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

Certification/ Requirements	Remarks
Food Laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foodstuffs, Disinfectants and Cosmetics Act (FDCA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act no. 54 of 1972 was updated to Government Gazette 32012 dated 20 March 2009. - control the sale manufacture, importation and exportation of food stuff; cosmetics and disinfectants • South African food regulations are aligned with CODEX Alimentarius Commission guidelines.
Regulatory Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health (http://www.doh.gov.za) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Directorate of Food Control (DFC - http://www.doh.gov.za/department/dir_foodcontr.html) oversees food safety • Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF - http://www.daff.gov.za) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sub-directorate Agric Product Quality Assurance (SAPQA) - Directorate of Plant Health and Quality (PHQ - http://www.nda.agric.za/docs/npposa/default.htm) - Directorate of Veterinary Services administers the Animal Diseases Act, 1984 (Act No 35 of 1984) and the Meat Safety Act, 2000 (Act No 40 of 2000) • The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS - https://www.sabs.co.za/) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directorate of Regulatory Affairs and Consumer Protection - Department of Food and Associated Industries (FAI) - food inspectors work with other governmental departments to ensure food safety issues for both locally manufactured and imported seafood and canned fish products; also issues quality and compliance health certificates for seafood products
Import Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill of entry (DA500) • Customs Worksheet: a customs document which details rates of exchange and conversion of rates of the foreign currency amounts into South African Rands • Commercial invoice • Import permit (if necessary): required for certain goods and commodities only in terms of import control regulations. If an import permit is required, the import permits number and the expiry date should appear on the DA500. • Special import certificates or permits: Apart from those goods requiring an import permit, a number of products are subject to inspection and/or to the issue of special

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	<p>permits by certain authorities prior to the goods being imported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transport documents: i.e. the Bill of Lading (sea), the air waybill (air), the freight transit order (rail), and the road 'waybill'.• Certificate of Origin (DA59): Certain strategic commodities and goods facing anti-dumping charges require a certificate of origin. Goods claiming preferential treatment in respect of tariffs also require proof of origin.
Import Tariff Permit (R50-00)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Required for controlled goods (any live or dead part of a plant, pathogen, insect, exotic animal, growth medium, infectious materials, honey, beeswax, or used apiary equipment)
Labelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No pictorial representation, which reflects any foodstuff not contained in the container and which might lead the consumer to believe that such foodstuff is contained in the container, shall appear on the label unless the words "serving suggestion", or words indicating the justification for the use of such a pictorial representation are printed on the label.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• at least one official language (English) of the Republic of South Africa
Required Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name and address of manufacturer/producer/proprietor/controlling company• Product name• Qualifying words• List of ingredients• Net mass declaration• Storage instructions• Grading of the product• Date of manufacture and factory code• Country of origin• Substandard (When required, the word "Substandard" shall be printed prominently and indelibly on all main panels in a print size at least half the size of the product or trade name, whichever is greater)• Directions for use (where relevant)
Name and address	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The name and full physical address of the manufacturer, producer, proprietor or controlling company, or, in the case of containers packed on behalf of any other person or organization, the name and full physical address of that person or organization.• The size of the lettering shall not be less than 1mm in height.

