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### **Report Highlights:**

New Zealand has strict biosecurity rules for plant and animal products but also imports large volumes of food and beverage products. This report outlines regulatory requirements and standards for food and agricultural products exported to New Zealand. Since last year, the Government of New Zealand has amended the deadline for compliance of home-compostable food labels on all produce sold in New Zealand to July 1, 2028. In 2024, New Zealand imported \$570 million of agricultural products from the United States.

### **DISCLAIMER:**

This report has been prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs, USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Wellington, New Zealand for United States exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. Whilst every possible care has been taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since their preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was unavailable. It is highly recommended that United States exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their New Zealand partners, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped.

**FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO NEW ZEALAND'S  
RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE  
TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.**

Please contact this office if you have any comments, corrections or suggestions about the material contained in this report.

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## Executive Summary

New Zealand has strict biosecurity laws that are designed to protect the nation's agricultural industry, maintain public health and safety, and ensure the integrity of imported goods. The Government of New Zealand has extended the deadline for fresh produce labels to be home-compostable to July 1, 2028.

### Key Regulatory Frameworks:

1. **Biosecurity Act 1993:** This foundational legislation sets out the primary requirements for preventing the introduction of harmful pests, diseases, and contaminants into New Zealand. It mandates that all food and agricultural products must meet stringent biosecurity requirements, which are assessed at the point of entry.
2. **Food Act 2014:** This act ensures that all food imported into New Zealand is safe for consumption and meets the required hygiene and safety standards. It outlines the responsibilities of food importers, including registration and compliance with food safety protocols.
3. **Food Standards Australia New Zealand:** This governing body develops standards that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colorings, additives, vitamins and minerals, composition of some foods and foods developed by new technologies.

### Key Standards and Requirements:

1. **Import Health Standards (IHS):** These standards specify the conditions under which particular food and agricultural goods can be imported into New Zealand. The IHS covers a wide range of products, including fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy, and processed foods, and defines the quarantine treatments, certification, and inspection processes required for entry.
2. **Health Certification:** All imported food and agricultural products must be accompanied by a valid health certificate issued by the competent authority in the exporting country, confirming compliance with New Zealand's food safety and biosecurity regulations.
3. **Inspection and Risk Management:** Upon arrival, imported goods undergo rigorous inspection and testing to ensure compliance with the specified standards. This may include physical inspection, laboratory analysis, and risk assessments to identify potential biosecurity threats or contaminants.

### Compliance and Enforcement:

Failure to comply with New Zealand's import regulations can result in significant penalties, including refusal of entry, destruction of goods, or fines. The Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) and other relevant agencies actively monitor and enforce compliance through inspections, audits, and ongoing risk management practices.

## Section I. Food Laws

New Zealand has strict biosecurity laws with two organizations that play key roles in regulating the food supply. The Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) is the government organization that regulates all food (processed and unprocessed) produced and imported into New Zealand. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is responsible for setting food standards that govern the contents, composition, contaminants, microbiological limits, and labelling of foods sold in both New Zealand and Australia.

### Ministry for Primary Industries

MPI has overall responsibility for food safety in New Zealand. Its primary responsibilities are to protect public health and to facilitate access to markets for food and food-related exports. Market access is a significant responsibility as New Zealand exports around 80 percent of the food it produces, accounting for over half of the country's export earnings. There are four acts that regulate the safety of food that is produced in New Zealand:

1. [Food Act 2014](#)
2. [Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997](#)
3. [Animal Products Act 1999](#)
4. [Wine Act 2003](#)

Unprocessed products cannot be imported into the country, unless an Import Health Standard (IHS) has been issued by MPI. Information on IHSs for specific products can be found [here](#). MPI also protects the borders by instilling biosecurity protection practices to prevent unwanted pests and diseases from entering the country.

### Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)

Australia and New Zealand signed an agreement in 1995 that resulted in the formation of a joint food regulation agency, Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) and the development of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ([the Code](#)). Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) develops standards that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colorings, additives, vitamins and minerals, composition of some foods and foods developed by new technologies.

Any area outside the scope of the joint food standards system and are covered under one of the four Acts listed above. These include:

- Maximum residue limits of agricultural compounds in food.
- Food hygiene and food safety provisions (including high risk imported foods).
- Export requirements relating to third-country trade; and
- Supplemented food.

Other important legislation and international agreements with New Zealand include:

- The Joint Food Standards Treaty, which committed the Australian and New Zealand Governments to a joint food standard system.
- The Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement - This allows products made or imported into New Zealand that meet New Zealand's legal requirements, to also be sold in Australia and vice versa (some products are currently exempted from the agreement, including each country's high-risk food list).
- The Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement and World Trade Organization Agreements; and;
- Codex Alimentarius - the international body for setting food standards.
- The World Wine Trade Group's Agreement on Mutual Acceptance of Oenological Practices (MAA). New Zealand and eight other member countries, including the United States, agree to accept the winemaking practices of all parties.

