



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture**

# Exporting plants and plant products: A step-by-step guide for Australian exporters

Biosecurity

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# Exporting plants and plant products: A step-by-step guide for Australian exporters

## About this guide

The Plant Export Operations Branch, within the Department of Agriculture, has prepared these step-by-step instructions to help you ensure your plants and plant products meet export requirements. This guide also tells you how to reduce the costs of exporting.

## Your responsibilities as an exporter

As an exporter you must:

- meet exporter requirements outlined in the *Export Control Act 1982* and other subordinate legislation
- meet the importing country's requirements
- provide export compliant goods for inspection.

Before export documents are issued, you must ensure that the:

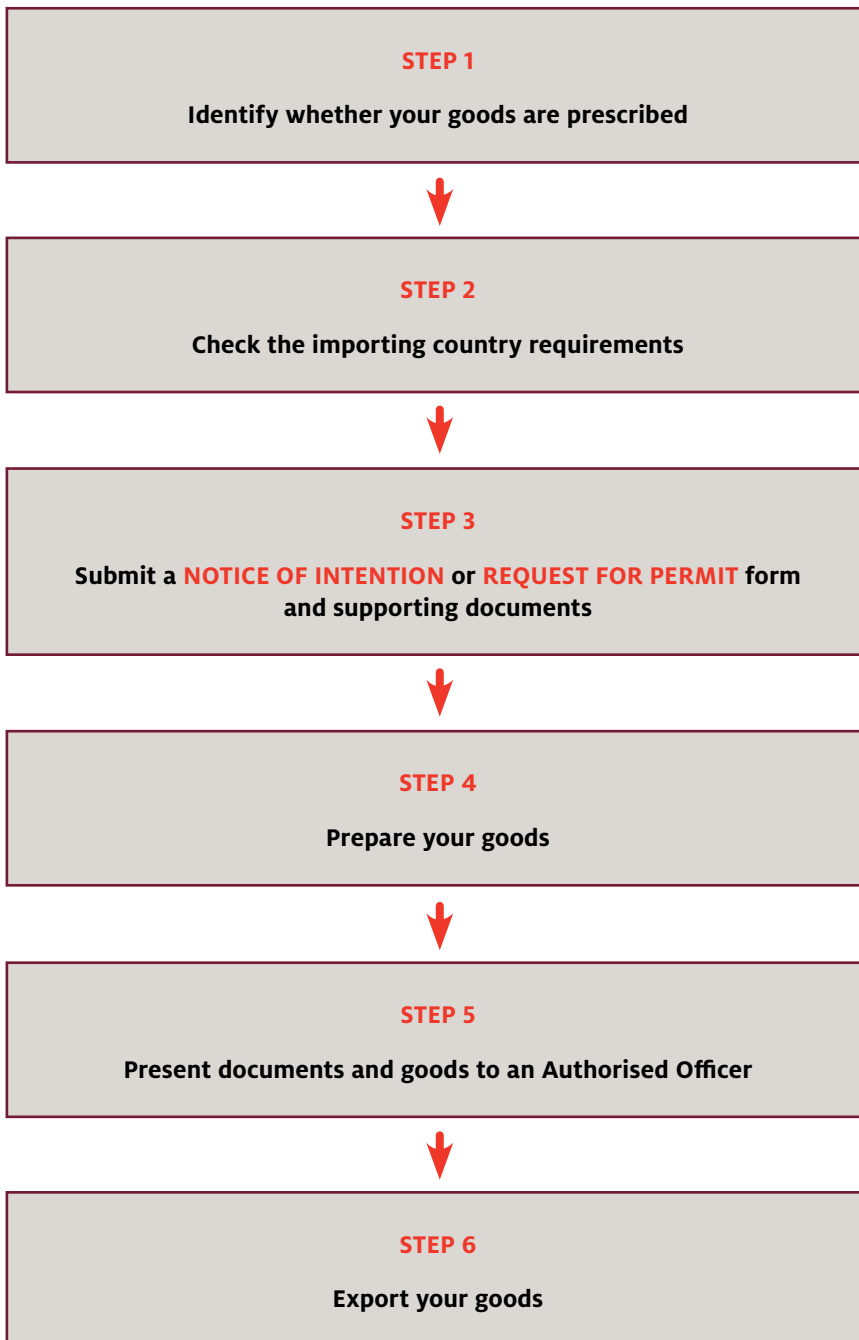
- establishment where the commodity is prepared and inspected is registered by the department and maintained in a hygienic manner
- transport unit used for export, such as container, is approved
- product is inspected to ensure it is export compliant.

