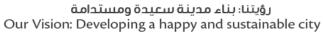




Import Requirements for Foodstuff



















Frequently asked Questions:

1. What are the requirements and procedures to start importing food?

- Obtaining a commercial, industrial or professional license from competent licensing authority in the United Arab Emirates
- The activity authorized in the license must be related to food or general trading activity.
- Registering in Dubai Municipality services to obtain a user name and password, which requires the following:
 - ✓ Submitting an electronic request through Dubai Municipality website dm.gov.ae and choosing Food Safety service from DM services.
 - ✓ Company license copy.
 - ✓ Company official seal.
 - ✓ Visiting (Alkifaf center) to complete the registration procedures.
- Registering in the food import and re-export (FIRS) system at the Food Trade Control section to activate the FIRS service at the same center (Alkifaf), which requires the following:
- Payment of AED 15,000 as a deposit which can be recovered when asked for by the company after confirming no previous shipments are still pending.
- A copy of the establishment's valid license.
- Food establishment Information, such as: address, telephone, e-mail, etc.









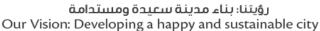


2. What is the FIRS system?

- The FIRS is an electronic system designed to monitor food imports and re-exports. All food products in the country are required to be registered in the system regardless of whether they are imported or produced locally. This is done by connecting the food items with a barcode number. Registered food establishments can submit online requests for multiple services that the food safety department provides through the FIRS. These include the following requests:
 - Food label assessment
 - Food item registration
 - Food import
 - Food import for re-export
 - Deferred food inspection (DIP)
 - Follow up
 - Food health certificates
 - Food destruction certificate
 - Viewing Boycotts and circulars (for internal and external users)
- Food establishments can access the FIRS anywhere in the world to apply and follow up on any requests until the case is closed.
- FIRS is completely an online service starting with food item registration, food import, food inspection and following up until each case is processed and closed.
- All fees can be paid online
- The FIRS system also contains an advanced program for food sampling based on risk analysis.



















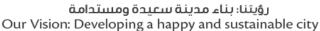
3. Can I start importing foods immediately after registering in the FIRS system?

Before any food items are ordered or imported into the country, the food establishment must ensure that the food item complies with the following requirements:

- The food establishment must ensure that any food item intended for import is complying with the rules, regulations and standards by obtaining a food label assessment report for every food product (a laboratory test may also be recommended depending on the food item risk).
- All food items shall be registered in the FIRS system. Submission of any import request in the FIRS should include each food item which is existing in the consignment, any food item that is not registered will be stopped at the port of entry.
- To provide food health certificate for each food consignment, which shall be obtained from government health authority in the country of origin (Phytosanitary certificate can be accepted for raw items such as fruits and vegetables).
- To provide Halal certificate for any item containing meat or its derivatives from an accredited Islamic society approved by authorized bodies in the UAE.

















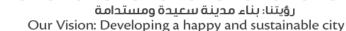


4. How do I apply for a food label assessment request?

A- All applicants must ensure the following:

- The food label submitted with the request shall contain the following information:
 - 1. Brand name.
 - 2. Product name or food item name (a short description of the item).
 - 3. Ingredients list (arranged in descending order by weight or size. Food ingredients consisting of one ingredient are excluded from ingredients declaration.
 - 4. Production and expiry dates (See details for the requirements of validity periods in paragraph (6)).
 - 5. Names and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributer or importer.
 - 6. Net weight or size.
 - 7. Country of origin (if its absence confuses the consumer)
 - 8. Barcode.
 - 9. Production and batch number.
 - 10. Storage conditions (if shelf life of the product depends on the availability of these conditions).
 - 11. Arabic language is mandatory for all food labels. Approved stickers could be used for the Arabic translation of the food labels.
 - 12. Indicating the presence of any ingredients that could cause allergy.
 - 13. Preparation methods are to be declared (if necessary).
 - 14. Declaration of the nutritional information.
- Food labeling regulations may not apply on all foods, as some foods may need part of these regulations (e.g. fresh vegetables which only need to comply with requirements 1,2,6,7,10,12).















- Food labels should comply with the standard requirements related to each food item specifically and other related standards generally (examples of general standards: requirements of nutritional labelling standard and food additives standard).
- To get a food label assessment, you must:
 - Submit an electronic application through the FIRS system (each application must contain one food item).
 - Attach a clear picture for the food product and its label.
 - Food labels will be studied and evaluated. Required amendments (if any) will be written in as remarks. The request is then approved, and the applicants must pay the fees and collect the assessment certificates which will be issued manually
- Some products may go for further lab testing as part of their food label assessment. This is based on the food item's ingredients and its risk level. This is done before the product is imported to ensure its compliance with the required specifications.