New Zealand has been a member of Codex Alimentarius for 60 years and is a member of the World Organization for Animal Health (formerly known as OIE). In 2023, New Zealand launched its [strategic objectives](#) in Codex 2022-2026.

## Section II. Labelling Requirements

New Zealand and Australia share food and labelling requirements and regulations. Products sold in both countries must be labelled in accordance with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ([FSANZ Code](#)). Most food for sale in New Zealand must be clearly labeled in English (other languages can be used in addition to English if they do not contradict the English information). Specific health and safety information about some food products must be given to consumers even when a complete label is not required (for example the presence of caffeine or allergenic substances). Additional labeling statements may be required under the individual food product standards specified in the FSANZ Code. See [Standard 1.2.2](#) and Standard [1.2.10](#) of the FSANZ Code for specific details.

### Compulsory Label Information:

The most helpful guide to labeling food can be found on [MPI's website](#). This guide is not legal advice, merely a checklist. The guide to compulsory food labeling is summarized below:

- **Accurate name:** Food products must be accurately named and/or described on the label. Some food (processed meat and honey) must use the exact names in the Food Standards Code.
- **Lot identification:** This is information that clearly indicates the premises where the food was packaged and/or prepared and the batch from which it came, to assist should there be a food recall. A date mark and supplier's address may be enough. This information also enables the product to be traceable should it be recalled.

- **Name and address:** The supplier's name and business (street) address in New Zealand or Australia (Note: “Supplier” includes packer, manufacturer, vendor, or importer of the food).
- **Date mark:** Most packaged foods with a shelf life of less than two years must have one of the following date marks:
  - **“Use By”** dates, which relate to food safety. Foods with a ‘Use By’ date should not be consumed after the date indicated for health and safety reasons. Food cannot be sold beyond their ‘Use By’ date.
  - **“Best Before”** dates, which relate to quality. Foods should be consumed by their ‘Best Before’ date to ensure quality. Foods can be sold beyond their ‘Best Before’ date provided it is still fit for consumption.
  - **“Baked On” and “Baked For”** dates can be used for breads with a shelf life of less than 7 days.
- **Alcohol labelling:** Alcoholic drinks need the number of standard drinks, alcohol by volume, %Alc/Vol (when alcohol content is more than 1.15%Alc/Vol) and a [pregnancy warning label](#).
- **Net Contents:** The net contents of food in appropriate units of measure (e.g. kg, g, ml, l) in text size 2 mm or larger, and be near the name of the food.
- **Irradiated and genetically modified food:** If any part of the food is genetically modified, there are no specific labelling requirements, only that if a food is irradiated, this must be stated.
- **Statements, if applicable:**
  - **Allergen declaration:** Some ingredients cause allergic reactions for some people. These allergens must be listed.
  - **Warning statement:** Only applies to some food and must be 3mm or bigger.
- **Mandatory warning statements, advisory statements, and declarations for certain ingredients/substances:** Some products must have special advisory and warning statements about the food or ingredients/substances in a food (for example, food containing unpasteurized egg must advise/state that the product contains unpasteurized egg and foods containing royal jelly must include a specific *warning* statement). This information must be available even if a complete label is not required. Warning statements must appear on labels on 3mm type (1.5mm for small packages).
- **Ingredient list:** All ingredients must be listed by their common name, a description or, where specified in the Food Standards Code, the generic names in descending order of incoming weight. Ingredients are any substances used in the preparation, manufacture and handling of a food, and include food additives, compound ingredients (any ingredient that is itself made up of two or more ingredients) and added water.



- **Food additives:** The class name of the additive (where specified in the Food Standards Code) followed by the additive's specific name or code number must be declared. Where the additive is a vitamin or mineral the class name 'vitamin' or 'mineral' may be used.
- **Directions for use and storage:** Storage instructions must be provided where necessary to ensure that the food will keep for the period indicated by the date mark and/or where the consumer should be aware of any storage and use requirements necessary to ensure food safety.
- **Percentage labeling:** The percentage of the characterizing ingredients, and/or components of most food products must be indicated on the label.
- **Health Star Rating:** This is an optional label to put on the front of a pack to help consumers make informed decisions. If used, the Health Star Rating must be used correctly, including calculating the number of stars needed specific to the food.

Example of nutritional information, ingredients, and percentage labelling:

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Servings per package: 10 Serving size: 35 g		
	Average Quantity Per Serving	Average Quantity per 100 g
Energy	566 kJ	1620 kJ
Protein	2.6 g	7.4 g
Fat, total	0.5 g	1.4 g
- saturated	0.2 g	0.5 g
Carbohydrate	29.7 g	88.8 g
- sugars	2.3 g	6.6 g
Sodium	179 mg	510 mg
<b>INGREDIENTS :</b> Rice (94%), sugar, molasses, salt, emulsifier (471) (soy)		
<b>Contains : soy</b>		

## Country of Origin Labelling

Previously voluntary, country of origin labelling in New Zealand is now required for certain foods. These include “single-ingredient, minimally processed fruit, vegetables, meat, seafood, and cured pork.” This also applies to frozen food. Information about these new requirements is available on the [Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment website](#).

