

Bakery products

General information

Imports of bakery products such as bread, cakes, biscuits, cookies from countries outside the European Union (EU) must meet the same or equivalent food hygiene and compositional standards and procedures as food produced in the UK or other EU Member States. You do not normally need a health certificate to import these products.

Import licences

You may not need a health or hygiene licence to import food, but many foods from countries outside the EU require licences for trading purposes and may be subject to quotas. For further information please contact the Rural Payments Agency on 0191 226 5050 or by email at: Trader@rpa.gsi.gov.uk

Food colourings, flavourings and sweeteners

Some bakery products may contain food colourings, flavourings or sweeteners. Although these may be approved by the food authority in the country of origin, some of them may not be approved in the EU. For information on food flavourings, sweeteners, colourings and preservatives, please contact the Food Standards Agency (FSA)'s Food Additives team on 020 7276 8570 or by email at foodadditives@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Labelling

For advice on the labelling of specific products, please contact your local authority's Trading Standards Department or Environmental Health Department. You can find contact details for these via the following link on our website <http://food.gov.uk/enforcement/yourarea/>

Advertising nutrition and health claims

For information on advertising nutritional and health claims on foods, please contact: DH customer service centre at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/contact-dh> or 020 7210 4850

Organics

If you are importing organic products (live or unprocessed agricultural products, processed agricultural for use as food or feed and vegetative propagating material and seeds for cultivation) from outside the EU, please contact the Organic Imports team at DEFRA at organic.imports@defra.gsi.gov.uk. For information on organic regulation and standards, (including labelling) within the UK please contact the Organic Strategy team at organic.standards@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Packaging

Food contact materials and articles, including those used for food packaging, are controlled by a comprehensive EU harmonised legislation that has been fully implemented in the UK. This legislation is particularly thorough in its control of plastic materials and articles intended for food use. For information on the safety of packaging please contact the Food Contact Materials Team on 020 7276 8570 or by email at:

FoodContactMaterial@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Food hygiene

For general enquiries on food hygiene please contact the Food Hygiene Policy Team by email at foodhygiene.policy@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Pesticides

For information on pesticides safety levels for imports, please contact Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Chemicals Regulation Directorate (CRD) by accessing the link:

<http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides>

Contaminants

A guidance note on the Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2013, which make provision for enactment and enforcement of Commission Regulations setting regulatory limits for contaminants in food (nitrate, mycotoxins, metals, 3-MCPD dioxins and PAHs), can be found at

<http://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2013/oct/regulations>

Weights and Measures

There are UK marketing standards governing the size of bread that can be sold. For further advice please contact Paul Cole at the National Measurement Office (NMO) on 020 8943 7218 or email paul.cole@nmo.gov.uk

Import restrictions

There are some other import restrictions/requirements that can apply to bakery products which importers need to be aware of as follows:

For a complete list of foods (not of animal origin) with current EU restrictions, please see the following link on the FSA's website:

www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/imports/banned_restricted/restricted_foodstuffs

Aflatoxins

As of 1 January 2010 imports of certain foodstuffs from certain non-EU countries, including some bakery products, are subject to special conditions due to contamination risk by

aflatoxins. This will mean that consignments can only enter the EU through specific ports or airports which are designated points of imports (DPIs) where official controls will be carried out. Further information for business operators can be found at http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/imports/banned_restricted/aflatoxinreg11522009 as well as the FSA's webpage on Mycotoxins at: www.food.gov.uk/safereating/chemsafe/mycotoxins/

Fusarium toxins

There is European Commission legislation covering fusarium toxin contamination in bakery products. For advice on this legislation and fusarium toxin testing requirements, please contact the Mycotoxins team on 020 7276 8716, or by email at mycotoxins@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Products of animal origin (POAO)

Although cakes, biscuits and pastries can contain small amounts of products of animal origin such as eggs, butter or suet, their import would also normally be covered by The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009. Due to the processes used to make cakes, biscuits and pastries (mixing then cooking), these are not normally considered to be POAO.

If, however, the cake, biscuit or pastry you wish to import has a fresh cream or butter cream topping or filling, then they will be considered to be POAO and different, stricter rules apply. Amongst other requirements, this will require certification of the product, the premises that produce the product being licensed by the EU and veterinary checks at the point of entry to the UK.

For information on the rules for importing a cake, biscuit or pastry with a fresh cream or butter cream filling or topping, please contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) in Carlisle on 01228 403 600 (option 3) or by email at imports@apha.gsi.gov.uk. APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

Imports of feed and food from Japan

As of 27 March 2011 imports of all feed and food originating in or consigned from Japan to the EU are subject to special conditions. This is following the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Japan in March 2011. This will mean that consignments of feed and food can only enter the UK through specific ports and airports where official controls will be carried out. Further information for business operators can be found at: http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/imports/banned_restricted/japan

Imported Food Team, Food Standards Agency, 1st Floor Zone B, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH
Email: imported.food@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
Helpline: 020 7276 8018

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