [Decree 248 March 4 Additions to Single Window List - March 15, 2022](#)
- [Decree 248 Clearing Detained Shipments Unofficial Guidance - March 14, 2022](#)
- [Decree 248 Additions to List of Items Subject to Decree 248 - February 28, 2022](#)
- [GACC Updates Decree 248 Product List - February 5, 2022](#)
- [Verifying Decree 248 Facility Registration Information - January 17, 2022](#)
- [Decree 248 Single Window Searchable Database and Jan 1 Shipment Information - December 23, 2021](#)
- [Decree 248 Single Window Operation Manuals and Tutorial – December 22, 2021](#)
- [Decrees 248 and 249 – January 1 Implementation \[Public Notice 103\] – December 14, 2021](#)
- [Decree 248 – FDA Constituent Update – December 8, 2021](#)

- [Decree 248 Single Window User Manual and Training – November 30, 2021](#)
- [Decree 248 HS Codes Published in GACC Single Window – November 30, 2021](#)
- [Informing Industry and Supporting Trade Facilitation as China Implements Decrees 248 and 249 – November 10, 2021](#)
- [Decree 248 Information Update – November 19, 2021](#)
- [GACC Issues Interpretation of Decree 248 - November 6, 2021](#)
- [Decree 248 Foreign Facilities Self-Registration Website Launched - November 3, 2021](#)
- [Decree 248 Unofficial Self-Registration Guide for Overseas Food Facilities - November 2, 2021](#)
- [Notes from Information Sessions on GACC Decrees 248 and 249 - October 22, 2021](#)
- [GACC Issues Explanatory Letter on Decree 248 - October 8, 2021](#)
- [Interpretative Guidance on Imported Food Labeling Requirements in Decree 249 - August 13, 2021](#)
- [Decrees 248 and 249 Status Update on Facilities Registration and Food Safety Measures - May 25, 2021](#)
- [Administrative Measures on Import and Export Food Safety - Decree 249 - May 7, 2021](#)
- [Overseas Facilities Registration Regulation - Decree 248 - April 20, 2021](#)
- [China Notified the Draft Administrative Measures on Import and Export Food Safety - December 11, 2020](#)
- [China Notifies Revised Overseas Facilities Registration Regulations as TBT 1522 - December 2, 2020](#)
- [China Released Draft Administrative Measures for Registration of Overseas Producers of Imported Foods - December 6, 2019](#)

## **Useful Links**

<http://www.customs.gov.cn/> (GACC Website)

<http://www.customs.gov.cn/customs/302249/302266/302267/3625372/index.html> (Decree 248 Original Announcement)

<http://jckspj.customs.gov.cn/spj/zcfg18/bmgz91/3979122/index.html> (Decree 248 Translation)

<https://new.singlewindow.cn> (Single Window Website)

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/inspection/import-export/import-export-library/china> (USDA FSIS)

<https://www.fda.gov/food/cfsan-constituent-updates/fda-takes-steps-facilitate-export-food-under-chinas-new-facility-registration-requirements-decree> (FDA)

### **Attachments:**

[May 9 2022 Decree 248 Codes.xlsx](#)