



Import Requirements for Foodstuff



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للاستفسارات والاقتراحات والتشكاوى

For Inquiries & Complaints & Feedback

www.dm.gov.ae



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.



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للاستفسارات والتعاملات والتشكاوى

For Inquiries & Complaints & Redirection

www.dm.gov.ae



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.



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للإستفسارات والتأجيلات والتشكاوى

For Inquiries & Complaints & Referrals

www.dm.gov.ae



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 (Phyosanitary 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.



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للإسعاد والابتهاج والشمس
For Happiness & Joy & Sunshine

www.dm.gov.ae



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, distributor 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).



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا
#Creating_Happiness
800900
للتأشيرات والتفتيش والتحكيم
for Inspections & Compliance & Arbitration
www.dm.gov.ae



- 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.



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا
#Creating_Happiness
800900
للإستشارات والتفتيش والتحكيم
for Inspection & Compliance & Arbitration
www.dm.gov.ae



- 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 its 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:



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا
#Creating_Happiness
800900
للإستشارات والتفتيش والتحكيم
for Supervision & Compliance & Arbitration
www.dm.gov.ae



- ✓ 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)



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للاستفسارات والشكاوى

For Inquiries & Complaints

www.dm.gov.ae



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 (whole and grounded)
- Liquid and dried glucose.



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للاستفسارات والشكاوى والتقديمات

For Inquiries & Complaints & Submissions

www.dm.gov.ae



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



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للإسعاد والابتهاج والشمس
for Happiness & Sunshine

www.dm.gov.ae



Product	Processing Type	Packaging Type	Expiration Period
Chicken Giblets	Ready for cooking	Suitable containers	3 days
	Vacuum packed or in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP)	Suitable containers	7 days
Other meats (duck – goose – turkey – rabbit – pigeons – quails Etc.)	Whole or pieces or boneless	Suitable containers	7 days from slaughter date
	Packed in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP)	Plastic containers	12 days from slaughter date
	Vacuum packed	Plastic containers	10 days from slaughter date
	Irradiated with a dose of 3 KiloGray	Suitable plastic containers	12 days from slaughter date
Edible Organs and offal: (Kidneys, heart, tongue, tripe, spleen, tail ... etc.)	Whole pieces	Suitable containers	7 days from the slaughter date
	Vacuum packed	Suitable containers	60 days from the slaughter date
	Packed in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP)	Suitable containers	60 days from the slaughter date
Sausages (Hot dogs): meats and poultry	Uncooked	Suitable containers	3 days
	Cooked	Suitable containers	14 days
	Cooked – Packed in modified atmosphere packaging (MAP)	Plastic containers	60 days
Brain, testis, rumen	No processing	Suitable containers	5 days from slaughter date
Kebab, kofta and meat balls	Uncooked	Suitable containers	3 days
	Cooked	Suitable containers	14 days
Fresh fish	Ungutted – covered with ice	Suitable containers	9 days
	Ungutted – Storage temperature at 0 ° C ±1	Closed containers with ice	9 days
	Gutted and cleaned	Suitable containers	14 days
	Fish fillet	Suitable containers	14 days
	Fish fillet (Sashimi) eaten raw – vacuum packed	Suitable containers	9 days



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للاستفسارات والتبليغات والتشكاوى

For Inquiries & Complaints & Notifications

www.dm.gov.ae



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

b. Dairy and its products:

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



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... هابتنا
#Creating_Happiness
800900
للإستشارات والتفتيش والتحكيم
for Supervision & Compliance & Arbitration
www.dm.gov.ae



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



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للتبليغات والتبليغات والتبليغات

For Suggestions & Complaints & Assistance

www.dm.gov.ae



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



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للاستفسارات والشكاوى

For Inquiries & Complaints

www.dm.gov.ae



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

d. Miscellaneous Food Products

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



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للإستفسارات والشكاوى والتقديمات

For Inquiries & Complaints & Submissions

www.dm.gov.ae



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

9. Food Trade Control Section Address

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



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للاستفسارات والشكاوى والتكوير

For Inquiries & Complaints & Feedback

www.dm.gov.ae



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



رؤيتنا: بناء مدينة سعيدة ومستدامة

Our Vision: Developing a happy and sustainable city



Facebook/DubaiMunicipality



Twitter/DMunicipality



Instagram/dubaimunicipality



Youtube/DubaiMunicipalityUAE

#إسعادكم... غايتنا

#Creating_Happiness

800900

للإستفسارات والشكاوى

For Inquiries & Complaints

www.dm.gov.ae