

OFFICIAL



HM Government



# Guidance Document: Exporting fruit and vegetables from Africa to Great Britain

November 2022

# Purpose and contents

This document is intended to provide African businesses with an overview of the requirements, standards and processes for sending fruit and vegetables to Great Britain (GB); and to signpost further resources for more information.

The document is structured into 6 sections:

1. **Key messages** – provides an overview of the key messages for African exporters
2. **Process** – outlines the export process from dispatch to arrival at destination
3. **Checking the requirements** – signposts the key resources to check which requirements apply given the product and country of dispatch
4. **Certifications** – describes the requirements and process for securing a Phytosanitary Certificate
5. **Marketing standards** - describes the requirements and process for meeting marketing standards
6. **Preparing the consignment** – outlines how to prepare the consignment for dispatch and highlights the checks that will be undertaken when the goods arrive in GB

**About Growth Gateway:** *Growth Gateway is a business support service to help African and UK businesses trade and invest. Growth Gateway's joint public-private sector team connects businesses with UK government trade and investment initiatives, provides business advice and expert support, and includes dedicated online information tools. Growth Gateway also undertakes targeted initiatives supporting trade and investment in high potential sectors and markets.*

# 1. Key Messages

To export fruit and vegetables from Africa to GB, there may be a requirement for:

- a) a Phytosanitary Certificate;
- b) The GB importer to pre-notify UK authorities ahead of the fruit or vegetable products arriving in GB; and
- c) Labelling requirements to meet the relevant marketing standards

Whether or not a), b) and c) are required is dependent on the product and country of origin.

As a general rule, while many fresh fruit and vegetable products require a Phytosanitary Certificate, often processed and packaged products (e.g. frozen material or nut/seed butters) do not (however there are notable exceptions to you are advised to always [check](#)).

The following list outlines the Phytosanitary Certificate status for products raised frequently with the Growth Gateway team through business enquiries:

Phytosanitary certificate *not* required:

- Fresh mango
- Nut spreads
- Edible oils
- Dried fruits
- Spices
- Coffee beans (roasted)
- Palm oil

Phytosanitary certificate required:

- Avocado
- Coffee beans (green)
- Fresh chillies
- Casava

None of the products listed above fall within the requirements of Specific Marketing Standards (SMS) – as such SMS quality/ labelling/ certification does not apply, however you should check General Marketing Standards (GMS) (see section 5).

# 2. Process

Below are the key steps for an African exporter to undertaken to export to GB.

**Check requirements**

**Check** GB SPS requirements (see section 3)

If a Phytosanitary Certificate is needed:

**Meet requirements**

**Secure** an appropriate certificate from your national plant health authority (see section 4)

**Certify** the Phytosanitary Certificate (see section 4)

If needed, **comply** with marketing standards (see page section 5)

**Share** a copy of the Phytosanitary Certificate and other consignment details with the GB importer

**Prepare consignment**

**Attach** a copy of the Phytosanitary Certificate to the consignment or send by post to APHA (see page see section 6)

**Dispatch**

**Dispatch** the consignment

# 3. Checking the requirements

Fruit and vegetables fall into 5 categories of phytosanitary control:

- ‘Prohibited’ - Can only bring into Great Britain if a scientific research license or derogation is obtained.
- ‘Prohibited (pending risk assessment)’ - Can only bring into Great Britain if risk assessed by Defra.
- ‘Regulated and notifiable’ - Can only bring into Great Britain if accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate and advanced notification of landing.
- ‘Regulated’ - Can only bring into Great Britain if accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. After applicants complete a customs entry, a small number of these consignments may need advanced notification on CHIEF (Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight).
- ‘Unregulated’ - Can bring into Great Britain without a phytosanitary certificate or advanced notification.



As a general rule, while many fresh fruit and vegetable products to require a Phytosanitary Certificate and prenotification (‘Regulated and Notifiable’), often processed and packaged products (e.g. frozen material or nut/seed butters) do not (‘Unregulated’).

However, you can check the detailed list linked below to understand whether a Phytosanitary Certificate is required for the product you seek to export to GB.

Resources: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plant-species-by-import-category/import-requirements-for-plants-plant-produce-and-products>

# 4. Certifications

If required, you must get a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) for each consignment from the plant health authority in the country where you are located.

The PC is a statement from the plant health authority that the consignment:

- has been officially inspected
- complies with legal requirements for entry into GB
- is free from quarantine pests and diseases

The inspection referred to in the PC must take place no more than 14 days before the consignment is dispatched from the country where your supplier is.

The certificate must be signed by someone within the inspecting plant health authority within the same 14-day period.

