

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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## **Report Name:** Taiwan Import Inspections Overview

**Country:** Taiwan

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### **Report Highlights:**

Taiwan operates a risk-based, three-tier inspection system for imported agricultural products, with intensity levels ranging from two to ten percent random sampling at the standard level to 100 percent inspection at the batch-by-batch level. A single shipment failure triggers escalation to enhanced inspection (20-50 percent selection rate), while a second failure results in 100 percent batch-by-batch inspection. Inspection procedures differ between food-grade products regulated by the Taiwan Food and Drug Administration and feed-grade products regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture. Testing methods are primarily adopted from U.S. FDA, USDA, and other international agencies. Failed shipments may be returned, destroyed, or in some cases undergo sequential container inspection to separate compliant from non-compliant products. Repeated failures trigger escalating consequences, including importer-level suspensions and potential country-level import suspensions affecting all U.S. exporters of that product type.

## INTRODUCTION

U.S. exporters shipping corn, soybeans, wheat, or other agricultural products to Taiwan must navigate a risk-based inspection regime that adjusts intensity based on compliance history. This guide provides an overview of Taiwan's inspection procedures, sampling methodologies, and remediation options when shipments fail to meet requirements.

Taiwan operates two separate regulatory frameworks depending on the intended end use. Food-grade products fall under Taiwan Food and Drug Administration (TFDA) authority pursuant to the [Regulations of Inspection of Imported Foods and Related Products](#), while feed-grade products are regulated by Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) under the [Regulations for Import Inspection of Feed and Additives](#).

## TAIWAN'S TIERED INSPECTION SYSTEM

Taiwan employs a progressive inspection regime that adjusts intensity based on compliance history. The system operates on three distinct levels, each with different sampling frequencies and implications for clearance times and costs.

### Standard Inspection Level

At the standard inspection level, Taiwan randomly selects 2 to 10 percent of shipments for full sampling and laboratory analysis. This represents the baseline tier, where approximately 1 out of every 10 to 50 shipments undergoes complete inspection, while the remainder clear with minimal review. For food-grade products, this level is termed "regular randomly selected batch inspection," while for feed-grade products it is called "general sampling inspection."

### Enhanced Inspection Level

Enhanced inspection increases the selection rate to 20-50 percent of shipments. At this level, approximately one out of every two to five shipments undergoes full sampling and analysis. For food-grade products, this is termed "reinforced randomly selected batch inspection."

**Escalation Trigger:** A single shipment failure while at standard inspection level automatically moves all subsequent shipments of the same type (same origin and CCC code) to enhanced inspection.

**De-escalation Requirement:** To return to standard inspection, importers must achieve five consecutive compliant batches with total volume equaling three times the failed shipment volume.

### Batch-by-Batch Inspection Level

Batch-by-batch inspection represents the highest intensity level, where 100 percent of shipments undergo full sampling and laboratory analysis without exception.

**Escalation Trigger:** A shipment failure while already at enhanced inspection level triggers batch-by-batch inspection. Products can also be placed directly into batch-by-batch inspection if Taiwan's inspection authority identifies serious safety concerns.

**De-escalation Requirement:** To return to enhanced inspection, importers must achieve five consecutive compliant batches with total volume equaling three times the failed shipment volume. The following table summarizes Taiwan's three-tier inspection system:

<b>Inspection Level</b>	<b>Selection Rate</b>	<b>Escalation Trigger</b>
Standard	2-10%	Starting point
Enhanced	20-50%	One failure at Standard
Batch-by-Batch	100%	Second failure at Enhanced

**SAMPLING PROCEDURES FOR BULK SHIPMENTS**

When a shipment is selected for inspection, Taiwan’s inspection authority implements specific sampling procedures.

**Documentation Requirements**

Importers must submit standard inspection applications along with the customs manifest and ship hold diagram. These documents enable inspectors to understand the vessel’s configuration and plan their sampling approach.

**Multi-Port Unloading Protocol**

For vessels unloading at multiple Taiwan ports, inspection occurs only at the first port of unloading, with results applicable to the entire shipment at all subsequent ports. However, if new facts or evidence emerge suggesting potential safety or hygiene concerns, inspection authorities at subsequent ports may conduct additional on-site verification or sampling analysis upon the product's arrival, and render separate decisions based on those inspection results.