Once these conditions are met, the department will issue an export permit or other required documentation.

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Step-by-step guidelines for exporting plants and plant products

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## Step 1 Identify whether your goods are prescribed

### Prescribed goods

Australia's *Export Control Act 1982* defines goods that require inspection and certification by Authorised Officers as prescribed goods. These include:

- some grains
- fresh fruit
- fresh vegetables
- hay and straw
- any other plants and plant products where a phytosanitary certificate or other official certificate is required by an importing country.

### Non-prescribed goods

If your goods are not on the prescribed list and do not require export certification, the Department of Agriculture does not need to inspect your goods. Ask the importing country's National Plant Protection Organisation or your importer whether your non-prescribed goods require official certificates.

## Step 2 Check the importing country requirements

It is your responsibility as an exporter to check the importing country's requirements before you export. Ask the importing country's National Plant Protection Organisation or your importer whether your commodity is permitted and whether any special conditions must be met. We may be able to help if you are having difficulty.

You can [search the Department of Agriculture Plants database](#) for information on importing country requirements for plants and plant products.

Import conditions vary depending on the country, commodity and the end use of a product. For example, seeds intended for sowing may have different import conditions and risks than seeds intended for consumption. Your goods will be inspected based on the importing country conditions and Australian export legislation. See Step 5 for [information on inspections](#).

If your exports do not meet the importing country's requirements, they may not be allowed into the country. As a result your goods may be destroyed or you may have to pay for their return to Australia. Breaches of this kind may damage your business relationships and affect future export opportunities.

## Step 3 Submit a Notice of Intention or Request for Permit form and supporting documents

### Notice of Intention to Export Prescribed Goods or Request for Permit

Before you can export prescribed goods from Australia, you must submit a [Notice of Intention to Export Prescribed Goods](#) or its electronic equivalent, a Request for Permit. You can complete a [Request for Permit](#) through the Export Documentation System EXDOC. See Step 5 for [information on inspection and approval](#).

Under the *Export Control Act 1982*, all prescribed goods shipments over 10 kilograms require an export permit. This is to protect the reputation of Australian plants and plant products by monitoring compliance with Australian legislation and by helping operators comply with international regulatory requirements.

### Supporting documents

You must check whether your goods require supporting documents in order to meet the requirements of the importing country. These requirements may include treatment of the commodity, pest-free area status, or inspection for pests and/or disease during the growing phase.

To show that these requirements have been met you will need documents certified by a person qualified to inspect the goods and make an official declaration. Suitably qualified persons include Department of Primary Industries employees, crop monitors or company employed entomologists. These documents must be presented before the export inspection. See Step 5 for [information on inspection and approval](#).

## Step 4 Prepare your goods

### Registered establishments

If your product is prescribed or the importing country requires a phytosanitary certificate, before export the goods must be prepared and inspected in a registered establishment in accordance with the [Export Control \(Plants and Plant Products\) Order 2011](#). If your premises are not registered, you can use a registered establishment or apply to have your premises registered. Ask your peak industry body to help you find a registered establishment.

To be registered your premises must be constructed, equipped and operate in an effective and hygienic manner. To register, first [submit an Export Registration form](#) to your local Department of Agriculture office. Once the application is approved and your establishment has passed inspection, your premises will be registered and you will receive a certificate of registration. Registration timelines are outlined in the [Plant Export Operations service charter](#).