5. What are food additives and how do I make sure they are allowed?

- Food additive is a chemical added to the ingredients of the food, but it is not a food. There are many types of food additives which are added to food for many functions, such as preservation, food coloring, antioxidation and anti-caking agent.
- According to UAE regulation no.192/2016, food additives that are allowed are listed in the latest version of CODEX website:

GSFA Online Food Additive Index

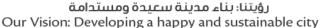
• If the additive is not found in CODEX then you may search for it in the European Standards website.

Database - European Commission

If we do not find the additive listed in under any of the previous sources, then the food additive is prohibited.



















When declaring any additive in the ingredients list of a food product, the name of the additive (or its international code) and its function should be declared on the label (Example: E330 antioxidant or citric acid (antioxidant))

6. What is the shelf life of the food item which I'm intending to import or is produced locally?

Food was divided according to its validity periods into two groups:

- A) Expiration periods of food items section 1- Mandatory expiration periods UAE.S 150 - 1: 2017 which include:
 - Food products which have a short expiration period and are stored cold. Examples of these products include meat, seafood and it products, dairy and its products in addition to other food products such as eggs and juices.
 - Baby food

These foods should comply with the following requirements:

- ✓ Shelf lives and storage conditions must comply with the ones specified (for each food category) in the standard UAE.S 150 - 1: 2017.
- ✓ Production and expiry dates must be mentioned on the container or on its food label.
- ✓ The date should be written in the following manner (Day-Month-Year) for food products with expiration period of less than 3 months and as (Month-Year) for products that have an expiration period of more than 3 months.
- B) Expiration periods of food items section 2 voluntary expiration periods UAE.S 2:2017 - 150 which include all foods that are not mentioned in the mandatory expiration periods section and have the following requirements:

















- ✓ The manufacturing company decides the expiration period for all products which fall under this section in addition to all items which are not mentioned in the mandatory expiration period section.
- ✓ The expiry date must be placed on food items that fall under this category (production date is not mandatory).
- ✓ The food safety department has the right to ask for a scientific reasoning on the expiration period mentioned if it finds it necessary. Additionally, the concerned party can ask for documents that show the production or manufacturing date of the food item.
- ✓ The shelf life periods listed in this specification are indicative and not necessarily mandatory. The manufacturer may use different periods of validity according to the manufacturing procedure of the product.

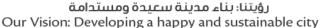
The following terms may be used to describe the expiration date as long as the date accompanies the term or indicates where it is placed:

- **Expiration date**
- Used by
- Best before (or best until)
- Valid for.... from the production date (valid until)
- Last recommended date

Sell before (for food items with an expiration period of more than 3 months)



















7. Are there any food items that are exempted from having an expiry date?

Yes, there is a group of food categories which does not require declaration of expiry date, but production date or crop year or filling date should be declared according to the nature of the product for the following items:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables including unpeeled, un-chopped and unprocessed potatoes
- Baked goods that are usually consumed within 24 hours of production
- Vinegar stored in glass bottles
- Non-iodized Salt
- Boiled hard candies
- Chewing gum
- Bee Honey
- Dry legumes, uncooked and not canned such as peas, beans, chickpeas, lentils... etc.
- Dried vegetables, herbs and medicinal plants such as chamomile, anise, cloves, saffron, etc.
- Loose tea leaves
- Dried grains such as rice, oats, barely, corn, etc. (not canned)
- Spices (whale and grounded)
- Liquid and dried glucose.











8. Mandatory Expiration Periods for Food Products

You must comply with the mandatory expiration periods described below. The sale of products that fall or exceed their expiration period is prohibited

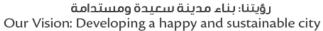
Chilled food products

a. Meat, fish and products

Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
	With bone or boneless	Fresh and Unpacked	21 days from slaughter date
Red meats (Beef,	Vacuum packed	Plastic containers	120 days from slaughter date
Buffalo, Camel,	Packed in modified atmosphere	Suitable containers	120 days from slaughter date
Gazelle, Etc.)	packaging (MAP)		
	With bone or boneless	Fresh and Unpacked	14 days from slaughter date
	Vacuum packed	Plastic containers	90 days from slaughter date
Mutton and goat meat	Packed in modified atmosphere	Suitable containers	90 days from slaughter date
	packaging (MAP)		
Minced Red meat	Fresh	Suitable containers	3 days
	Whole or pieces or boneless	Suitable containers	3 days from slaughter date
	Packed in modified atmosphere	Plastic containers	7 days from slaughter date
Poultry meat (chicken)	packaging (MAP)		
	Packed under vacuum	Plastic containers	7 days from slaughter date
	Irradiated with a dose of 3	Suitable plastic	12 days from slaughter date
	KiloGray	containers	
	Minced	Suitable containers	3 days

















Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
Ready for cooking	Suitable containers	3 days
Vacuum packed or in modified	Suitable containers	7 days
atmosphere packaging (MAP)		
Whole or pieces or boneless	Suitable containers	7 days from slaughter date
Packed in modified atmosphere	Plastic containers	12 days from slaughter date
packaging (MAP)		
Vacuum packed	Plastic containers	10 days from slaughter date
Irradiated with a dose of 3	Suitable plastic	12 days from slaughter date
KiloGray	containers	
Whole pieces	Suitable containers	7 days from the slaughter date
Vacuum packed	Suitable containers	60 days from the slaughter
		date
Packed in modified atmosphere	Suitable containers	60 days from the slaughter
packaging (MAP)		date
Uncooked	Suitable containers	3 days
Cooked	Suitable containers	14 days
Cooked – Packed in modified	Plastic containers	60 days
atmosphere packaging (MAP)		
No processing	Suitable containers	5 days from slaughter date
Uncooked	Suitable containers	3 days
Cooked	Suitable containers	14 days
Ungutted – covered with ice	Suitable containers	9 days
Ungutted – Storage temperature	Closed containers	9 days
at 0 ° C ±1	with ice	
Gutted and cleaned	Suitable containers	14 days
Fish fillet	Suitable containers	14 days
Fish fillet (Sashimi) eaten raw –	Suitable containers	9 days
vacuum packed		
	Ready for cooking Vacuum packed or in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) Whole or pieces or boneless Packed in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) Vacuum packed Irradiated with a dose of 3 KiloGray Whole pieces Vacuum packed Packed in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) Uncooked Cooked Cooked — Packed in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) No processing Uncooked Cooked Cooked Ungutted — covered with ice Ungutted — Storage temperature at 0 ° C ±1 Gutted and cleaned Fish fillet Fish fillet (Sashimi) eaten raw —	Ready for cooking Vacuum packed or in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) Whole or pieces or boneless Packed in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) Vacuum packed Irradiated with a dose of 3 KiloGray Whole pieces Vacuum packed Plastic containers Vacuum packed Irradiated with a dose of 3 KiloGray Whole pieces Vacuum packed Packed in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) Uncooked Suitable containers Cooked Suitable containers Cooked Suitable containers Cooked Suitable containers Uncooked Suitable containers Cooked Suitable containers Ungutted – covered with ice Ungutted – Storage temperature at 0 ° C ±1 with ice Gutted and cleaned Suitable containers Fish fillet Suitable containers Suitable containers











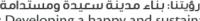
Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
	fish fillet- gutted and cleaned	Plastic containers	30 days
Fresh Fish	fish fillet or gutted cleaned fish	Plastic containers	60 days
	packed in modified atmosphere		
	packaging (MAP)		
	Cold Smoked	Suitable containers	7 days
	Hot Smoked	Suitable containers	14 days
Packed fish	Smoked and vacuum packed	Plastic containers	90 days
	Smoked and packed in modified	Plastic containers	120 days
	atmosphere packaging (MAP)		
Crustaceans	Packed at storage temperature of	Suitable containers	10 days
	0° C ±1		
Oysters and Mussel	Vacuum packed - Storage	Plastic containers	10 days
	temperature of 0° C ±1		
Lobsters and Crab	Storage temperature of 0° C ±1	Suitable containers	5 days
	Unpasteurized – vacuum packed -	Suitable containers	3 months
Caviar	Storage temperature of 0° C ±1		
	Pasteurized - vacuum packed -	Suitable containers	6 months
	Storage temperature of 0° C ±1		

b. Dairy and its products:

Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
	Pasteurized	Suitable plastic	5 days
Milk and flavored milk		containers or	
		aluminum padded	
		carton containers	











Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
Yoghurt	Heat treated after fermentation (heat		90 days
	treated fermented milk) in tightly sealed		
	conta	ainers	
	Tightly seale	ed containers	14 days
	Packed under mo	dified atmosphere	28 days
Flavored yoghurt and yoghurt	Packed under modified	d atmosphere in tightly	28 days
with fruit pieces	sealed co	ontainers	
	Tightly seale	ed containers	10 days
Laban and flavored laban	Heat treated after	Tightly sealed	90 days
	fermentation	containers	
	Tightly seale	ed containers	21 days
	Heat treated after	Tightly sealed	45 days
Laban drink (Ayran or Doogh)	fermentation or	containers	
	carbonated		
Unripened cheese	Tightly sealed containers		30 days
	Tightly sealed containers		14 days
Labneh and flavored labneh	Heat treated after	Sealed suitable	6 months
	fermentation	containers	
	Tightly sealed containers		21 days
	Heat treated (UHT) in tightly sealed		9 months
Cream and flavored cream	conta	ainers	
	Sour	Suitable containers	60 days
	Whipping cream	Sealed suitable	90 days
	containers		
Butter	Suitable containers	Suitable containers	60 days









