



# Fact Sheet: Importing Food

## Safe Food for Canadians Regulations

Under the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR), new food safety requirements will apply to businesses that import food into Canada.

### Would your business be ready?

As an importer, you will need to ensure that the food you import is safe to consume and meets Canadian requirements. The new consolidated regulations include a requirement that imported food be prepared with the same level of food safety controls as food prepared in Canada.

### Key requirements

#### 1. Licensing

Importers, in most cases, will require a licence to import food into Canada.

Find out if and when you need a licence by using the Licensing interactive tool. It only takes 5 minutes.

#### 2. Preventive Controls

As an importer, you will be required to keep food safe by:

**Knowing your food** – Be aware of potential risks of contamination and describe how biological, chemical, or physical hazards to the food you import are controlled.

**Knowing your supplier** – Be certain that your foreign supplier meets the same level of safety standards as domestic suppliers in preparing, storing, and transporting your food product.

In addition, you may be required to keep food safe by:

**Writing a Preventive Control Plan** – Be sure to write down and review regularly:

- how you monitor and verify that your import process is working well
- how the food you import meets requirements for safety, grading, standards, labelling, and net quantity
- that you have procedures to handle complaints and recalls

A written Preventive Control Plan (PCP) demonstrates that you understand the risks associated with the food you import. It sets out the applicable preventive controls to the food you import and describes the measures you and the foreign business preparing the food are taking to control those risks.

Find out if and when you need a (PCP) by using the preventive control plan interactive tool.

### **3. Traceability**

Under the SFCR, you will need to keep clear and readable records that trace where you sourced your food and to whom you provided it. This will significantly reduce the time it takes to recall a product if necessary.

Find out what traceability requirements apply to you and when by using the traceability interactive tool. It only takes 5 minutes.

### **Why it matters**

Currently, all imported food must meet applicable Canadian import requirements, and only importers of some foods are required to be licensed and have preventive food safety controls in place. The SFCR provide for a consistent approach across all types of imported foods.

Learn more at [www.inspection.gc.ca/safefood](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/safefood) and access tools including:

- Video: Get ready for the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations
- Video: SFCR – Importing Food
- Understanding the SFCR: A handbook for food businesses
- A guide for preparing a preventive control plan – For importers
- Infographic: 3 Key Principles for Importers
- Fact Sheet: Importing Food (available in English, French and 10 other languages)
- Automated Import Reference System (AIRS): A tutorial