## Pre-packaging goods

Goods may be pre-packed before inspection if the packaging can be removed in a way that allows an Authorised Officer to inspect the goods using a method approved under the [Export Control \(Plants and Plant Products\) Order 2011](#). Alternatively, the goods may be packed after inspection. See Step 6 for [information on packaging](#).

## Step 5 Present documents and goods to an Authorised Officer

### Inspection of goods

Before export, your prescribed goods must be inspected and certified by an Authorised Officer at a registered establishment. It is your responsibility as the exporter to make sure the goods you present for inspection are export compliant. Live insects in inspected samples will not be tolerated and infested goods will not be permitted to leave Australia unless specific importing country tolerance levels have not been exceeded.

To arrange an inspection by Department of Agriculture Authorised Officers, [submit a Request for Plant Exports Inspection Appointment](#) to Plant Export Operations. Inspections by other Authorised Officers, such as third party providers, should be organised with the Authorised Officer. Present your documents to the Authorised Officer before inspection.

### Export permits

To receive an export permit, first provide the Department of Agriculture with a completed [Notice of Intention to Export Prescribed Goods](#) or a [Request for Permit](#) and supporting documents (see [Step 3](#)). Once the Authorised Officer has inspected your goods and is satisfied that they meet the requirements of Australian export legislation and the importing country, the officer will sign and stamp the export permit at the bottom of the Notice of Intention or authorise the Request for Permit and send an inspection record to the Department of Agriculture.

If you are using an industry Authorised Officer, you must request authorisation of your export permit (see [Step 6](#)). If you are using a Department of Agriculture Authorised Officer, they will either issue the permit manually on a Notice of Intention to Export Prescribed Goods form or electronically through the Export Documentation System EXDOC.

Your goods are export compliant and your export permit is valid for 28 days from the date the export permit is issued. It will be revoked if:

- the goods are not exported within the 28 days
- the goods do not comply with legislative Orders
- information in (or relating to) the export permit is incorrect, incomplete or has no sound basis.

If your export permit is revoked, you must surrender it to an Authorised Officer before close of business on the day after the permit is revoked.

## Phytosanitary certificates

To confirm whether the importing country requires a phytosanitary certificate, [search the Plants database](#) or contact the importing country's National Plant Protection Organisation.

Some importing countries require you to include proof of the pest-free status of the produce or other information about the product, such as treatment. You may have to supply additional documents to demonstrate this. Some countries will only accept an electronic phytosanitary certificate.

If you require a certificate, ask your Authorised Officer to provide one when you present your goods for inspection. The [Export Control \(Plants and Plant Products\) Order 2011](#) outlines requirements for issuing phytosanitary certificates.

The [Phytosanitary Certificate](#) guarantees that Australian plants or plant products:

- have been inspected and tested using appropriate procedures
- are considered to be free from quarantine pests and practically free from other injurious pests
- conform with current phytosanitary regulations of the importing country.

The [Phytosanitary Certificate for Re-export](#) is issued for products that have been formally cleared as imports into Australia and guarantees that the:

- goods are accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate issued by the country of origin
- goods comply with the requirements of a foreign country authority
- identity of the goods can be established
- consignment has not been exposed to infestation while in Australia.

If imported goods in original packaging are exported with Australian prescribed goods, they may be certified on an Australian phytosanitary certificate issued for the consignment provided that:

- additional declarations required by the importing country authority can be satisfied by product inspection or treatment
- the certificate indicates the country of origin for the imported product.

Authorised Officers cannot provide certification where an importing country requires endorsements of growing conditions or treatments in the original exporting country.

## Other certificates and forms

Other certificates that may be required by an importing country include:

- [Certificate as to Condition](#)
- [Declaration and Certificate as to Condition](#)
- [Radioactivity Statement](#)
- [Ship's Holds Inspection Certificate](#)

[Lodge forms electronically through the Export Documentation System EXDOC](#)

or submit a hard copy by email, post or in person to your local Department of Agriculture office.



## Step 6 Export your goods

### Packing goods

Goods may be packed into packaging, containers or vessels under conditions outlined in the [Export Control \(Plants and Plant Products\) Order 2011](#). Goods should only be packed after they have been inspected and passed as export compliant.