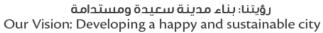


c. Baby Foods Products stored in well-ventilated stores (Temperature shall not exceed 25 ° C)

Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
Liquid milk prepared for infants	Sterilized	Tightly sealed glass	12 months
		or plastic containers	
		Metal containers	15 months
Liquid milk prepared for babies		Padded carton	12 months
(flavored or not flavored)	Heat treated (UHT)	containers or tightly	
		sealed plastic	
		containers	
		Sealed metal	24 months
Dried milk product for babies	Sterilized and	containers	
	vacuum packed	Aluminum Padded	18 months
		carton containers	
		(tetra packs)	
		Sealed metal	15 months
Flavored liquid nutritional		containers	
supplement for babies	Heat treated (UHT)	Aluminum Padded	12 months
		carton containers	
		(tetra packs)	
Dried nutritional supplement for	Sterilized and	Sealed metal	24 months
babies	vacuum packed	containers or	
		aluminum padded	
		carton containers	
		(tetra packs)	



















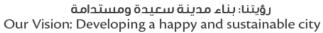
Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
	Sterilized and	Sealed metal	18 months
	vacuum packed in the	containers	
Baby foods in powdered or	presence of inner gas		
granulated form prepared from	Sterilized and	Aluminum padded	18 months
legumes, fruits or vegetables	vacuum packed	carton containers	
etc		(tetra packs)	
	Sterilized	Aluminum padded	12 months
		carton containers	
		(tetra packs)	
Strained baby food	Sterilized	Glass containers or	12 months
		sealed containers	
Baby fruit juices	Sterilized	Glass containers or	12 months
		sealed containers	

d. Miscellaneous Food Products

Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
	Stored at a	Suitable containers	30 days
	temperature between		
Fresh Eggs (table eggs)	11-15 ° C		
	Stored at a	Suitable containers	90 days
	temperature of 4-10		
	° C		
Liquid eggs	Pasteurized Stored	Suitable plastic	30 days
	at a temperature of	container or sealed	
	1-4° C	padded carton	
		container	



















Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
Baking Yeast	Compressed and	Suitable containers	45 days
	stored at 0 - 4 ° C		
Fresh pasta ready to be cooked	stored at 1 - 4 ° C	Suitable plastic	30 days
		containers or tetra	
		packs	
Pasteurized fruit juices, nectars	stored at 1 - 4 ° C	Suitable plastic	30 days
and drinks		containers or tetra	
		packs	
	Natural fresh	Suitable containers	3 days (1-4 ° C)
Fresh fruit juices	untreated		
	Natural, processed	Sealed suitable	28 days
	under High-pressure	containers	

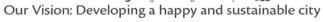
9. Food Trade Control Section Address

Location	Contact Numbers	Working Hours
Dubai Municipality – Main Headquarters	04-2064205	07:30 AM -02:30 PM
	04-2064227	
	foodtrade@dm.gov.ae	
AlKifaf Centre	04-5035621	07:30 AM -02:30 PM
	04-5035630	
	04-5035624	
	04-5035619	
	04-5035629	
	04-5035670	07:30 AM -02:30 PM
Food Heath Certificates	04-5035671	
	04-5035673	
Jebel Ali Port – Gate 2	04-8871797	24 Hours



















Location	Contact Numbers	Working Hours
Jebel Ali Port – Gate 3	04-8818675	24 Hours
Jebel Ali Port – Gate 8	04-8816629	24 Hours
Jebel Ali Port – Gate 11	04-8806163	24 Hours
Dubai Flower Centre	04-2163449 04-2163485	24 Hours
Emirates Airlines Office EK	04-2163370 04-2834179	24 Hours
Emirates Airlines Office FG1	04-2942986	24 Hours
Al Maktoum Airport EK	04-2163485	24 Hours
Al Maktoum Airport 1	04-2163485	24 Hours
Hatta Land Port	04-8528124	24 Hours
Alaa Aldin Yard for Containers	04-3333598	07:30 AM – 02:30 PM
Hamriya Port	04-2661844	07:30 AM – 02:30 PM
Wharfage	04-2279990	07:30 AM – 02:30 PM