**Sampling Method**

Taiwan employs a four-corner sampling method for food-grade bulk cargo holds. Inspectors board the vessel, access each cargo hold, and collect samples from four points at each corner or edge of the hold. Inspectors collect two kilograms of sample material per hold.

For feed-grade bulk cargo holds, each cargo hold is opened for inspection sequentially. The regulations specify that inspectors collect "sufficient quantity for laboratory tests" but do not provide detailed methodology like food-grade regulations.

**Importer Responsibilities**

Importers must provide all necessary equipment and labor to facilitate sampling, including machinery needed to access holds, tools for collecting samples, and personnel to assist inspectors. Inspectors randomly select sampling locations; importers cannot specify which samples should be taken. All costs associated with this cooperation fall on the importer.

**SAMPLING PROCEDURES FOR CONTAINERIZED SHIPMENTS**

**Container Opening Ratios**

Taiwan applies different opening ratios depending on the specific product:

**Food-Grade Major Agricultural Products:** For corn, wheat, barley, rice, sorghum, and soybeans, Taiwan opens 1 container for every 30 containers in the shipment.

**Food-Grade Other Products:** For products not on the major agricultural products list, the ratio is 1 container opened per 10 containers.

**Feed-Grade:** For the first 50 containers, inspectors open one container per ten containers. Beyond 50 containers, they open one additional container for each additional 50 containers (or fraction thereof).

Product Type & Use	Opening Ratio	50-Container Shipment
Food: Corn, Wheat, Barley, Rice, Sorghum, Soybeans	1 per 30	2 containers
Food: Other products	1 per 10	5 containers
Feed: All	1 per 10 (first 50), then 1 per 50	5 containers

### Containerized Bulk Products

**Food-Grade:** For full-container bulk products without bags or boxes, inspectors randomly select four sampling points within the container. Additional sampling points may be added when necessary.

**Feed-Grade:** The regulations do not specify detailed sampling procedures. Sampling is conducted to obtain sufficient quantity for laboratory tests.

### Package-Level Sampling

For products that come in bags or boxes, Taiwan applies specific sampling schedules based on the total number of packages in the shipment.

Total Packages	Food-Grade: Packages Opened	Feed-Grade: Packages Opened
1-30	1	2 (up to 50)
31-60	2	2 (up to 50)
61-100	3	5 (51-500)
101-500	4	5 (51-500)
501-1,000	5	15 (over 501)
1,001-1,500	6	15 (over 501)
1,501-2,000	7	15 (over 501)
2,001-2,500	8	15 (over 501)
2,501-3,000	9	15 (over 501)
3,001-3,500	10	15 (over 501)
3,501-4,000	15	15 (over 501)
Over 4,000	Add 1 per 500 packages	15 (over 501)

## Sample Collection

After sampling is complete, inspectors collect two kilograms (or sufficient quantity for feed), issue a sampling receipt to the importer, and send samples to the laboratory for analysis. Samples are taken free of charge, but importers bear all costs for labor and equipment to make sampling possible.

## FOOD EXAMINATION

The legal basis for food examination regulations is found in Chapter 7, Articles 37-40 of the Act Governing Food Safety and Sanitation. The primary responsible authorities are the Research and Laboratory Division and the Quality Supervision and Management Division of TFDA. The Research and Laboratory Division develops relevant testing methods, while the Quality Supervision and Management Division handles laboratory accreditation and management. According to Article 39 of the Food Safety Act, if there is a dispute regarding testing results, an application for re-testing must be submitted to the original sampling agency within 15 days of receiving notification, and the receiving agency must conduct the re-testing within three days. Article 40 of the Act Governing Food Safety and Sanitation requires that when releasing food-related examination information, the official testing methods, testing institute, and basis for result interpretation must be disclosed.

### Accredited Laboratory Management

Taiwan's "[Regulations Governing Accreditation and Outsourced Accreditation Management of Food Testing Institutions](#)" establish standards for accrediting and managing laboratories that conduct food safety tests. The regulations enacted under the Food Safety and Sanitation Act define key terms such as testing institution, certification, and hygiene standards. To ensure the testing quality of private testing institutions and expand their capacity to support government agencies, private organizations, industry self-management, and import/export testing operations, TFDA has established an accreditation system based on the ISO 17025:2017 and specific requirements for testing institution management.

