

Imported food requirements: Tahini or crushed sesame seeds or any products containing these

Recent Updates:

Date	Location	Information
17 August 2009		Removal of import clearance requirements for product exported from Australia, tariff codes targeted revised.
1 July 2009	Section 1.0	Structure revised

1.0 Scope

1.1 The purpose of this Imported Food Requirement is to provide administrative guidance to a Food Act Officer (FAO) as to the matters they may take into consideration when determining whether they have been satisfied by a person who imports food into New Zealand that the food complies in all respects with-

- (a) All relevant provisions of the Food Act 1981; and
- (b) All relevant provisions of any regulations made pursuant to the Food Act 1981; and
- (c) All applicable food standards.

Nothing in this Imported Food Requirement limits the powers of a FAO appointed under the Food Act 1981.

1.2 Legislative requirement: [Food \(Prescribed Foods\) Standard 2007](#)

- Products covered under the scope of these requirements are Prescribed Foods for the purpose of import into New Zealand (Section 11P, Food Act 1981).
- No person may import these products into New Zealand unless that person has satisfied an officer that the food complies.

1.3 This Imported Food Requirement sets out clearance options and procedures for importers of prescribed foods that an importer may follow when aiming to satisfy a FAO that the food complies with the Food Act 1981.

1.4 These clearance options and procedures apply in addition to and after a prescribed food has gained clearance from MAF Biosecurity New Zealand. Importers should check those requirements at: [MAF Biosecurity New Zealand](#).

1.5 Products include:

- Tahini and crushed sesame seeds including sesame seed paste, sesame paste, sesame butter.
- Foods containing tahini or crushed sesame seeds including hamas tahini, tehina, tahina, tahineh, halva, halawa, helva, hummus, babaganoush, eggplant dip.

1.6 [Tariff codes targeted](#)

1.7 **Food safety hazard:** pathogenic organisms, specifically *Salmonella*.

1.8 **Import permitted with conditions from:** All countries.

- Tahini and crushed sesame seed products imported into New Zealand from Australia are not subject to NZFSA import clearance requirements. Importers do not need to apply for a Single Use Permit for clearance. This applies to food produced in Australia and to food imported into Australia.

2.0 Importer Clearance Options

2.1 The requirements in this document apply to **crushed sesame seed** products and are in addition to clearance requirements detailed in the [Import Clearance Procedure](#).

2.2 Importers must also meet the requirements of the Food (Importer Listing) Standard 2008 and the Food (Importer General Requirements) Standard 2008. Importers should also read and understand the [Food Importer Standards Guidance](#) before sourcing products to import.

2.3 For **crushed sesame seed** products, importers have a responsibility under the Food (Importer General Requirements) Standard 2008 to ensure imports are not contaminated with *Salmonella*. Tahini and crushed sesame seed products are at high risk of contamination during processing (crushing and packaging). Good manufacturing practices during processing can greatly reduce the likelihood of *Salmonella* contamination. Tahini and crushed sesame seed pastes do not normally receive a heat treatment prior to consumption, which would inactivate the pathogenic bacteria.

2.4 The following two options are available to importers when they are aiming to satisfy a FAO that the food complies with the Food Act and can therefore be cleared:

Option 1 - Clearance sampling and testing on arrival in New Zealand

In the absence of a multiple release permit (MRP), products are sampled and tested in New Zealand.

Products will be tested for *Salmonella*.

Sampling and testing should be in accordance with [NZFSA's sampling and testing protocol](#).

Option 2 - Multiple Release Permit (MRP)

MRPs are issued for imported food products that are:

- Inadvertently captured by the tariff codes monitored by the NZFSA, and /or
- From particular suppliers under an arrangement agreed to by the importer and NZFSA.

Importers wishing to apply for a MRP should contact the Advisor (Food Service, Sale and Import) in the NZFSA Approvals Group at (04) 894 2500 or email approvals.fssi@nzfsa.govt.nz to discuss their situation prior to completing a MRP application form.

3.0 Clearance Procedures

3.1 Documentation checks

Not applicable

3.2 Physical inspections

Not applicable

3.3 Clearance sampling and testing on arrival in New Zealand

Sampling and testing should be in accordance with [NZFSA's sampling and testing protocol](#).

Samples:

- Number of samples per lot = 10.
- Each lot sample must weigh at least 200g.
- Individual units or packets should be sampled if these are available.
- A maximum of 5 samples (of approximately equal weight) may be composited by the laboratory per lot.

- Each sample should be entirely ground before compositing. A surfactant may need to be included in the pre-enrichment step.

Clearance criteria: The following criteria should be used when deciding if a consignment captured by these requirements is safe to be released:

- Nil tolerance for *Salmonella* per 25g.

Reject criteria:

- FAOs may REJECT lots that test positive for *Salmonella*.
- FAOs may reject any untested lots in the consignment.
- Procedures for rejected lots and untested lots are described in [NZFSA's sampling and testing protocol](#).

3.4 Multiple Release Permit (MRP)

For holders of an MRP, the import agent will use the permit number to clear the products. Holders of an MRP must maintain an agreed imported food surveillance (sampling and testing) programme for the products covered by the MRP.

3.5 Management of non-compliant consignments

When clearance cannot be given because of non-compliance with import requirements, all determinations on disposition of non-complying consignments should be made in full consultation with NZFSA (or a representative nominated by NZFSA). This will facilitate appropriate corrective action and communication with relevant entities.

3.6 Contact details for border clearance agency

First stop for importers seeking more information.

Central Clearing House

NZFSA Verification Agency

Level 1, 96 New North Road, Eden Terrace, Auckland

PO Box 3540, Eden Terrace, Auckland

Email: imported.food@nzfsa.govt.nz

Fax: 09 909 6208

Phone: 09 909 6210 or 09 909 6211

To be notified of changes and updates to NZFSA’s website, including import requirements, go to the [NZFSA website Notifications page](#).

4.0 Tariff Codes Targeted

Prescribed foods are targeted at the border using the New Zealand Customs tariff code system.

A tariff code is a number used for Customs purposes to classify goods. An import agent or customs broker may be able to assist with interpretation of the tariff code.

Importers who are importing **tahini and crushed sesame seed** products under tariff codes not listed below should notify NZFSA Central Clearing House. CCH will notify NZFSA of the need to review the tariff codes targeted.

Inadvertent captures

As the tariff classification system is not designed specifically around the imported food regime, some food products may be inadvertently captured by the targeted tariff codes listed. If this is the case, products will not be subject to the sampling and testing protocol outlined in this document. Importers may apply to NZFSA for a multiple release permit (MRP) to facilitate clearance.

Products classified with the following tariff codes are captured under this requirement:

Tariff codes targeted for tahini or crushed sesame seeds	
1207 Other oil seeds and oleaginous fruits, whether or not broken	
1207.40.00.00A	Sesamum Seeds
2008 Nuts, ground-nuts and other seeds, whether or not mixed together	
2008.19.09.29H	Nuts (Other than ground-nuts) and Seeds, Roasted
2008.19.09.39E	Nuts (Other than ground-nuts) and Seeds Not Roasted