



# IMPORT REGULATIONS FOR FOOD

## IN THE UAE

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### 3. FOOD LABELING

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The following information is MANDATORY on the food label:

1. Brand name
2. Product name: a summarized description of the food product.
3. Food ingredients: arranged in a descending order according to the weight or volume. All ingredients should be listed.
4. Production & expiration dates of all products, except those which are exempted from displaying the validity or expiration dates, such as fresh produce.

The only accepted format of dates is: dd/mm/yyyy, for products with a shelf life longer than 3 months mm/yyyy is accepted.

For more information on expiration period for food products, please check the [DM Food Control Import Requirements Guide](#). A distinction is made between:

- foodstuff with mandatory specified shelf life,
- foodstuff with voluntary shelf life,
- exempted products.

5. Name of the food manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer
6. Net weight or volume
7. Country of origin should be declared clearly and should be specific. EU is not a country of origin!
8. Product's barcode
9. Lot number
10. The language of the label should be Arabic.





## 4.1 BANNED ADDITIVES AND INGREDIENTS

The following additives and ingredients are completely banned in the UAE:

Food additives:

- E104 Quinoline yellow (yellow no.1)
- E105 fast yellow A B
- E107 Yellow G 2 (Food Yellow 5)
- E123 Amaranth (C.I. 16185 FD and C Red 2)
- E124 Ponceau 4 R (Red 2) (C.I.16255)
- E127 Erythrosine (FD & C Red 3) (C.I.45430)
- E131 Patent Blue V (C.I.42051)
- E142 Green S (Acid Brilliant Green, Food Green S, Lissamine Green, C.44090)
- E924 Potassium Bromate (Bread products)
- E952 Cyclamate
- E1510 Ethanol (alcohol)

Note: adding alcohol is not allowed in any food product. However, if alcohol occurs naturally in some products such as juices, it is subjected to the limits as indicated in the respective UAE standards.

Ingredients:

- Poppy seeds,
- Qat leaves,
- Betel leaves or nuts,
- Niswar (=tobacco snuff),
- Gutkha (=a preparation of crushed areca nut, tobacco, catechu, paraffin wax, slaked lime and sweet or savory flavorings).

If any product contains pork or pork products, it should be clearly declared on the label (NOT only in ingredients).

## 5. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

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Documents needed for clearance by DM - Food Control at the port of entry:

1. Bill of entry/ airway bill
2. Delivery order in case of containers only
3. An ORIGINAL health certificate approved by the government health authority at the country of origin. A copy of the health certificate will not be accepted and shall result in detaining of the consignment at the port of entry.

The only authority in Belgium authorised to issue health certificates is the 'Federaal Agentschap voor de Voedselveiligheid (AFSCA-FAVV), [www.favv.be](http://www.favv.be)

4. Consignment packing list
5. An ORIGINAL halal certificate issued by an Islamic Organization which is approved by UAE authorities (for meat and poultry and products thereof). Failure to deliver an original Halal Certificate shall result in detaining or re-exporting of the consignment.

The only authority in Belgium authorised to issue halal certificates is Halal Food Council Europe, [www.hfce.eu](http://www.hfce.eu)

6. Any other certificates which might be required in case of any international epidemics or any certificates required based on local decisions (such as GMO-Free Certificates, Avian Flu-free certificates, Dioxin-free certificates, etc).

## 6. MAIN REASONS FOR REJECTION OF ENTRY

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- Banned ingredients such as poppy seeds and alcohol,
- Difficult to read the information on the label,
- Health certificate is not original,
- Easily removable sticker,
- Duplicated barcodes in the FIRS,

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- Food supplements, medication, vitamins do not fall under this regulation, but need approval by additional/other authorities.
- Not all ingredients have been declared,
- Ingredients are mentioned in a foreign language,
- Non-conformity with 'shape law': there are religious signs or inappropriate pictures (this includes also any mention of alcoholic drinks, e.g. marketing a food item as a good accompaniment to a glass of beer or wine).

## 7. MORE INFORMATION

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More information on regulations, procedures & actions taken in case of contraventions can also be found on the website of Dubai Municipality: [www.dm.gov.ae](http://www.dm.gov.ae) - Business - Food Safety Department.

In case you have any further questions the office of Flanders Investment & Trade in Dubai will be happy to assist you.

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