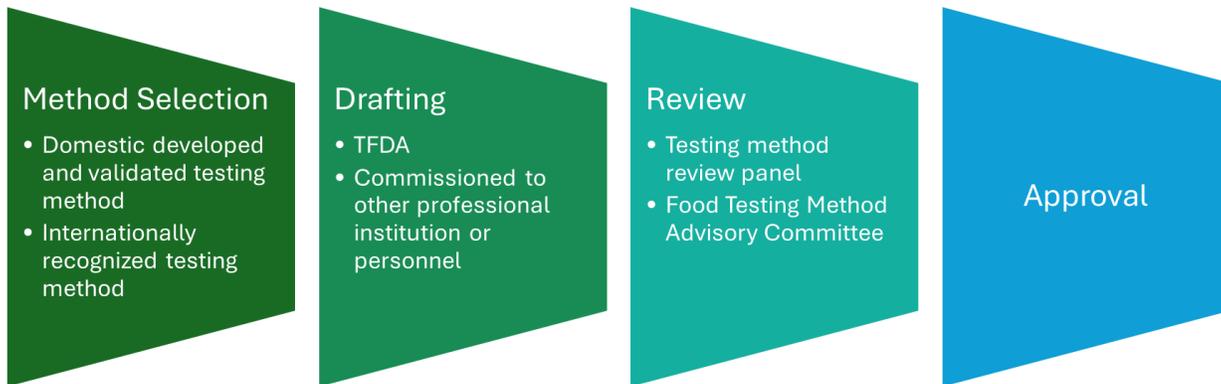
To obtain accreditation, a testing institution must maintain a dedicated laboratory equipped with essential facilities, quality management systems, and qualified personnel. Staff requirements include relevant academic backgrounds in food, chemistry, biology, or related fields, and professional experience in testing and quality management (Article 3). The laboratories are subject to regular and random audits, proficiency testing, and emergency mobilization during major food incidents. The list of accredited institutions is published in real-time on the TFDA website for public reference:

[Accredited Laboratory List](#)

[Annual Proficiency Test Report](#)

### Testing Methods

TFDA follows [procedures for establishing inspection methods](#) (in Mandarin), with the scope of application including food testing methods as specified in Article 38 of the Act Governing Food Safety and Sanitation. Testing methods must undergo method selection, drafting, review and approval by the Testing Method Review Panel. For officially announced testing methods, additional review by the Food Testing Method Advisory Committee is required, followed by processing in accordance with Articles 154 and 157 of the Administrative Procedure Act. The Advisory Committee convenes quarterly, and meeting minutes are published on the TFDA website.



Testing methods are primarily adopted from those developed by the U.S. FDA, USDA, AOAC, CODEX Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare, and other agencies. These methods are announced only after validation, with references appended to the testing procedures. The most frequently tested items at the border are pesticide residues, which require approximately three days for testing, while microbiological testing requires at least five days. Since Taiwan’s pesticide residue testing predominantly employs multi-residue analysis methods, agricultural products are categorized into three different matrices for sample preparation based on their varying moisture content to reduce testing variability. TFDA’s published Quality Control FAQ specifies that when measured values approach or exceed standard limits, retesting must be conducted using the standard addition method.

