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This table summarises the general requirements and standards for food and agricultural imports into Bahrain.

Certification/ Requirements	Remarks
Food standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) • The Gulf Standards Organization (GSO - http://www.gso.org.sa) is comprised of senior standards officials from the six GCC member countries and is responsible for developing food and other standards in the GCC
Regulatory/ Enforcement Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food regulations are formulated by the Public Health Directorate (PHD - http://www.moic.gov.bh/MoIC/En/More/Resources/BahrainInvestorsCenter/Licensing+Authorities/MinistryOfHealth/PublicHealthDirectorate/), Ministry of Health (MOH - http://www.moh.gov.bh/), in conjunction with the Directorate of Standards and Metrology, Ministry of Industry & Commerce (MOIC - http://www.moic.gov.bh/) • The Directorate of Agencies and Industrial Property, MOIC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formulates and enforces trademark and agency laws • The Directorate of Customs & Ports, Ministry of Finance and National Economy (MOFNE - http://www.mofne.gov.bh/) , <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enforces local agency laws • The Public Health Directorate, Food & Water Control Section (FWCS), MOH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enforces food safety regulations - inspects all imported fresh (including fresh fruits and vegetables) and processed food products, by verifying compliance with label regulations and, if deemed necessary, drawing samples and laboratory testing the products • The Agricultural Affairs, Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture (http://websrv.municipality.gov.bh/mun/index_en.jsp) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsible for Live plants and live animals • Food Safety Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an interagency committee composed of representatives from the MOH, the Directorate of Standards and Metrology, Director of Consumer Protection, MOC and the Directorate of Agriculture, Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Agriculture (MMAA) - decides all food safety and control issues, including the imposition of product bans
Health Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for all food imports • Issued by the country of origin • not required to be notarized
Islamic (Halal) slaughter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for all meat and poultry products

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certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be issued by an approved Islamic center in the country of origin• Required to be notarized by the Bahraini or any other Arab Embassy/Consulate<ul style="list-style-type: none">- However, officials do accept non-notarized Halal certificates if issued by well known/reputed Halal center
Certificate of Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be notarized by a local Arab chamber of commerce and the Bahrain Embassy, or one of its consulates, in the country of exporter<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Another Arab embassy or consulate may be used, if a Bahraini government mission is not located near the exporter.- If no other Arab government mission is located near the exporter, a statement from the local Singapore chamber of commerce will suffice. A local Arab chamber of commerce, however, must still notarize the certificate of origin.
Pre-shipment approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bahrain will pre-approve food labels prior to import• Pre-import approval is strongly encouraged since it can significantly speed import clearance, particularly for new-to-market products and brands
Pre-registration of specialty food products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• According to Ministerial Order No. 2/1989, all specialty foods, such as certain diet and health foods and foods for diabetics and infants, must be pre-registered with the Directorate of Pharmacies and Drug Control, Ministry of Health, prior to import.
Certificate of Radiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A certificate of irradiation type and level is required for these foods
Labeling	
General Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GSO standards for labeling GSO 9/2007 and shelf life GSO 150/2007 have yet to be officially approved in Bahrain to replace Decree No. 3, due to technical reasons, but are being applied on a provisional basis.• Small consignments of 20 or less cartons, as well as ethnic food products, may be exempt from Arabic label requirements, provided prior authorization is obtained from the PHD/MOH.• Products shipped in bulk or institutional-sized containers destined specifically for the hotel, restaurant, and institutional (HRI) sector are subject to all labeling requirements. However, officials may be willing to grant certain exceptions. Exporters should consult with their importers before shipping.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Original labels should be printed in Arabic, but exceptions do exist for small lots and ethnic foods.• Bilingual labels are permitted, provided one of the languages is Arabic (e.g. Arabic/English).

