

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

As an exporter, you are the person or company responsible for the goods being exported.

DAWE have developed this step-by-step guide, to help you comply with [Australian export laws](#) and meet [importing country requirements](#).

This guide is an overview only. Instructions for specific parts of the process, such as the transport of products, inspection of specific products, treatment of products, storage and documentation is available on the [Plant Export Operations Manual \(PEOM\)](#).

[Fees and charges](#) apply to some steps.

STEP 1.- Check what types of goods you are exporting

Under [Australian export laws](#), plants and plant products are defined as:

- prescribed goods (controlled by export laws)
- non-prescribed goods (not controlled by export laws).

You need to understand how your product is defined by law, as export requirements differ between products.

Prescribed goods

The following products are prescribed (listed) and controlled under Australian plant export law:

- some grain and legumes (including wheat barley, canola, chickpeas, dried field peas, faba beans, lentils, lupins, mung beans, oats, sorghum, soybeans, whole vetch).
- all fresh fruit
- all fresh vegetables (including mushrooms and sprouts)
- all hay and straw
- any other plants and plant products where an importing country requires a phytosanitary (plant health) certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export (this may include nuts, fodder, timber products, nursery stock, tissue cultures, cotton; and other grains, seeds and legumes).

If you plan to export prescribed goods, you **must**:

- [register with us](#) as an exporter
- use an [export registered establishment](#) to prepare your product for export.
- use a [Plant Export Authorised Officer \(AO\)](#) to inspect your product prior to export.

Find out more information about [prescribed goods](#).

Non-prescribed goods

All other plants and processed plant products that are not listed under [Australian plant export law](#), or do not need a phytosanitary certificate, are considered non-prescribed goods and do not need an export permit.

Where a country has no requirement for a government issued certificate at the point of import, the department will not be involved.

[Step 1](#) will help you to further determine if your goods are prescribed or non-prescribed.

Find out more about [non-prescribed goods](#)

Other considerations when exporting plants and plant products

Organic products

If your products are defined and/or labelled as organic, bio-dynamic, ecological or by any other word of similar indication, they will need to meet additional requirements under [Australian export laws](#).

Find out more about [exporting organic and bio-dynamic products](#).

Wood and wood fibre products

Some of the countries we export wood and wood fibre products to have laws to help stop the trade of illegally logged timber.

[Find out more about the requirements to export wood and wood fibre products.](#)

Narcotic products

Plants and plant products that are narcotic goods under the *Customs Act 1901*, such as plants or plant products of *Cannabis* spp., are non-prescribed goods for the purpose of the Export Control (Plants and Plant Products) Rules 2021. Exporters can apply for certification of plants and plant products that are categorised as narcotic goods.

2. Check Importing Company requirements

Import conditions vary depending on the country, product and the end use of a product.

[Importing country requirements](#) may include (but are not limited to) what [certificates and supporting documents](#) are required, pest-free area status, how/where products are grown, how they are treated, and where they are packed.

The [Manual of Importing Country Requirements \(Micor\) Plants](#) is the department's database that publishes known importing country requirements for plants and plant products.

It is your responsibility as the exporter (or your agent) to verify the information in Micor with the importing country's [National Plant Protection Office \(NPPO\)](#) before relying on it. This includes when there are no importing country requirements listed in the database.

You should obtain official notification in writing from the importing country's NPPO (import permit or instrument in writing). Any notification received that differs to the information in Micor should be emailed to the [Micor Plants team](#) for assessment/updating of the database. This **must** be done **before** you export.

Important: If your product is exported and it does not meet the importing country's requirements, it could be rejected by the importing country. As a result, your products 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.

If you have determined through [Step 1](#) and [Step 2](#) that your products are not prescribed under Australian law and the importing country does not require a phytosanitary certificate, then you are exporting non-prescribed goods. You do not need to continue through this guide, instead, [find out how to export non-prescribed goods](#).