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Product name	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The name of the product shall be a true description, including its method of preparation, presentation and packing medium and shall not be misleading.• The name must appear on the main panel(s) in bold print in letters not less than 4mm in height.
Qualifying words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words that qualify the foodstuffs or are an essential part of the description, shall be in the immediate proximity to the name• In prominent letters at least one third the size of the name of the product.
List of ingredients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In descending order of content must be given.• The presence of any preservative shall be indicated in the list of ingredients by its common chemical name, either followed or preceded by the word "preservative".<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Preservatives which are used as anti-oxidants shall be indicated by the common chemical name in the list of ingredients, either followed or preceded by the words "anti-oxidant".• Where the colorant tartrazine is used it must be specifically listed as "tartrazine" in the ingredients listing.• The use of monosodium glutamate (MSG) shall be indicated by name in the ingredients listing.• Foodstuffs which need not bear a list of ingredients include water, which is added with carbon dioxide and having a name indicating it has been carbonated, vinegars fermented exclusively from a single basic product, dairy products containing only milk, or added with only starter culture or rennet, any drink according to the Sorghum Beer Act, 1962, or beer as described in the Liquor Act of 1989.
Net mass declaration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The net mass of the contents shall be expressed in the relevant units of the metric system such as kilogram (kg) or gram (g).• The lettering must be uniform and of a size such that the head of the "g" is equal to at least one quarter the size of the product name, brand or trade name, or 1.5mm, whichever is the greater.• The net mass declaration shall be in a color in distinct contrast with the background, and where it does not appear on the main panel(s) it must be framed in a bold continuous line.• The words "net mass" or "net" may be used with the net mass statement.
Storage instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A statement that the product is cooked or uncooked as applicable, together with the relevant storage instructions shall appear on the main panel in letters not less than

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	<p>3mm in height.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uncooked/raw – Keep Frozen Partly cooked – Keep Frozen Cooked – Keep Frozen
Date of manufacture and factory code	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be indelibly marked or stamped on each immediate container or, in the case of glass jars, on the cap or label.• The use of a code is permissible provided that the key is disclosed to the SABS.
Marking of master cartons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Print or stencil:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The quantity and net mass of the packages it contains- the information as required in the previously mentioned requirements, except:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ the street address of the manufacturer need not be the full address, but must be sufficient for identification purposes▪ The method of preparation need not be given on the container.- The date of packing and batch number (if applicable) shall be stamped or otherwise marked on the container or on a label securely attached to the container.
Nutritional and Health Claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nutrition labeling must appear on food labels or in accompanying labeling.• The label must have the heading 'Nutrition Information' , and should specify serving size, the nearest kilojoule of energy content of a serving per 100g or per 100 ml, total amount of proteins, carbohydrates, fats and dietary fiber in grams(weight), sodium in milligrams and RDA proteins per serving.• Labeling of foods for special medical purposes must indicate nutritional information, osmolarity on acid-base balance, number of servings contained in the package, nature of animal/plant protein hydrolysates, the description of modification and information on the amino acid, fatty acid/carbohydrate profile, a bold capital lettered statement not less than 3mm reading "USE UNDER MEDICAL SUPERVISION".
GMO labeling regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compulsory labeling according to the Consumer Protection Bill (2009)
Other Information	
Inspection/Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All food and agricultural products that enter South Africa are sampled and tested before distribution and sale to ensure that they are not contaminated with any pest and that they are fit for their intended use.• The Port Health Authority may detain goods at customs or issue an extended health detention to assist the food industry and other associated industries to take samples and conduct one or more of the following tests: sensory, microbiological and chemical. The sample is divided and packed separately into three sealed and labeled containers to indicate its nature and to identify it as from the original sample. One of the packages is

