



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

## FAQS: Importing organic produce into Great Britain

### **Will the regulations for importing organic produce remain the same?**

Yes, the rules for organic produce imported from third countries will remain the same as they are now but will use an interim paper-based import system. GB imports will require a GB Certificate of Inspection (COI).

The requirement to produce a COI will not apply to organic products from the EU, Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein and Switzerland until 1 July 2021.

Northern Ireland will continue to use the EU's TRACES NT system to import organics products.

See Annex A for detailed information on key movement scenarios.

### **Will goods imported into GB from the EU be accepted or stopped at port from 1 January 2021?**

Organic produce from the EU, Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein and Switzerland will be accepted into the UK with no additional checks until 1 July 2021.

### **Will a Certificate of Inspection (COI) be required for goods imported from non-EU countries?**

Yes, the same process applies as now. As part of the import process, an endorsed COI should be sent to the Port Health Authority (PHA)/ Local Authority (LA), usually by courier. The PHA/ LA can endorse a copy if the original hasn't arrived in order to clear the goods, though the original will need to be endorsed within 10 working days for the consignment to be sold on as organic.

### **Do I need to register to start using the paper-based import system?**

No, the paper COI and associated guidance can be used from 1 January 2021 without any registration. Anyone who intends to import organic food or feed into GB needs to be certified with an [approved UK organic control body](#).

### **What paperwork is needed when a product from outside GB enters by transit?**

They will need a GB COI, if the goods are imported into GB, the COI will need to be endorsed when they arrive either at a GB border control post (BCP) or by local trading standards. If the consignment needs a physical check or testing, this will need to go to a port that is able to carry out these checks.

### **Do organic goods need to enter GB at specific entry points?**

The type of entry point required for organic goods is defined by the type of commodity and whether the consignment needs a physical check or testing. If you are unsure, please check the guidance on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

### **Do organic goods moving between GB and NI require a COI?**

Organic products from NI do not require a COI. Organics products moving from GB to NI will require an EU COI as they will apply the EU Organic Regulations. If you wish to move organic products to NI, you must register on TRACES NT and be approved by your control body.

### **Will the trade tariffs be the same as they are now?**

Please refer to tariff guidance on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

### **What happens to goods that have already been shipped to the UK before the end of the transition period?**

They should already be registered on TRACES NT and have an EU COI. The COI will be checked and endorsed upon arrival in GB. The importer or agent should notify the PHA/LA of the arrival in case they cannot access the notification in TRACES NT. All goods leaving a third country on or before the end of the transition period will require an EU COI.

Consignments leaving a third country from the 1 January 2021 will require a GB COI.

### **Will there be any additional checks at port for livestock products being imported from third countries?**

Please refer to importing guidance on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

### **How will third country control bodies be made aware of the paper-based GB import procedure?**

Defra will contact third country control bodies to let them know what regulations and procedures are in place for exporting to GB at the end of the transition period.

### **What happens if an organic consignment arrives in GB without an endorsed COI?**

If an organic consignment arrives without an endorsed COI (either the original or a copy), the consignment cannot be cleared as organic.

The goods must be either:

- a) re-labelled, removing all reference to organics
- b) re-exported as non-organic OR
- c) destroyed

**Can imported products from third countries use the EU organic logo at the end of the transition period?**

The logo and its use are controlled by the EU. Products can continue to use the EU logo where the products meet the EU requirements for the use of the logo.

## Annex A: Movement of organic goods into the UK

Scenario	Country of origin of goods	Importer (who financially buys the goods from the third country)	Country of arrival	Country of end destination	Type of COI	1 January 2021 process
1.	Third country	GB	GB – goods imported directly into GB and customs cleared	GB	GB COI	GB COI manual system, checks will need to be carried out at the first point of entry into GB or by Local Trading Standards.
3.	Third country	GB	EU/ NI – goods then transit through the EU/ NI to GB, NO customs clearance in the EU/ NI	GB	GB COI	GB COI manual system, checks will need to be carried out at the first point of entry in GB or by Local Trading Standards.
4.	NI	GB	GB- goods are imported from NI into GB	GB	No COI required	COIs are not required.
5.	GB	NI	NI – goods are exported from GB to NI	NI	EU COI	EU COI on TRACES NT, cleared in NI.
6.	Third country	NI	GB – goods then transit through GB to NI, NO customs clearance in GB	NI	EU COI	EU COI on TRACES NT, goods cleared at the first point of entry in the EU/ NI.