



A guidance document on the Import-Export of food items – Maldives

Maldives Food and Drug Authority
Ministry of Health
Maldives

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Guidance on importing food items to the Maldives

General requirement

- The label of all pre-packaged food items, except for those imported for the non-commercial purpose shall meet the standard number MFDA-FCD STAN 4-2014 (Rev. 1 – 2016) <https://health.gov.mv/en/downloads/national-standard-for-labelling-prepackaged-food>. However, the label of the prepackaged food imported for the non-commercial purpose shall contain the minimum information to identify the food product in a legible language.

Designated products

- Food item that falls under the regulation number (MFDA-FS/R1:2008) shall be registered in Maldives Food and Drug Authority along with the importer <https://health.gov.mv/dv/downloads/gaathundhey-kiruge-badhalugai-kudakudhinnah-dhey-baavaithah-dhivehiraajeah-etherekurumaai-ufehdhumaai-viyafaareegai-beynunkurumugai-amalukuraanegohtuge-a>.
- These registrations have to be done through the “Dhirithi portal” <https://dhirithi.egov.mv/Home/Login>. For more information on registration in the “Dhirithi” send an email to foodsafetydivision@health.gov.mv.
- Documents required for health clearance of these food items:
 - **Commercial use:**
 - Invoice or packing list.
 - Bill of lading / Airway bill or invoice which contains a bill of lading or airway bill number.

NOTE: LIST OF REGISTERED IMPORTERS AND DESIGNATED PRODUCTS UNDER THE “REGULATION ON IMPORT, PRODUCE AND SALE OF BREAST MILK SUBSTITUTES IN THE MALDIVES” is updated on the web page of the Ministry of Health

- **Non Commercial use:**
 - Application for Health Clearance of Designated Product for Noncommercial Use <https://health.gov.mv/en/downloads/application-for-health-clearance-of-designated-products-for-noncommercial-use>
 - Applicant’s NID card (copy)
 - Child’s NID card/Birth certificate (Copy)

Food supplements

- All food supplements intended for import to the Maldives for commercial purposes shall either be registered or listed in Maldives Food and Drug Authority prior to import.
- The registration procedure and other requirements for the process of registration or listing is detailed in the guideline number MFDA-FCD GL 2-2020 (Rev 04 - October 2021) <https://health.gov.mv/en/downloads/guidelines-on-issuance-of-health-clearance-to-food-supplements-imported-to-maldives-4th-revision>

- These registrations have to be done through the “Dhirithi portal” (<https://dhirithi.egov.mv/Home/Login>). For more information on registration in the “Dhirithi” send an email to (foodsafetydivision@health.gov.mv).
- Documents required for health clearance of these food items:
 - **Commercial use:**
 - Invoice or packing list.
 - Bill of lading / Airway bill or invoice which contains a bill of lading or airway bill number.
 - Document of Product registration/ product listing

NOTE: FOOD SUPPLEMENT LISTED FOR IMPORT is updated on the web page of the Ministry of Health.

- **Noncommercial:**
 - Food supplement imported for noncommercial use does not required prior approval. However, the amount imported shall be within the allowance stated in the annex 4 of ‘Guidelines on Issuance of Health clearance to food Supplements Imported to the Maldives’ <https://health.gov.mv/en/downloads/guidelines-on-issuance-of-health-clearance-to-food-supplements-imported-to-maldives-4th-revision>.

Food items for non-commercial use

- All food items imported to the Maldives intended for non-commercial use in the Maldives shall meet the requirements mentioned in the standard number MFDA-FCF STAN 6-2021 (Rev 1- September 2022) <https://health.gov.mv/en/downloads/standard-for-importing-food-item-for-personal-use>
- Documents to be submitted for the health clearance of these items are:
 - A declaration stating that the imported food items are for non-commercial use.
 - If importing a food product for a special medical purpose, an evidence document stating that the person requires to use the food item along with a copy of identity proof of the person importing the product.
- Food items can be imported to the Maldives as sample items under the condition that those food items shall not be used commercially. However, the amount is limited to 2 units per item.

Food items for commercial use

Documents required for health clearance of:

Meat and meat products, poultry meat and meat products, and fish and fishery products:

- Original veterinary health certificate/certificate of condition or original health certificate. Emailed copy of health certificate from competent authority’s official email to MFDA official email. Copy of the health certificate if the health certificate is able to verify through the health certificate issued competent authority’s online portal.

- If the original veterinary certificate/certificate of condition or original health certificate does not contain the product origin, the original of the certificate of origin.
- Invoice or packing list.
- Bill of lading / Airway bill or invoice which contain a bill of lading or airway bill number.
- The product shall be classified as a product of meat if it contains 5% of meat. (Stock, sauce, soup, and paste will be excluded).