## Plain English Allergen Labelling

Certain foods and ingredients can cause severe allergies and other adverse reactions in some people. The FSANZ Code (the Code) requires these to be declared on labels when they are present in food.

These requirements include that allergen information is to be declared:

- in a specific format and location on food labels, and
- using simple, plain English terms in bold font

### **Pregnancy Warning Labels on Alcohol**

Pregnancy warning labels on all packaged alcohol products are now mandatory. An example of the new label is below.



### **Nutrition Information and Claims on Alcohol Packaging**

A Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) is not required on alcoholic beverages unless a claim requiring nutrition information is made. Alcoholic beverages may voluntarily include a NIP. The inclusion of a NIP does not constitute a nutrition content claim.

All alcoholic beverages that contain more than 1.15% ABV:

- can only make nutrition content claims about energy content, carbohydrate content (for example, 'low carbohydrate') or gluten content
- are not permitted to make health claims
- must not be represented as a low alcohol beverage

### **Compostable Labels**

From July 2023, the sale of non-compostable plastic produce labels will be phased out. Current regulations require:

- labels on produce sold in New Zealand to be home compostable by 2023, with the adhesive (glue) to be home-compostable by July 1, 2025
- labels on imported produce to be home-compostable by July 1, 2025

In 2024, the Government of New Zealand amended the regulation to extend the 2025 deadline of compliance to July 1, 2028. Parliament will consider these regulatory amendments in early 2025. If approved, labels on all produce sold in New Zealand, including the adhesive, must be certified home-compostable by July 1, 2028.

## **Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations**

### **Food Packaging Materials**

Under the New Zealand Food Act 2014, packaging material must not cause food to be unsafe or tainted. Specific requirements in the Code, which relate to contaminants and contact with food, must also be met ([Standard 1.4.3](#) Articles and Materials in Contact with Food). It is the responsibility of food manufacturers and sellers to ensure that products are safe and that they comply with legislation as well as ensuring products are suitable for their intended use.

Compliance with recognized international food standards such as those of the European Union (EU) or the United States Food and Drug Administration would be reasonable evidence that materials are suitable for food use.

Members of the Australia Food and Grocery Council and the New Zealand Food and Grocery Council are voluntarily phasing out Bisphenol A (BPA), which is a chemical used in the plastics industry in baby bottles and in food containers. As per a FSANZ report, BPA exposure in New Zealand and Australia is well below the internationally established safe levels and poses no significant human health risk. However, FSANZ will continue to liaise with the industry to provide alternative packaging materials, such as stainless steel, glass or BPA-free plastics and be consistent with approaches taken by regulatory agencies in other countries, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

From July 1, 2023, the government's plastic minimization policy was implemented and several changes to plastic packaging policy have been made to meet the new standards. More information is available [here](#).

### **Wood Packaging Materials Used for Shipping Products to New Zealand**

Under the Biosecurity Act (1993) importers must comply with the IHS that outlines phytosanitary requirements for wood packaging material for biosecurity clearance into New Zealand. The IHS for [Wood Packaging Material](#) has been developed under the requirements of the Biosecurity Act (1993) and NZ's obligations under the International Plant Protection Convention (1997).

Imported wood packaging material must be:

- Free of regulated pests.
- Free of extraneous material (e.g., leaves, soil);
- Bark-free in accordance with IHS for wood packaging material, section 4.3.2.
- Treated in accordance with IHS for wood packaging material, section 3.2.
- Certified in accordance with IHS of wood packaging material section 3.3.

Wood packaging that is treated and certified as per "International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) 15 standard" would be compliant with the New Zealand standard.

## **Import Health Standard for Sea Containers**

The IHS for sea containers covers only shipping containers and does not include the contents which can be categorized as either “high or low risk” goods. All containers imported into New Zealand must comply with the requirements outlined in the [IHS for Sea Containers](#).

Containers arriving in New Zealand with:

- High risk goods containing any risk material (i.e., plant or animal products, used vehicles, machinery etc.), should refer to the appropriate [Import Health Standard](#).
- Low risk goods may be released, and the container may be given approval to move to Approved Transitional Facility (ATF), if the requirements meet the import health standard.

All containers imported into New Zealand must be clean and free of pests and biosecurity contamination. Inspections or checks to verify this must be carried out by a legally approved person (e.g., MPI Biosecurity inspectors or an accredited company).

All containers arriving in New Zealand are required to send following information to MPI Biosecurity at least 12 hours prior to container arrival:

- Importer details.
- Exporter details.
- Container number.
- Container type.
- Country of origin.
- Port of loading.
- New Zealand port of discharge.
- New Zealand transitional facility destination.
- Quarantine declaration; and
- Complete and accurate description of the cargo or tariff code, including all packaging.