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	<p>given to the person responsible for the commodity, and the other package is sent for testing, while the third package remains with the inspector. For further analysis, the sample is derived from the remaining two packages. The same procedure also applies to perishables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All canned seafood products are tested under the compulsory specifications. The products are detained when tests are conducted and are only released for sale after a compliance certificate is issued.• Frozen products are monitored on a regular basis at the processors.
Microbiological Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On May 23, 2008, the Government Gazette no. R547 was published which amends regulations governing microbial standards for foodstuffs and related matters. (available at http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/regulations/2008/reg0547.pdf)
Packaging and Container Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For all goods, temperature in transit and at the destination point must be taken into consideration when using gels and dry ice.• Chilled goods should be packed either in insulated container with gel-packs/blue ice or in heavy cardboard boxes with gel-packs. Goods should never be packed with wet ice.• Frozen goods, as with chilled, should be tightly packed with gel-packs and/or dry ice.• Dry goods should be packed tightly to avoid internal damage.• Carton labels should be marked to indicate either dry/chilled/frozen content.• The shipments should be marked with colored labels, and all boxes should contain the following: Supplier name, address, destination, total number of cartons shipped, and a copy of pro-forma / commercial invoices
Food Additives Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• According to Government Gazette no. R125, the following words should appear below the term "Isomaltulose" and should be in parenthesis "source of glucose & fructose"• Food additives used as oxidants, sweeteners, colorants, curing agents, flavor enhancers, flavorants or preservatives, in a given foodstuff must appear on the label.• The label on any pre-packed food additive or blend of food additives must comply with all labeling requirements and bear the words "for use in foodstuffs", or "for use in food" or "blend of food additives". The common chemical name of the product should be used on the labels.• The names 'food colorant' or 'food coloring' or 'food color' and common chemical name and color index number should appear in the label.• If an additive is sulfur dioxide, the maximum and minimum percentages should be specified.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The date of maximum durability for food additives with the shelf-life not exceeding 18 months should have words as “use before < latest recommended date of use>”• The DOH does not maintain a list of permitted additives.• South African Food Additive regulations are categorized according to type. Please look up your product at the following internet address and then see which additives are permitted with that particular foodstuff: http://www.doh.gov.za/department/dir_foodcontr.html (Click on “legislation” at the top, then scroll at the bottom to see all the final regulations pertaining to additives).
Pesticides and Other Contaminants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DOH is the main food control regulatory body.<ul style="list-style-type: none">- approves the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticides and for other chemicals and metals that may be present in foodstuffs for both exports and imports- DOH inspection services performs analysis for pesticide MRL• The National Department of Agriculture (NDA) gives guidance for usage of pesticides.• Regulations of maximum residue limits for pesticides on imported foodstuffs are governed under the FCD Act, 1972 (Act No.54 of 1972).• Food import control is conducted by the Port health services and the Provincial Health Department according to the act. For specific MRLs, please see http://www.doh.gov.za/department/dir_foodcontr.html.• Samples are continuously taken from the consignments to test for food colorants, aflatoxin, preservatives, sweetness and labeling.• Codex Alimentarius values are the principal default levels but are only applicable when no South African MRLs have been established.<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If there is no Codex value for a particular chemical/commodity, the second default choice is the lowest Limit of Detection (LoD) level, usually at 0.01mg/kg of commodity, established in South Africa for a crop in the same food category- If none of these defaults are applicable, then the MRL set by other countries are considered
Vitamin-Enrichment Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fortification of foodstuffs is regulated under South Africa’s Department of Health, Food Act of 1972.• Importers and manufacturers of food vehicles should use only micronutrient mix from companies that have registered with the Department of health.• The importer should record certificates of micronutrient mix used in the production of every batch of the food vehicles.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is illegal to import micro nutrient mix without registering it with the DOH. Importers of micronutrient mix should apply to the Director General for registration of their nutrient mix specifications.• Specifications must include recommended addition rates.• Specifications for labeling, fortified food standards, micronutrient mix, etc, the Regulations Relating to the Fortification of Foodstuffs can be accessed by visiting www.doh.gov.za under documents – legislations - regulations.
Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NDA released a guideline document for working with Genetically Modified Organisms in May 2004.• GMO products intended sale as food/feed are analyzed for food safety on a case-by-case basis.• The prospective importer must submit a comprehensive summary of all results, preferably in a table format, with a complete package of the data for food safety assessment.• For further information on GMOs and legislation, visit the following websites: Regulatory authorities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Department of Health: http://www.doh.gov.za/department/dir_foodcontr.html- Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: http://www.daff.gov.za/- The South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement: www.pub.ac.za• This offices produces a Biotechnology report for South Africa SF7028

Reference: USDA FAS GAIN Report

Ministry of Health – Directorate of Food Control (http://www.doh.gov.za/department/dir_foodcontr.html)

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.**