STEP 3- The Volume of your shipment

The volume of your shipment may also determine if your prescribed goods need a phytosanitary inspection and export permit. Shipments of prescribed goods that are less than or equal to 10 litres (liquid products) / 10 kilograms (all other products), do not need an export permit. However, these goods **will** need an inspection if a phytosanitary certificate is required by the importing country.

STEP 4- Register with DAWE

You **must** register with us if you are involved in the export of prescribed goods.

As an exporter, there are a number of steps in the process that you can choose to either do yourself or use department or industry services. For example, you may choose to:

- submit documentation yourself or use an agent
- become a [registered establishment](#) to pack and prepare your own products or use a third-party industry registered establishment
- become (or request an employee to become) a [Plant Export Authorised Officer \(AO\)](#) to inspect your products, or use a departmental/self-employed industry AO.

The level of involvement you choose to have in the process will likely depend on the nature of your business.

[Fees, charges](#) and training requirements may apply to the roles.

Exporters

You **must** [register with us](#) as an exporter if you are involved in the export of prescribed goods.

When you register, your details will be added to the department's electronic export documentation system (EXDOC). This will enable electronic documentation (such as export permits and phytosanitary certificates) to be generated with your exporter details.

[Find out about EXDOC for plant and plant product exports.](#)

Registered establishments

You **must** use a registered establishment to prepare and store your prescribed goods for export. Export inspections must also be conducted by a Plant Export Authorised Officer at a registered establishment.

If your establishment is not registered, you can either:

- use a third-party industry registered establishment, or
- apply to have your own establishment registered.

Information about booking a registered establishment is available at [Step 6](#).

[Find out about registered establishments, including registration.](#)

Accredited Properties (horticulture only)

Some horticulture products **may be** subject to additional requirements if there is an agreement or understanding in place between that country and Australia for a specific product. These are referred to as protocol markets.

Where there is a specific protocol agreement in place, the property will need to be accredited by the department.

A workplan may also be developed by the department to assist staff and industry with the interpretation of the protocol requirements.

All protocols and workplans are accessible through the Micor database under the [documents section](#). To access this content, users must first [register with Plant Exports](#) to obtain log in details.

Talk to your importer for any further details.

Find out about accredited properties.

Authorised Officers

Prescribed goods **must** be inspected by a plant export AO appointed by the department (either a departmental AO or third-party AO). AOs are responsible for inspecting your products to ensure they meets the [importing country requirements](#), comply with [Australian export laws](#) and comply with all other requirements outlined on the [Plant Export Operations Manual](#).

If you do not have access to an AO within your business, you can either:

- use a departmental AO
- use an third-party AO, or
- apply for you or your staff to be trained and appointed as an AO.

Information about booking a departmental AO is available at [Step 6](#).

[Find out about AOs, including applying to become an industry AO.](#)

Register for access to the Plant Export Management System (all parties listed above)

PEMS is an IT system that is used by the department to capture and store information relating to the export of plants and plant products from Australia, including plant export AO inspection results for products and transport units.

PEMS allows:

- **AOs** to enter and submit inspection results, and any supporting documentation, to the department via the system.
- **exporters and EDI users** to view their Request For Permits (RFPs) in PEMS and upload supporting documentation directly into the system.

- **export registered establishments** to view and download inspection records from all inspections conducted at their establishment.

[Find out about PEMS, including registration.](#)

STEP 5 – Request export documentation

Before you can export your products, you **must** notify us of your intention to export by submitting a [Request for Permit](#) (RFP) through EXDOC.

[Fees and charges are payable.](#)

[Find out about EXDOC for plant and plant product exports.](#)

STEP 6 – Prepare your Product for Export

It is your responsibility as the exporter to make sure that the products you present for inspection:

- meet the [importing country requirements](#)
- comply with [Australian export laws](#)
- comply with all other requirements outlined on the [Plant Export Operations Manual](#).

Treat your products (if required)

You may need to treat your products before inspection. Treatments include a range of processes targeted at the control or eradication of pests.