This information will be assessed by MPI Biosecurity to determine the regulatory interest of a container and subsequent actions to be taken. Containers with incomplete information will be deemed of high regulatory interest.

Every imported container must be delivered to a biosecurity Approved Transitional Facility (ATF) within New Zealand and be searched by an MPI Inspector or a trained Accredited Person (AP). All containers must have a Quarantine Declaration (a document signed by a manager of the packing or exporter facility) that declares that a container: was inspected internally and externally; was found to be free of contaminants; the type of packing materials and wood packaging used; and information pertaining to the container and ship number). Failure to provide a Quarantine Declaration results in extra biosecurity checks and costs.

Only ISPM15 (an international packaging standard) compliant packaging is allowed entry into New Zealand and any non-compliant packaging (i.e., timber) will be required to be treated either overseas to New Zealand standards with approved methods; or inspected and treated in New Zealand (Fumigation with methyl bromide gas) prior to release of the container by the New Zealand Biosecurity Officer. If treated overseas, the original fumigation certificate must be produced prior to release.

Any containers that are deemed to be ‘high risk’, as well as these checks, the shipments must be subject to either:

- Six-sided external inspection on the port area by an inspector within 48 hours of discharge; or
- Fumigated with methyl bromide or heat treated; or
- Be accompanied by an official phytosanitary certificate attesting to the container’s freedom from specific contamination; or
- Inspection under Biosecurity supervision at an Approved Transitional Facility.

To expedite clearance, additional certification of containers such as free from restricted packaging and free of contamination of either the external or internal surfaces of the container or both are options. In certain circumstances, certification may cover multiple arrivals of containers for periods of up to one year.

### **Import Health Standard for Air Freight Containers**

Air freight containers used for the import of food products into New Zealand must meet a minimum standard of cleanliness. All parts of the container, including the internal and external sides must be free of contamination. Every container must also be free of any of the following:

- Animals, insects, or other invertebrates (any life cycle stage), egg casings or rafts, or any organic material of animal origin (including blood, bones, fiber, meat, secretions, excretions).
- Plants or plant products (including fruit, seeds, leaves, twigs, roots, bark, saw dust, or other organic material); or
- Soil or water

More information can be found in the MPI [Import Health Standard](#) on Air Freight Containers from all countries.

## **Section IV. Food Additive Regulations**

FSANZ is responsible for the development and modification of food standards in the [Food Standards Code](#). The section of the code that governs food additives, [Standard 1.3.1](#) has been in force for several years. It was developed based on food additive provisions from the former Australia Food Standards Code and the former New Zealand Food Regulations, 1984. The Code

addresses additives in two ways. Some additives have specific permissions and levels allowed in food; others are permitted at levels determined by GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice). Information regarding permitted use of food additives is listed in [Schedule 8](#), of [Standard 1.3.1](#) of the Code, as well as a list of miscellaneous additives permitted in accordance with GMP in processed foods.

A food additive may be used only where permitted by [Standard 1.3.1](#) and only where it performs a technological function. These functions are listed in [Schedule 5](#) of the standard. The following criteria are guiding principles that FSANZ uses in assessing whether a food additive is listed in Standard 1.3.1 and is therefore permitted for use in foods:

- The food additive poses no unacceptable risk to health when used in amounts up to the specified permitted limits.
- There is a demonstrable need for the substance, and it fulfils a technological function that benefits consumers; and
- It is used in any food only up to the level that achieves the technological function, even if higher levels might pose no threat to health.

Food additives must be used in accordance with Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP). Manufacturers are responsible for justifying the use of additives, and the level of additive used. The Codex Alimentarius Commissions Procedural Manual sets out the following relevant criteria for use in assessing compliance with GMP:

- The quantity of additive added to food shall be limited to the lowest possible level necessary to accomplish its desired effect.
- The quantity of the additive that becomes a component of food because of its use in the manufacture, processing, or packaging of a food and which is not intended to accomplish any physical, or other technical effect in the food itself, is reduced to the extent reasonably possible; and
- The additive is prepared and handled in the same way as a food ingredient.

For the purposes of ingredient labeling, food additives are treated the same as other ingredients in a food. [Schedule 7](#) of the Code lists class names for additives based on their technical function. [Schedule 8](#) of the Code lists all permitted additives by their prescribed name and code number. An additive must be declared in the ingredient list in its correct place by using its appropriate class name (from Schedule 7) followed by the additive's specific name or code number (from Schedule 8). One exception to this rule is that enzymes need only be declared by the class name 'enzyme' and not by specifically declaring the name of the enzyme.