### Commonly Used Testing Methods at Borders

Product	Test Item	Testing Method
Fruit, Vegetable, Grain	Pesticide	<a href="#">Method of Test for Pesticide Residues in Foods -Multiresidue Analysis (5) (MOHWP0055.05) (2022.08.17)</a> <a href="#">Method of Test for Pesticide Residues in Foods – Multiresidue Analysis (6) (TFDAP0007.04) (2023.04.20)</a>
Seafood	Heavy Metal	<a href="#">Method of Test for Heavy Metals in Aquatic Animals, Livestock and Poultry Products and Honey (MOHW0028.00) (2021.08.26)</a>
Processed Food	Additive	<a href="#">Method of Test for Preservatives in Foods (MOHWA0020.03) (2019.01.30)</a> <a href="#">Method of Test for Sweeteners in Foods – Multiple Analysis (MOHWA0030.00) (2020.09.09)</a> <a href="#">Method of Test for Sulfur Dioxide in Foods (MOHWA0013.03) (2022.11.08)</a> <a href="#">Method of Test for Preservatives in Foods – Test for Propionic Acid (MOHWA0011.03) (2021.10.27)</a>
Animal Product	Veterinary Drug	<a href="#">Method of Test for Veterinary Drug Residues in Foods – Test of Nitrofurantol Metabolites (MOHWV0040.07) (2022.08.04)</a>
Dairy	Microbial	<a href="#">Method of Test for Food Microorganisms – Test of Escherichia coli (MOHWM0023.02) (2022.01.01)</a>
Herb, Spicy, and Seasoning	Ethylene Oxide	<a href="#">Method of Test of Ethylene Oxide and its Reaction Product, 2-Chloroethanol, in Foods (TFDAP0022.04) (2023.07.05)</a>

[More Testing Methods](#)

**RETESTING PROCEDURES**

When a shipment fails laboratory analysis, Taiwan's inspection authority issues an electronic notice of non-compliance.

**Retesting Deadlines**

For food-grade products, importers have 15 days from receiving the failure notice to request retesting. For feed-grade products, the deadline is only seven days.

**Retesting Process**

When retesting is requested, Taiwan does not collect new samples from the shipment. Instead, laboratories retest the same samples that were collected during the original inspection. For food-grade products, the retest must be performed by the original laboratory.

Retesting is permitted only once. If the retest also shows non-compliance, no further appeals are available.

**Sample Destruction**

If retesting is not requested within the deadline, or if retesting is conducted and also fails, Taiwan destroys the remaining samples after the deadline expires.

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Food-Grade Products</b>	<b>Feed-Grade Products</b>
Deadline to request	15 days	7 days
Number of retests	One only	One only
Sample source	Original samples	Original samples
Laboratory	Original lab	Authority-designated lab
If retest fails	No further appeal	No further appeal

**DISPOSAL AND REMEDIATION OPTIONS**

Once a shipment definitively fails, the product must be disposed of according to Taiwan's regulations.

**Return or Destruction**

Both food and feed products can be returned to their origin, reexported, or destroyed in Taiwan. Returning the shipment requires arranging return transportation and bearing all associated costs. Destroying the shipment in Taiwan involves Taiwan authorities arranging for destruction, with the importer paying destruction costs.

**Sequential Container Inspection (Feed-Grade)**

When initial on-site verification reveals visible quality problems such as mold, rot, or decomposed product in a container, the entire shipment would normally be deemed non-compliant. However, importers can request sequential container inspection, where inspectors open and examine every container to identify which have visible defects and which do not.

Inspectors separate compliant containers from non-compliant ones; importers then work with customs to split the original import declaration into two batches. Compliant containers are accepted and cleared while non-compliant containers are returned or destroyed.

Importers pay for opening all containers. The decision is final, and no retesting is available after sequential container inspection.

### **Silo Commingling Risk**

If bulk products are unloaded into a silo before inspection is complete, and the shipment subsequently fails inspection, Taiwan deems all products in that silo non-compliant (even products from other shipments). Once products are commingled in a silo without segregation capability, no method exists to separate the failed shipment from compliant shipments.

## **INDUSTRY-WIDE ENFORCEMENT CONSEQUENCES**

Taiwan's enforcement system extends beyond individual shipments. Repeated failures trigger escalating consequences that can affect specific importers and all U.S. exporters.

### **Importer-Level Suspension**

If a Taiwan importer experiences two failures within six months for the same product type from the United States, Taiwan's inspection authority may require submission of a written explanation and improvement plan.

If the importer fails to respond within the deadline, or if subsequent shipments continue to fail, Taiwan can suspend that importer from importing that specific product type from the United States.

### **Country-Level Suspension**

If products of the same type from the United States fail inspection three times within six months—regardless of which importers brought them in—Taiwan's central competent authority may require the U.S. government to provide a written explanation and improvement plan.

If the U.S. government does not respond within the deadline, or if failures continue after the response, Taiwan can temporarily suspend inspection applications for all products from the related industry and origin. This means all U.S. exports of that product type could be blocked.

### **Attachments:**

No Attachments.