



In partnership with:



Department for
International Trade

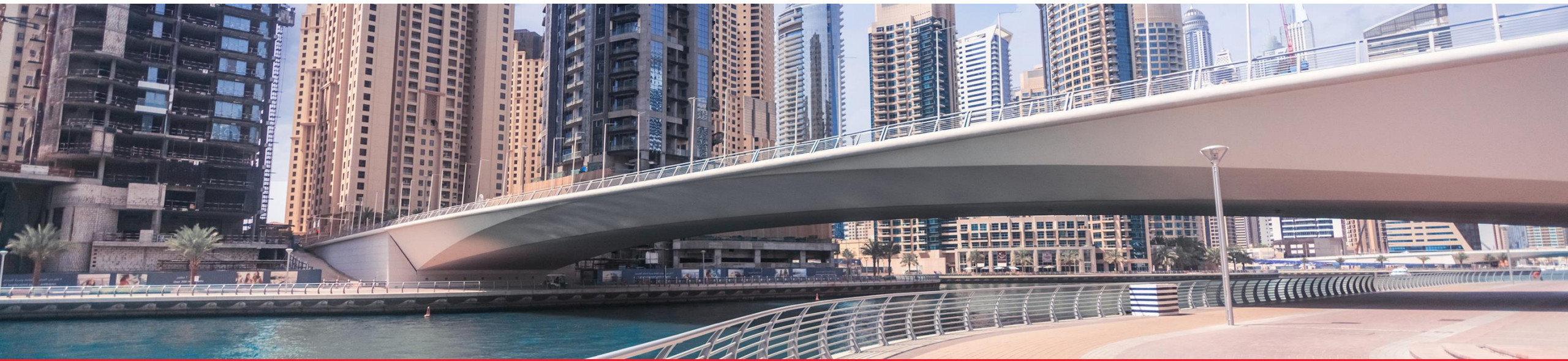
Here to give the UK seafood sector
the support it needs to thrive.



Export Guide: **UAE**

Market Research Report

UAE SEAFOOD REPORT





Market Overview

1

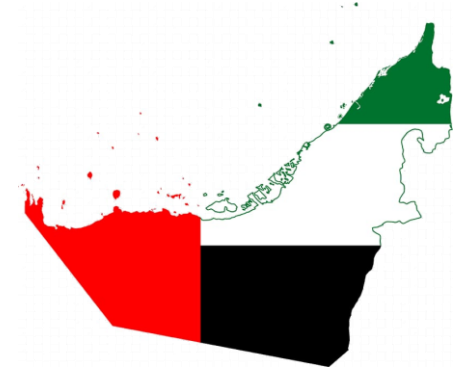


Overview of the UAE

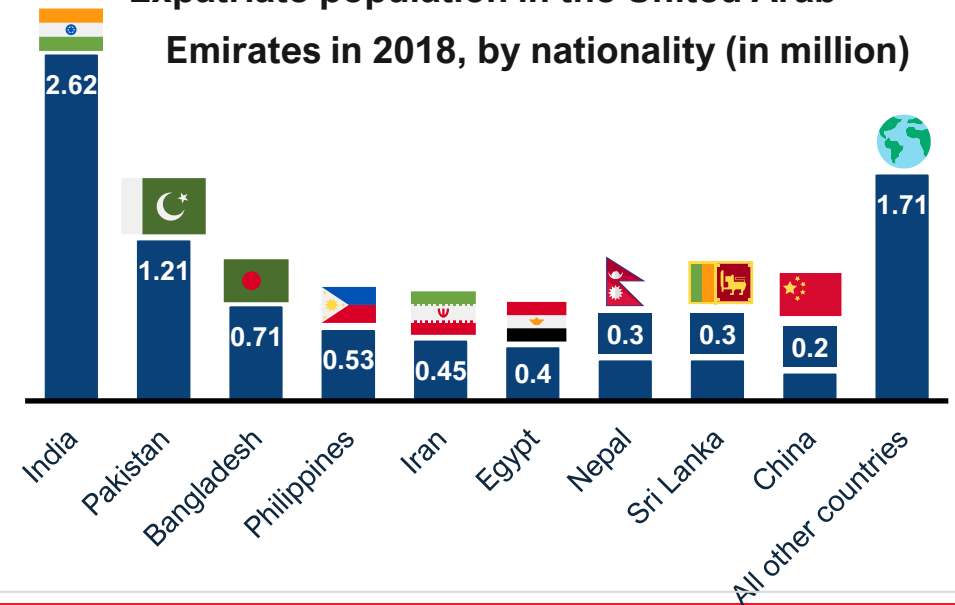
- The UAE is a member of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) which includes the Kingdom Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar.
- Abu Dhabi is the capital which includes Abu Dhabi city as well as the Western provinces including Al Ain, together making it the largest Emirate. Dubai is the most significant emirate from a trade and commerce perspective.
- The UAE has been focusing on diversification of its economy away from oil. The current global unstable oil prices coupled with the country's dwindling oil reserve have further cemented the country's push for diversification. Dubai has always been at the forefront of the diversification plans leading the way for the other emirates.
- The United Arab Emirates 2020 population is estimated at 9,890,402 people. The median age in the United Arab Emirates is 32.6 years. Dubai's ratio of males to females is skewed, with approximately 75% of the population being male.
- The official language of the UAE is Arabic, and the population also uses English, Hindi, and Urdu.
- The population is composed of just 20% native residents, with the remaining 80% being composed of expatriates. About 85% of the expatriate population – or 71% of the total population -- is Asian, primarily from India (accounting for 51%).
- British expatriates make up the largest population of Western expatriates. Around 120,000 UK nationals reside in the UAE.