More information can be located:

[New Zealand food additives](#)  
[Maximum permitted levels of additives in food](#)

## **Plant-based Meat Alternatives**

FSANZ uses the term “plant-based meat alternatives” to describe meat substitutes and constituent parts derived from plants. Each alternative product is composition affects how the regulations are applied. The composition requirements of plant-based and meat alternatives are regulated by [Standard 1.3.2](#) (Vitamins and minerals) in the Code and associated [Schedule 17](#). These regulate the voluntary addition of vitamins and minerals to general purpose foods, including variations of meat, yoghurt, dairy desserts, ice cream, cheese and varieties derived from cereals, nuts, and seeds. In the case of analogue foods (for example, soy milk), permissions are derived from the vitamin and mineral content of the primary counterpart food (for example, milk).

## **Maximum Permitted Levels for Food Additives**

The FSANZ Code also sets maximum permitted levels (MPLs) for some additives, like benzoates, sorbates, and sulphones, which are used as preservatives. The MPL is the maximum amount of an additive legally allowed in a food product—or in the product when it is prepared according to packaged food directions. While a MPL is the maximum level that may be used, the actual amount used must be the lowest possible level needed to get the desired effect in a particular food product. [Schedule 15](#) of the Code lists which substances can be added to foods and their corresponding MPLs.

Special attention should be given to additives that are genetically engineered. For more information on these declarations, the [genetically modified food labeling](#) section of the FSANZ website provides further details.

## **Section V. Pesticides and Other Contaminants**

The Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO Act) is the primary legislation governing pesticides and other contaminants. It focuses on protecting people, the environment, and communities from the adverse effects of these substances. The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) is responsible for approving substances and setting rules, while the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) enforces the law. FSANZ sets the standards in New Zealand for the maximum levels of specified metal and non-metal contaminants and natural toxicants in nominated foods. More information can be seen in [Standard 1.4.1](#) of the Code.

The [EPA website](#) lists all contaminants that are phased out, and also informs if a contaminant is covered already by an existing approval.

The upper limit of agricultural and veterinary chemical residue allowed in a food is known as the Maximum Residue Limit (MRL). FSANZ sets MRLs for Australia only and these are specified in the Code. MPI has responsibility for setting and enforcing MRLs in New Zealand. All imported and domestically-produced food sold in New Zealand (except for food imported from

Australia) must comply with the [New Zealand Food Notice on MRLs for Agricultural Compounds](#).

It is also possible to have an MRL [amended or to request an exemption](#).

Under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement (TTMRA), food imported from Australia into New Zealand needs to comply with the FSANZ Code and Food Notice on MRLs for Agricultural Compounds. MPI maintains a database to provide exporters with information on pesticide MRLs established by New Zealand's major trading partners.

Information on approved pesticides and allowed MRLs are listed in the [Import Health Standard](#) for produce.

## **Section VI. Other Requirements, Regulations, and Registration Measures**

To export food into New Zealand, an exporter must either register with MPI or use an agent who is registered. To find an already registered agent, MPI publishes a [Public Register of Food Importers](#). A food importer (individual or company) who is published on the public register must be a New Zealand resident as defined in sections YD1 (for persons) or YD2 (for companies) of the [Income Tax Act 2007](#). More information how to register as a food importer can be found [here](#).

Some foods cannot be exported into New Zealand. For example, endangered plants or animals and some foods are considered too great of a risk to the environment, plants and animals or people.

Some products require pre-shipment testing often from a biosecurity perspective. All information on pre-shipment testing and clearance can be found on MPI's [website](#).

### **Specific Documentation and Certification Requirements**

Refer to the New Zealand Food and Agricultural Imports Regulations Standard (FAIRS) Export Certificate Report for specific import certification requirement for products entering New Zealand.

### **Transitional and Containment Facilities**

All sea containers arriving in New Zealand are sent to a transitional facility and are unpacked. Some higher risk imports—especially plants, animals, and related products, can be quarantined or held in a transitional or containment facility.

Transitional facilities hold, inspect, treat, identify, or destroy and dispose of un-cleared risk goods imported into New Zealand. They operate under a standard that details the minimum requirements for approval and monitoring transitional facilities functions.

Types of goods that need to go to transitional facilities include:



- agricultural chemicals and veterinary medicines
- animals and animals' products
- biologicals
- food products
- plants and plants products
- other organisms
- used machinery or vehicles; and
- wood and wood products

Import Health Standard (IHS) of a specific product details complete import requirements, including transitional and containment facilities can be found [here](#).

MPI has the responsibility to ensure any treatments applied to imported “risk” goods offer the best practicable level of control. MPI approves and oversees treatments and the treatment providers to ensure that only competent organizations and individuals are involved with the delivery of official treatment activities.

### **Post-entry Quarantine Facilities**

For plants and plant products that could have pests and unwanted organisms, New Zealand has post-entry quarantine (PEQ) facilities. Plants are held in PEQ facilities until they are assessed, and a biosecurity clearance is granted.

### **Containment Facilities**

New Zealand also has containment facilities (i.e., laboratories for microorganisms testing) that are approved for holding organisms considered high risk.