An Authorised Officer must inspect packaging to confirm it is sufficient to protect the goods. Packaging must be unused or suitably cleaned.

If you are packing bulk goods in a container, the container must be inspected by an Authorised Officer.

If you are loading bulk goods in a vessel, the vessel holds must be inspected by an Authorised Officer and a marine surveyor before loading.

See Step 4 for [information on pre-packaging](#).

### Exporting goods

Once you are ready to export your goods, [contact Plant Export Operations](#) to have your certificates authorised.

## Reduce the costs of exporting

To save time and reduce the costs of exporting plants and plant products from Australia [lodge export documents electronically through the Export Documentation System EXDOC](#).

Eliminate inspection fee-for-service costs by training staff to become Authorised Officers.

Reduce fee-for-service time by:

- correctly completing documents
- only presenting export compliant goods for inspection
- ensuring goods meet importing country requirements.

See [Plant exports fees and charges](#) to learn more about reducing your costs.

## About Plant Export Operations

As the head of the National Plant Protection Organisation of Australia we certify documents presented by Australian exporters to ensure compliance with:

- the *Export Control Act 1982* and subordinate legislation
- importing country requirements
- Australia's obligations under the International Plant Protection Convention.

Plant Export Operations provides independent fee-for-service export inspection and certification services to exporters. We work with products such as grains, fresh fruit and vegetables, hay and straw, timber, logs, woodchips, bark, dried fruit, seeds, cut flowers and foliage (fresh and dried), nursery stock, processed plant products and miscellaneous plant material.

## Useful links

### Forms and certificates

Export Documentation System (EXDOC) website

[daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/exdoc](http://daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/exdoc)

Plants and plant products export certificates, declarations and forms

[daff.gov.au/forms/biosecurityforms/export/plants-plant-products](http://daff.gov.au/forms/biosecurityforms/export/plants-plant-products)

### General

Authorised Officer applications and training

[daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/plants-plant-products/ao](http://daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/plants-plant-products/ao)

Department of Agriculture export fees and charges

[daff.gov.au/fees/biosecurityfees-charges/export](http://daff.gov.au/fees/biosecurityfees-charges/export)

Department of Agriculture Plant Export Operations subscriber database

[daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/plants-plant-products/ian/stakeholder-registration-form](http://daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/plants-plant-products/ian/stakeholder-registration-form)

### Legislation and guidelines

AusIndustry [ausindustry.gov.au](http://ausindustry.gov.au)

Austrade [austrade.gov.au](http://austrade.gov.au)

Australian Customs and Border Protection Service [customs.gov.au/site/page4222.asp](http://customs.gov.au/site/page4222.asp)

*Export Control Act 1982* [comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2004A02606](http://comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2004A02606)

Export Control (Fees) Orders 2001 [comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2001B00473](http://comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2001B00473)

Export Control (Plants and Plant Products) Order 2011

[comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2011L02005](http://comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2011L02005)

Export Control (Prescribed Goods—General) Order 2005

[comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2005L00144](http://comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2005L00144)

Exporting plants and plant products from Australia

[daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/plants-plant-products](http://daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/plants-plant-products)

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) [foodstandards.gov.au](http://foodstandards.gov.au)

## Contact us

Plant Export Operations

Department of Agriculture

Postal Address GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601

Phone +61 2 6272 3933 or Freecall from Australia 1800 020 504

Email details [daff.gov.au/biosecurity/about/contact/plants-plant-products](http://daff.gov.au/biosecurity/about/contact/plants-plant-products)

Web [daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/plants-plant-products](http://daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/plants-plant-products)



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**Biosecurity Plant Division**  
**Department of Agriculture**

Postal address GPO Box 858 Canberra ACT 2601

Phone +61 2 6272 3933

Facsimile +61 2 6272 3372

Email [daff.gov.au/biosecurity/about/contact/plants-plant-products](https://daff.gov.au/biosecurity/about/contact/plants-plant-products)



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[daff.gov.au/plantexports](https://daff.gov.au/plantexports)