Always check [Micor Plants](#) for specific country requirements. Talk to your importer for any further details.

Information is available in the [Treatments Section](#) of the [Plant Export Operations Manual](#).

Pack your products

You may pre-pack your products before inspection if the packaging can be removed in a way that allows an AO to inspect the products using a method approved under Australian plant export laws. Alternatively, you may pack your products after inspection.

Move your products (if required - horticulture only)

If you need to move any horticulture products after they have been prepared for inspection, either within the establishment or from one registered establishment to another, you **must** maintain the phytosanitary security of the product during transit.

Information on maintaining phytosanitary security of horticulture products is on the [Plant Export Operations Manual](#).

Gather supporting documents

You **must** ensure that you have any [required supporting documents](#) ready, prior to inspection and that the [supporting documents are valid](#). Check [Micor Plants](#) for specific country requirements. Talk to your importer for any further details.

These are documents provided by you as evidence that your product is compliant with Australian export laws and importing country requirements. For example, grower declarations, area freedom statements and treatment certificates.

Your name **must** be on all export documents and you **must** make all the relevant declarations that your products are fit for export.

These documents can be provided to the AO at the time of inspection in [Step 7](#).

Book a registered establishment

If you are preparing your products for export at a third-party industry registered establishment (see [Step 4](#)), ask your [peak industry body](#) to help you find an appropriate establishment.

Book an inspection

If you are not using an AO within your own business, you can either:

- arrange an inspection by a departmental AO, by [submitting a Request for Plant Exports Inspection Appointment](#), or
- arrange an inspection with a third-party AO, by contacting them directly— see the [Public register of Australian plant export AOs](#).

Note: The [public register of Australian plant export AOs](#) is not a comprehensive list and many of the AOs on this list are employed by registered establishments and may not be available to conduct your inspection.

Information about what will occur during an inspection is available in the [Product Inspection](#) and [Transport Unit](#) sections of the [Plant Export Operations Manual](#).

STEP 7 – Present your Products for Inspection

Inspection

Your product **must** be inspected by a [Plant Export AO](#) appointed by the department (either a departmental AO or third-party AO).

The AO will inspect your product and assess your documentation to confirm that it:

- meets the [importing country requirements](#)
- complies with [Australian export laws](#)
- complies with all other requirements outlined on the [Plant Export Operations Manual](#).

During the inspection, the AO will also check the products' packaging and transport unit to ensure that they meet the appropriate standards and that there is no contamination.

STEP 8 – Request Approval to export your Product

Approval to export

Once the AO has inspected your products and documents, and is satisfied that they meet our requirements, you (or your agent) will then need to:

- request RFP authorisation from the department
- submit any required post-inspection supporting documentation to us.

We will then authorise your RFP and issue your export permit and phytosanitary certificate (if required) electronically through [EXDOC](#).

Find out more about [requesting export documents](#).

Note: Some departmental AOs will be able to authorise your RFP on the spot.

Export Permit

Your export permit is typically valid for 28 days from the date the goods passed the AO's inspection (export validity period). Where no inspection was required, the export permit is valid for 28 days from the date it is issued. An export permit will expire if products are not exported within the export validity period.

An export permit can be revoked for a range of reasons. This can include if:

- the products do not comply with [Australian export laws](#)
- information in (or relating to) the export permit is incorrect, incomplete or has no sound basis.

Export permits are not required for non-prescribed goods.

Phytosanitary certificate and other government certificates

A [phytosanitary certificate](#) indicates that your products were inspected and are free from pests and signs of disease. They will only be issued if requested by the importing country.

We will issue a phytosanitary certificate when your products pass their inspection, all supporting documentation has been validated.

From time to time importing countries may require other government certificates.

Find out more about other kinds of [government certificates](#).

STEP 9 – Export your Product

If you have completed Steps 1 to 8 and your products meet all requirements, you are now ready to export.

[Find more resources for plants and plant products exporters](#).