### **Prohibited Products**

Some foods pose a higher risk to people's health or the environment, plants, and animals. There are additional rules for these foods and may need permission from MPI before arriving.

This permission is called ‘clearance.’ You will need biosecurity clearance (for plants and animals). You may need food safety clearance (for people's health).

If MPI is not satisfied with clearance, or the food does not meet the requirements, the items may be shipped back out of New Zealand or it may be destroyed. It is advised to check all information on the MPI website for the rules and checks listed in the Import Health Standards and for food that needs food safety clearance (these are called ‘high regulatory interest foods, or ‘increased regulatory interest foods’).

The Import Health Standard relating to certain products can be found [here](#).

## Organic Foods

There are two major organic certifying agencies in New Zealand for the certification of locally produced organic products, Borgo, and Unreality New Zealand. Both agencies are accredited by International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM).

In New Zealand, there is no official standard set for organic food products. Products certified by the National Organics Program (NOP) in the United States can be exported to New Zealand and sold as organic. Further information on importing organic products can be found [here](#). There are no mandatory labeling requirements for organic products imported into New Zealand, although the use of the term ‘organic’ is controlled through the Fair-Trading Act 1986.

There are mandatory labeling requirements for products that are intended to be further processed in New Zealand and re-exported and this applies to both organics and non-organics.

The MPI Technical Rules under Section 12 (Imported Product and/or Ingredient) details the requirements for organic products/ingredients imported into New Zealand further information is [here](#).

In 2023, the New Zealand Parliament passed the [Organic Products & Production Bill](#) which is designed to harmonize and enforce organic standards in New Zealand creating a robust and internationally recognized organic standard. The bill will go into legal effect when the national standard and regulations are developed by MPI, the date for development is still to be determined.

## Section VII. Other Specific Standards/Laws

### Vitamin- Enrichment Requirements

Vitamin-enriched foods are regulated by the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (FSANZ Code). This includes mandatory and voluntary fortification of foods. Voluntary fortifications can be found in the [Policy Guideline for the Fortification of Vitamins and Minerals](#).

The following are listed as mandatory fortification:

- **Folic Acid in Wheat Flour:** All plain, fancy, and sweet breads, rolls, buns, bagels, focaccia, English muffins, and flatbreads made with yeast, as well as flour mixes or flour for domestic bread making, must contain folic acid.
- **Iodized Salt in Bread:** Bread must use iodized salt to help prevent iodine deficiency.
- **Vitamin D in Edible Oil Spreads:** Edible oil spreads, like margarine, are required to have added vitamin D.

### Allergy Foods

In New Zealand, all food allergen labeling requirements are regulated by the FSANZ Code, the [Food Act 2014](#), and New Zealand Food Safety which is a branch in MPI. There are 10 common

food allergens that must be declared if they are intentionally in a food, a processing aid, or an additive:

1. Peanuts
2. Tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, walnuts)
3. Shellfish (crustaceans, molluscs)
4. Fish
5. Milk
6. Egg
7. Wheat
8. Soy
9. Sesame
10. Lupin

Three main statements that need to be included on a food label are:

1. Allergen declaration
2. Warning statement
3. Advisory statement

Review the Food Standards Australia New Zealand [website](#) for specific text formats.

### **Special Use Foods**

Foods for special use or for use as samples will be subject to the same requirements as imported food for sale unless there is enough evidence that the samples will not be consumed.

There is no specific government law governing Halal food, nor Kosher foods in New Zealand. However, businesses can operate under their own Halal standards.

### **Plant Based, Meat and Dairy Alternatives**

All plant-based products, and dairy and meat alternative products are regulated under the same framework as regular foods. All imported products must ensure that food safety and labeling standards are met under the Food Act 2014.

### **Biotechnology**

Biotechnology in New Zealand is heavily regulated under the 1996 Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act (HSNO) and administered by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). Since late-2024, the New Zealand Government introduced a new gene technology legislation which intends to allow for greater use of gene technology while still ensuring strong protections for the health and safety of people and the environment. It will be based on Australia's Gene Technology Act 2000 and modified to a New Zealand context. FSANZ, the

regulatory authority for approving the sale of GE food products in New Zealand, has approved 90 GE food and microbial-derived products to date.

At present, New Zealand does not currently grow any GM crops commercially. However, some processed foods that have been imported may contain ingredients derived from GM crops.

## **Section VIII. Geographical Indicators, Trademarks, Brand Names, and Intellectual Property Rights**

### **Geographical Indicators**

The Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand (IPONZ) manages Geographical Indicators (GI) and sets regulations for goods produced in New Zealand and for goods imported and sold in New Zealand. You can apply to register a GI for local or international wines and spirits only. In 2018, IPONZ accepted and registered the only GI from the United States “Napa Valley” which refers to wine originating from Napa Valley in California.

If an application is made to register a GI for wines or spirits, the application will be examined in accordance with the Geographical Indications Registration Act 2006 (“the GI Act”) and its regulations. More information about registering a GI in New Zealand can be found on the IPONZ [website](#).

