



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

## Guidance: Importing organic products into Great Britain

This guide explains the roles and responsibilities at each stage of the process for importing organic goods into Great Britain.

Certificates of Inspection (COIs) are not required for organic products imported from the EU, Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein and Switzerland until 1 February 2027. Imports of organic products from the EU must meet the requirements of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), Annex 14: Organic Products.

Consignments that transit through the EU/ NI, destined for Great Britain, will need to be checked at the first point of entry into Great Britain.

Recognised non-UK countries, non-UK control bodies and what can imported into GB can be found [here](#).

| Step to take   | Who is responsible?                                       |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Get certified by an approved UK organic control body and check which Ports, Local Authorities/ Local Trading Standards can carry out organic checks. (Some may differ depending on the commodity type and other checks require i.e. organic feed).</b> | Anyone who intends to import organic food or feed into GB |
| <b>2. Complete the GB Certificate of Inspection (COI) ensuring the products imported meet the relevant import rules - the exporter then emails the COI their control body</b>  | Exporter, agent or importer                               |
| <b>3. The control body verifies that the consignment is organic and meets the relevant import rules before endorsing the goods by signing and stamping box 18 of the COI. A PDF can be used for this.</b>  | Non-UK control body (exporters control body)              |
| <b>4. The control body emails the endorsed PDF COI to the destination address/ GB importer.</b>  | Exporter or agent   |

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|---|--|
| 5. Let GB Port Health Authority/ Local Authority know when the organic consignment will arrive by phone or email – at least 6 hours in advance for air freight or Roll on Roll off (RoRo), and 24 hours in advance for other means of transport.  | GB importer or agent                         |
| 6. Send the COI and shipping documents to the PHA via email.  | GB importer or agent                         |
| 7. If the consignment is to be split, the importer mentioned in box 11 of the COI must submit an extract of the COI to the relevant PHA/ LA.  | GB importer                                  |
| <p>8. Check documents and carry out any necessary physical checks or testing. If the consignment passes, endorse by signing and stamping box 20 of the COI or box 13 of the extract COI and clear the goods for onward movement.</p> <p><b><u>The signature and the stamp may be electronic.</u></b></p> <p>If the consignment does not pass, the goods must be either:</p> <p>a) re-labelled removing all reference to organics.<br/> b) re-exported as non-organic OR<br/> c) destroyed</p> <p>If the consignment does not meet the relevant importing rules, it may be rejected.</p> | GB Port Health Authority/<br>Local Authority |
| 9. If the goods are cleared, indicate the number of the COI in the customs declaration for free circulation.  | GB importer or agent                         |
| 10. Collect the goods, sign box 21 or (box 14 of the extract COI) and ensure the importer receives the endorsed COI. The consignee of a batch must keep the extracts of the COI for at least 2 years.   | GB first consignee                           |
| 11. Keep the endorsed COI and copies of the endorsed extracts of the COI on file for at least 3 years.  | GB importer                                  |
| 12. Check COIs during routine inspections of importers.   | GB organic control body                      |

**Definitions:**

**'Importer':** means the natural or legal person who presents a consignment for release for free circulation into Great Britain, either in person, or through a representative.

**'First consignee'** means the natural or legal person to whom the imported consignment is delivered and who will receive it for further preparation and/or marketing.