Below is a list of contact details for authorities that can issue Phytosanitary Certificates in the African countries from which Growth Gateway has see the most business queries:

- Kenya – Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service
- South Africa – Department for Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
- Ghana – Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate

When a Phytosanitary Certificate is required, the GB importer (or their agent) must use the Procedure for Electronic Application for Certificates (PEACH) system (*or the new service Import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS)*) to pre-notify any import consignments of goods. Using PEACH is mandatory in this instance – there is no paper-based alternative. More information on PEACH is available [here](#).

Check requirements

Meet requirements

Prepare consignment

Dispatch

Resources: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-plants-fruit-vegetables-or-plant-material-to-the-uk>

# 5. Marketing Standards

The Special Marketing Standards (SMS) and General Marketing Standards (GMS) include quality and labelling rules that your products must comply with at each stage of production and marketing.

The SMS applies to:

- apples
- table grapes
- kiwi fruit
- citrus fruit (including oranges, lemons and fruit that's easy to peel)
- peaches and nectarines
- pears
- strawberries
- lettuces (including curly green and broad leaves that are eaten uncooked in salads)
- sweet peppers
- tomatoes

There are a range of special requirements for the products listed above – please see the resource linked below.

All goods that have to meet the Specific Marketing Standards (SMS) need a certificate of conformity before they can enter Great Britain.

Non-EU countries with Authorised Inspection Service (AIS) status can issue a certificate of conformity to show that the product meets the SMS. The product must originate from the country issuing the certificate.

The following African countries have GB AIS status for all fresh fruit and vegetables:

- Kenya
- Morocco
- Senegal
- South Africa

Please see the link below for more info on General Market Standards (GMS) and a list of products that do not need GMS.

**Resources:** [Fresh fruit and vegetable marketing standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-marketing-standards)



# 6. Preparing the consignment

To prepare your consignment for dispatch you should be aware that when it arrives in GB, your consignment must be presented for inspection to check it:

- includes all required documents
- contains the plants you have declared
- is free from pests and diseases

If your consignment doesn't pass an inspection it may be destroyed, treated or sent back to where you sent it from at your expense.

If you're travelling with your consignment, you can provide PCs and reforwarding certificates for inspection yourself when you arrive in GB.

If you're shipping the consignment by post, put the certificates in an envelope marked 'For the attention of Border Force' and attach it to the outside of your package.

If you have more than one package, attach certified copies of the PCs and reforwarding certificates to each package.

You can also submit the Phytosanitary Certificate after the goods arrive but within three days of the consignment reaching GB. To do this you should post the Phytosanitary Certificate to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) at the following addresses:

For consignments landing at Heathrow or Gatwick send the certificate to:

Animal and Plant Health Agency  
1st Floor  
Building 4, Heathrow Boulevard  
284 Bath Road  
West Drayton, Middlesex  
UB7 0DQ

For consignments landing anywhere else send the certificate to:

Animal and Plant Health Agency  
Foss House  
1st Floor, Kings Pool  
1-2 Peasholme Green  
York  
YO1 7PX



**Resources:** [Import plants and plant products from non-EU countries to Great Britain and Northern Ireland - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-plants-and-plant-products-from-non-eu-countries-to-great-britain-and-northern-ireland)



# 6. FAQs

Below are frequently asked question and responses. Please contact us at 'growthgateway@fcdo.gov.uk) if more information is required.

## 1. Where can I get a Phytosanitary Certificate?

You can obtain a Phytosanitary Certificate from your country's plant health authority. See section 4 for a selected list of plant health authorities.

## 2. Does a Phytosanitary Certificate need to be certified? If so by whom?

Yes, by someone from the plant health authority.

## 3. How far in advance can the Phytosanitary Certificate be certified prior to dispatch?

Certification should be done no more than 14 days prior to dispatch.

## 4. How do I attach the Phytosanitary Certificate to the consignment?

If you're shipping the consignment by post, put the certificates in an envelope marked 'For the attention of Border Force' and attach it to the outside of your package; or send it to APHA within three days of consignment arrival.

## 5. Who is required to submit information on PEACH?

The GB importer is required to submit information to PEACH (or the new IPAFFs service), however, the exporter must provide the GB importer with a copy of the Phytosanitary Certificate so they can submit this as part of the application.

## 6. How far in advance of goods arriving should information be submitted on PEACH?

The GB Government requires that importers provide the pre-notification material:

- at least 4 working hours before the goods land in GB, for air and 'roll-on-roll-off' freight
- at least 1 working day before the goods arrive in GB for all other freight

## 7. How do I understand what food safety or quality standards need to be met to export to GB?

The Government guidance (see section 3) provides information regarding food safety and quality standards.