Egg and egg products (packaged whole eggs, egg yolk, and egg white):

- Original health certificate.
- An emailed copy of the health certificate from the competent authority's official email to MFDA's official email. Copy of the health certificate if the health certificate is able to verify through the health certificate issued competent authority's online portal.
- If any treatment is given to increase the shelf life of the eggs, a document from the competent authority of the product manufacturer or treated authority (details of the treatment and expiry date). The document shall be submitted either from their company's email address to MFDA's official email or the original stamped document.
- Invoice or packing list.
- Bill of lading / Airway bill or invoice which contain a bill of lading or airway bill number.
- If the original health certificate is issued from the product manufacturer or exporter of the competent authority, it shall contain the original document of "Fit for human consumption".

Milk and milk products:

- Invoice or packing list.
- Bill of lading / Airway bill or invoice which contain a bill of lading or airway bill number.
- The product shall be classified as a milk product if it contains 5% of milk.

Fresh fruits and vegetables:

- Invoice or packing list.
- Bill of lading / Airway bill or invoice which contain a bill of lading or airway bill number.

Other foods including pre-packed food: (can, bottles, packet)

- Invoice or packing list.
- Bill of lading / Airway bill or invoice which contain a bill of lading or airway bill number.

Document submission procedure for health clearance of imported food

- The Documents shall be submitted to the Maldives Food and Drug office at the port of entry in the Male region and in atolls to the Health Protection Agency office at the port of entry

- Document shall be submitted 3 hours prior to the time of health clearance if the shipment is imported via air cargo. And 12 hours prior if the shipment is imported via sea cargo.

Inspection of imported food

- Each shipment shall be inspected randomly for compliance before providing Health clearance
- Shipments are issued health clearance after inspection if:
- Products have proper labeling according to the “National Standard for labeling of pre-packaged foods” (Link)
- Temperature of the products is proper in case of chilled/frozen products
- No observation of spoilage/damage or contamination of food

Guidance on exporting food items from the Maldives

Export of fish and fishery products including live groupers:

The below documents shall be obtained from the head office prior to production and export (necessary for obtaining a health/veterinary certificate for exporting fish and fishery products). These documents are to be obtained through the Dhirithi portal (www.dhirithi.egov.mv)

- Establishments producing fish and fishery products for the export purpose shall have a valid “Certificate of Compliance/Food establishment permit”
- Exporters shall have a valid “export permit”

Following are the documents to be obtained from the Health Certification unit at Velana International Airport. To obtain these documents, a request shall be sent to healthcertification@health.gov.mv, and the original copies of the document shall be collected from the unit:

- Each fish and fishery product shipment shall be accompanied by a Health/Veterinary/ Foodstuff certificate.
- On arrival of air cargo shipments to the airport for export, the shipment will be inspected by the MFDA officers.
- The sea cargo shipments will be inspected by the MFDA officers during shipment loading.

Export of live ornamental fish:

The below documents shall be obtained from head office prior to packaging and export (necessary for obtaining a Fitness certificate for exporting live ornamental fish). These documents are to be obtained through the Dhirithi portal (www.dhirithi.egov.mv)

- Establishments rearing and packaging live ornamental fish for the export purpose shall have a valid “permit for packaging live ornamental fish”
- Exporters shall have a valid “export permit”

The following documents shall be obtained from the Health Certification unit at Velana International Airport. To obtain these documents, a request shall be sent to healthcertification@health.gov.mv, and the original copies of the document shall be collected from the unit:

- Each live ornamental fish shipment shall be accompanied by a Fitness certificate.
- On arrival of the shipment at the airport, the shipment will be inspected by the MFDA officers.

Export of Fish meal (feed):

The below documents shall be obtained from head office prior to production and export (necessary for obtaining a veterinary certificate for exporting fish meal). These documents are to be obtained through the Dhirithi portal (www.dhirithi.egov.mv)

- Establishments producing a fish meal for the export purpose shall have a valid “Certificate of Compliance/Food establishment permit”
- Exporters shall have a valid “export permit”

Documents are to be obtained from the Health Certification unit at Velana International Airport. To obtain these documents request shall be sent to healthcertification@health.gov.mv, and the original copies of the document shall be collected from the unit:

- Each fish meal shipment shall be accompanied by a veterinary certificate.
- The shipment will be inspected by the MFDA officers during shipment loading.

Food products intended for the purpose of laboratory samples, personal use, and exhibitions:

Documents are to be obtained from the Health Certification unit at Velana International Airport. To obtain these documents request shall be sent to healthcertification@health.gov.mv, and the original copies of the document shall be collected from the unit:

- A letter from MFDA will be issued, if necessary.

Returned fish and fishery product shipments:

- Prior to returning back to the Maldives, the “reason of reject”, temperature log sheet, and other relevant documents (case dependent) from a reliable source such as competent authority, shipment survey agencies, etc, shall be submitted to the MFDA head office for approval.
- Health clearance will not be issued to any shipment rejected due to food safety failure.
- Depending on the case collection of samples for laboratory analysis may be required.
- Depending on the case the shipment will be inspected by MFDA officers.