### **Trademarks**

Protection is provided to registered trademarks through the Trademarks Act 2002. The registration of trademarks is not essential. Owners of trademarks may rely on common law rights to protect their trademarks. Although the rights of owners of registered trademarks are statutorily defined, registration is often desirable. Unlike other forms of intellectual property, such as patents and designs, trademark registrations can be renewed indefinitely, thereby providing owners with the exclusive right to use their trademarks in perpetuity. Information on the Trademarks Act is available at: [Trademarks Act 2002](#). As a member of the World Trade Organization, New Zealand is a party to the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights 1994 (the TRIPS agreement).

All the obligations relating to trademarks imposed under the TRIPS agreement have been incorporated into the Act. These obligations include those in Article 15(1) of the TRIPS agreement, which states that *“signs, in particular words including names, letters, numerals, figurative elements and combinations of colors as well as combinations of such signs, shall be eligible for registration as trademarks.”*

### **Patents**

The Patents Act of 2013 established the Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand for the purpose of communications to and from the public on matters arising under the Act; the power to

appoint a Māori Advisory Committee; appointment of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of patents; and the regulation-making powers of the Act.

The Act strengthens the criteria to ensure that patents are granted for genuine innovations that are a “manner of manufacture” and are novel, non-obvious and useful. The aim of the Act is to inhibit the grant of overly broad patents. The establishment of the Māori Advisory Committee will advise the Commissioner of Patents to address Māori concerns relating to the granting of patents for inventions derived from indigenous plants and animals or from Māori traditional knowledge. Exclusions provided under the legislation include software, plant varieties, human beings and biological processes for their generation, inventions of methods for diagnosis practiced on human beings and for the treatment of human beings by surgery or therapy.

## **Copyright**

Copyright Act 1994 governs copyright law in New Zealand. These rights allow copyright owners to control certain activities relating to the use and dissemination of copyright works. New Zealand is party to various international agreements, including:

- The Agreement on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (the [TRIPS Agreement](#)) (Annex 1C to the Agreement Establishing the [World Trade Organization](#) (WTO) 1994);
- The [Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works 1928](#) (Rome Act revision); and
- The [Universal Copyright Convention 1952](#)

For a “work” or type of material to qualify for copyright protection, four conditions must generally be satisfied:

- It must fall within one of the categories or subject matter in which copyright can exist.
- It must be sufficiently “original;”
- The author must be a “qualified person;” and
- Certain works must be fixed either in writing or some other material form.

Copyright protection applies only for a limited period (mostly lasting 15-50 years). Once copyright expires, it falls into the public domain and can be freely used.

## **Section IX. Import Procedures**

All imported foods must comply with all relevant aspects of the Food Act 2014 and the Food Standards Code at the point of entry into New Zealand. MPI may perform a random inspection on any food imported from anywhere. High-risk foods tend to be targeted for inspection more often. All foods imported into New Zealand must be cleared by Customs, whether they are imported by air, sea, or mail. New Zealand Customs import entry clearances or Electronic Cargo

Information (ECI) can be lodged electronically via internet and by filling in Customs Online Declarations. More information regarding New Zealand customs can be found [here](#).

The minimum documentation required to be submitted with customs import entries includes; an airway bill or bill of lading, invoice, and any other papers (including packing lists, insurance documents, import permits, phytosanitary documents).

### **New Zealand Food Importing Process**

All food imported into New Zealand must be cleared by New Zealand Customs, MPI Biosecurity officers, and follow the requirements set out in the relevant Import Health Standard. The import process follows these key steps:

- New Zealand importers are required to complete an import entry in the Customs Trade Single Window or via a customs broker; then,
- Once New Zealand Customs and MPI Biosecurity confirm that the food meets customs and biosecurity requirements, most foods are free to enter New Zealand. However, if the food requires food safety clearance, the importer needs to do the following:
  - Send consignment information to the MPI Central Clearing House.
  - Food products are inspected, sampled, and tested by MPI.
  - Food Safety clearance is given either for further sampling or testing and/or released; and
  - Once consignment is released, the importer must ensure the imported food is stored and labeled properly.

To look up the Import Health Standard for specific products [click here](#).

## **Section X. Trade Facilitation**

New Zealand has pre-clearance programs in place for table grapes, apples, and pears with the United States. MPI uses ePhyto hub. In March 2024, the capability to accept e-certification for animal products (AP) was introduced. More information on the AP e-Cert can be found [here](#).

Release times can range from a few hours up to two weeks depending on whether products are sent to a transitional facility or further inspections are required. Information regarding transitional facilities can be found [here](#).

A common delay for goods arriving in New Zealand is getting the wrong certificate issued or leaving off required statements/declarations, it is advised to work closely with the selected importer to ensure all technical requirements are covered prior to shipping.

