

United States Importation Requirements and Restrictions

Note: These are only some basic requirements and restrictions for importation. Because of the complexity of the laws, it is **highly recommended** that a professional import agent be hired to facilitate the importation process. Detailed import information can be found at www.customs.ustreas.gov.

FOOD PRODUCTS

Cheese, milk, and dairy products

Cheese and cheese products are subject to requirements of the FDA and the Dept. of Ag. Most importations of cheese require an import license and are subject to quotas. Milk and cream may only be imported by holders of permits from the dept. of Health and Human Services, FDA, and various other organizations. They are also subject to requirements of the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the Import Milk Act.

Fruits, vegetables, and nuts

Some of these agricultural commodities must meet U.S. import requirements with regard to grade, size, quality, and maturity.

Meat and meat products

Meat is subject to the regulations of the Department of Agriculture and must be inspected by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Food Safety and Inspection service prior to release by U.S. Customs.

Plant and plant products

Plants are subject to regulations of the Department of Agriculture and may be restricted or prohibited. Import permits are required.

Quotas

Food items subjected to quotas include:

- Milk, cream, and some cheeses
- Anchovies

- Olives
- Satsumas (mandarins)
- Tuna

In addition, quotas may apply to various other unlisted items.

TEXTILES

All textile fiber products must be stamped, tagged, labeled or otherwise marked with the following:

- The generic names and percentages by weight of the constituent fibers present in the product
- The name of the manufacturer or registered identification number issued by the FTC of one or more persons marketing or handling the textile fiber product
- The name of the country where processed or manufactured

Flammable Fabrics

Any article of wearing apparel, fabric, or interior furnishing must conform to flammability standards issued under the flammable fabrics act.

Wool

Any product containing woolen fiber imported into the U.S. (there are a few exceptions) must be tagged, labeled, or marked with the following information:

- The percentage of the total fiber weight of the wool product
- The maximum percent of the total weight of the wool product
- The name of the manufacturer or person introducing the product in commerce in the U.S.

Fur

Fur products must be tagged, labeled, or marked to show:

- The name of the manufacturer or importer
- The name(s) of the animals that produced the fur
- The name of the country of origin of any imported furs contained in the product

- If the fur is artificially colored, contains used or damaged fur, or is composed of waste fur, it must be marked on the item

GOLD AND SILVER

Articles made of gold or alloys thereof must be within three one-thousandth parts of indicated fineness. Articles marked "sterling" or "sterling silver" must contain at least 0.925 part of pure silver, give or take 0.004. Articles marked "coin" or "coin silver" must contain at least 0.900 part pure silver, with a divergence of 0.004 allowed.

ART

Pre-Columbian monumental and architectural sculpture and murals from countries in Central and South America must have proper export permits from the country of origin.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Any person or firm wishing to engage in the importation of distilled spirits, wines, or malt beverages into the U.S. must first obtain an importer's permit from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. Bulk or bottled shipments of imported spirits or distilled or intoxicating liquors must be accompanied by a copy of a bill of lading or other documents such as an invoice, showing the name of the consignee, the nature of its contents, and the quantity contained. Imported wine and distilled spirits must conform to the metric standards of fill. Wine, spirits, and malt beverages must also be packaged, marked, branded, and labeled according to regulations. U.S. law requires a health warning to appear on the labels of containers of alcoholic beverages bottled on or after Nov. 18, 1989.