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In addition, Arabic language stickers are permitted in lieu of Arabic or bilingual labels provided the sticker:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Is extremely difficult to remove- Includes the following essential label information: Product name, Ingredients, Net weight, Country of origin, Dates of production & expiry- If they are part of the original sticker and not being stamped over- Does not cover the original label- Does not contradict information on the original label
Required Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Product and brand name• Ingredients and additives, in descending order of proportion• Net content in metric units (volume in case of liquids)• The name and address of the manufacturer, producer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor shall be declared on the label;• Country of Origin• Origin of animal fat (e.g. beef fat)• Production and Expiry dates, (best or sell by dates are also acceptable)• Instructions for use (if any)• Special storage, transportation and handling instructions• Lot identification
Date marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Production and expiration dates must be engraved, embossed, printed or stamped directly onto the original label or primary packaging at the time of production, using indelible ink.• The expiration date must be printed in the following order, depending on the shelf life of the product:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Day/month/year for products with a shelf life of less than 3 months.- Month/year for products with a shelf life longer than 3 months.• Dates, written in digit format or in words such as "September 24, 2005", are acceptable.• American dating (month/day/year) is not acceptable and if utilized, it could lead to the rejection of the products dated in such a manner.
Nutritional Labelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No local nutritional labeling requirements
Specialty Food Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministerial Order No. 2/1989 governs the importation of specialty food products, such as certain diet and health foods and foods for diabetics and infants.

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Certification/ Requirements	Remarks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Under this order, all specialty foods must be pre-registered with the Directorate of Pharmacies and Drug Control, Ministry of Health, prior to import.• Specialty food labels must contain detailed information regarding ingredients (e.g., vitamins, supplements, minerals, etc.), nutritive value per 100 grams and instructions for use and proper storage.• There are no Recommended Daily Allowance label requirements.
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All imported eggs must be individually stamped with the supplier name or country of origin and dates of production and expiry.
Other Information	
Food Additives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MOCI issued Decree No. 22, dated June 21, 2005, that approved Codex Standards CXS 192:1995 as the "General Standard on Food Additives and Class Names and the International Numbering System for Food Additives" and CXS 107:1998 as the "General Standard for Labeling of Food Additives When Sold as Such." (Available at http://www.codexalimentarius.net)• The common name and index number of all food color additives contained in a product must be noted on the product label.• European "E" numbers are accepted.
Pesticides and other contaminants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MOCI issued Decree No. 22, dated June 21, 2005, that approved Codex Standards CXS 193:1995 for "General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food" and CXS 229:1993 for "Analysis of Pesticide Residues and Recommended Methods" as national standards.
Inspection / control procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poultry products are granted a 20 percent tolerance for salmonella bacteria. Inspection officials routinely test for salmonella and will reject a shipment if salmonella is detected in more than 20 percent of samples taken.• Bahrain applies 100 percent inspection on new-to-market products, high risk products and products that failed a previous inspection. All other products are subject to a random sampling review that does include a laboratory analysis periodically.• Bahrain health authorities randomly inspect food products in retail outlets. In addition to visually inspecting labels, samples are taken and analyzed to ensure that product ingredients match those listed on the label.
Food Samples	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Sample" consignments face no special requirements.• Samples destined for food shows or other types of promotional events are exempt from local label requirements.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be accompanied by health certificates and invoices noting that the products are not for sale and are of no commercial value
Alcoholic Beverages and Pork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alcoholic beverages and pork, as well as food products containing alcohol or pork, are strictly regulated.• Retail outlets can only sell pork products from special counters that are clearly marked.• Only four companies are licensed to import alcoholic beverages. These companies may retail the product directly through their own establishment or market to institutional end users, such as hotels and licensed restaurants.• Supermarkets are prohibited from selling alcoholic beverages.• Media are prohibited from advertising alcoholic products, although in-house promotion in a liquor store or licensed restaurant is permitted.
Packaging and Container Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General requirements for packaged special foods are covered under GS 654/1996, GS 839/97, and GS 1024/2000.
Irradiated Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bahrain Standard 988/1998, which is identical to GS 988/1998, defines the permitted level of radioactivity in foodstuffs.• Irradiated food products are permitted but the label must include the international irradiated foods logo.

Reference: USDA FAS GAIN Report

DISCLAIMER:

This document has been prepared by SPRING Singapore with the intention of assisting Singapore based exporters of food products. While every possible care has been taken in the preparation of this document, the information may not be completely accurate as policies may have changed or clear and consistent information on these policies were not available. They cannot be taken as the official interpretation of the regulations. It is highly recommended that Singapore based exporters verify the full set of certification and import requirements with the relevant authorities in importing country. **Please note that final import approval of any product is subject to the importing country's rules and regulations as interpreted by custom officials at the point of entry.**