### **Trading Fees**

[Goods Clearance Fees](#)

[Customs Duty and GST](#)

[Other Charges](#)

[Fines and Penalties](#)

## **Appendix I. Government Regulatory Key Agency Contacts**

### **Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)**

PO Box 2526  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-894-0100  
Fax: (+64)-4-894-0720  
Web: [www.mpi.govt.nz](http://www.mpi.govt.nz)

### **Food Standards Australia New Zealand**

PO Box 10559  
Wellington 6143  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-978-5630  
Fax: (+64)-4-473 9855  
Email: [info@foodstandards.govt.nz](mailto:info@foodstandards.govt.nz)  
Web: [www.foodstandards.govt.nz](http://www.foodstandards.govt.nz)

### **Environmental Protection Authority**

Private Bag 63002  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-916 2426  
Fax: (+64)-4-914 0433  
Email: [info@epa.govt.nz](mailto:info@epa.govt.nz)  
Web: [www.epa.govt.nz](http://www.epa.govt.nz)

### **New Zealand Customs Service**

(Wellington, Corporate Office)  
PO Box 2218  
Wellington, New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-473 6099  
Fax: (+64)-4-473 7370  
Email: [feedback@customs.govt.nz](mailto:feedback@customs.govt.nz)  
Web: [www.customs.govt.nz](http://www.customs.govt.nz)

### **Ministry of Consumer Affairs**

PO Box 1473  
Wellington, New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-474 2750  
Fax: (+64)-4-473 9400  
Email: [mcainfo@mca.govt.nz](mailto:mcainfo@mca.govt.nz)  
Web: [www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz](http://www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz)

### **New Zealand Commerce Commission**

PO Box 2351  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-924 3600  
Fax: (+64)-4-924 3700  
Email: [contact@comcom.govt.nz](mailto:contact@comcom.govt.nz)  
Web: [www.comcom.govt.nz](http://www.comcom.govt.nz)

### **Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand**

PO Box 30 687  
Lower Hutt  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-569 4400  
Fax: (+64)-4-569 2298  
Web: [www.iponz.govt.nz](http://www.iponz.govt.nz)

### **The Commissioner**

Plant Variety Rights Office  
PO Box 24  
Lincoln  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-3-325 2414  
Fax: (+64)-3-325 2946

### **Ministry of Health**

PO Box 5013  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-496 2000  
Fax: (+64)-4-496 2340  
Email: [moh@moh.govt.nz](mailto:moh@moh.govt.nz)  
Web: <https://www.health.govt.nz/>

### **Central Clearing House**

Ministry for Primary Industries  
Level 1, 96 New North Road, Eden Terrace,  
Auckland  
PO Box 3540, Eden Terrace, Auckland  
Phone: (+64) 9 909 6210 or (+64) 9 909 6211  
Fax: (+64) 9 909 6208  
Email: [imported.food@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:imported.food@mpi.govt.nz)

**Department of Conservation**

PO Box 10420  
Wellington, New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-471 0726  
Fax: (+64)-4-471 1082  
Web: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

**Auckland Regional Public Health Service**

Cornwall Complex, Floor 2  
Building 15, Greenlane Clinical Centre  
Private Bag 92605  
Symonds Street  
Auckland 1150  
Tel: +64-9-623-4600  
Email: [arphs@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:arphs@adhb.govt.nz)

**SPS and TBT Contacts**

Coordinator, SPS New Zealand  
Ministry for Primary Industries  
PO Box 2526  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-474 4226  
Fax: (+64)-4-470 2730

**TBT Enquiry Point**

Trade Negotiations Division  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Private Bag 18 901  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-439 8000  
Fax: (+64)-4-472 9596  
Email: [tnd@mft.govt.nz](mailto:tnd@mft.govt.nz)  
Web: [www.mfat.govt.nz](http://www.mfat.govt.nz)

**Foreign Agricultural Service**

Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Embassy  
PO Box 1190  
Thorndon, Wellington  
New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-462 6030  
Fax: (+64)-4-462 6016  
Email: [AgWellington@fas.usda.gov](mailto:AgWellington@fas.usda.gov)  
Web: <https://nz.usembassy.gov>

**American Chamber of Commerce**

PO Box 106 002  
Auckland, New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-9-309 9140  
Fax: (+64)-9-309 1090  
Email: [amcham@amcham.co.nz](mailto:amcham@amcham.co.nz)  
Web: <http://www.amcham.co.nz/>

**New Zealand Food and Grocery Council**

PO Box 1925  
Wellington, New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-473 9223  
Fax: (+64)-4-496 6550  
Contact: <http://www.fgc.org.nz/Contact>  
Web: [www.fgc.org.nz](http://www.fgc.org.nz)

**Intellectual Property Policy Group**

Regulatory and Competition Policy Branch  
Ministry of Economic Development  
33 Bowen Street, PO Box 1473  
Wellington, New Zealand  
Phone: (+64)-4-472-0030  
Email: [info@med.govt.nz](mailto:info@med.govt.nz)

**Attachments:**

No Attachments