The United Arab Emirates

UAE Province	Population
Dubai	4,177,059
Abu Dhabi	2,784,490
Sharjah	2,374,132
Al Ain	631,005



Expatriate population in the United Arab Emirates in 2018, by nationality (in million)



Overview of UAE F&B Market

Due to harsh climatic conditions and scarce water resources, Gulf Cooperation Council member states are heavily reliant upon imports for their food supplies. demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

- The UAE has quickly earned itself a reputation as one of the leading destinations to enjoy quality food and five-star hospitality services.
- The growing affluence and numbers of the UAE population and visitors over the last two decades led to a rise in the consumption of F&B products in general, it also led to the adoption of a new range of products with habits and tastes changing at a similar pace.
- The country's growing population, thriving economy, and profile as one of the world's top tourist destinations has only increased the UAE's appetite for quality food products and hospitality services.
- Gourmet food stores, organic supermarkets, spice souqs, specialty food stores, fish markets, international hypermarket chains and local convenience stores now stock everything from quail eggs to white truffle oil.
- Dubai's strategic position as the gateway between the three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa and the establishment of the many free trade zones have supported the growth exports and re-exports in F&B sector.
- Agriculture accounts for 1 percent of GDP; 80 percent of food & drink is imported.
- Food security is one of the major priority of the UAE government hence the Government is focusing on encouraging local production.



The UAE is still heavily reliant on Import to meet its food demands. 80% of food is imported.



The UAE food and drink sector revenue is estimated to grow annually (CAGR 2020-2025) by 17.1%, resulting in a projected market volume of £335m by 2025.



UAE allows for access to 1/3 of the world's population within four hours. 80% of the world's population live within an eight-hour flight.



UAE's strategic location makes it accessible to major emerging economies, linking shipping routes and facilitating goods' transport in the Middle East, Asia, Europe and Africa.

Overview of UAE F&B Market

The UK remains one of the major supplier of food products to the UAE. Seafood is one of the top imported products from the UK especially salmon.

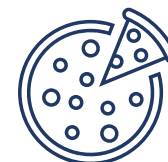
Top UK imported Food	
Groups Name	Total Weights / TONNES 2019
corn flakes	2,845,111
biscuits	2,437,387
natural mineral water	2,366,040
whipping cream	2,332,689
white sugar	2,038,899
oat flakes	1,794,873
salt	1,648,237
wheat flour	1,369,039
oats	1,263,664
mozzarella cheese	1,194,998
tomato	1,174,205
breadcrumbs	1,048,396
salmon	907,911
yogurt	898,475
white kidney beans	890,995
beans	885,728
cheddar cheese	817,986



Revenue in the Food & Beverages segment is projected to reach £152m in 2020.



Revenue is expected to show an annual growth rate (2020-2025) of 17.1%, resulting in a projected market volume of £335m by 2025..



The UAE's total imported food from the UK was estimated at 7.8 million tonnes.



Expected F&B sales at EXPO 2020 is estimated at £427.5mn.

Source: Dubai Municipality

Impact of COVID-19

UAE F&B is expected to have a moderate growth in 2020. A KPMG report has observed a negative impact as a result of Covid-19 on dine-in restaurants and premium brands, while observing a positive impact on meal kits, frozen food and value brands, and private labels.

Key Points

- With Covid-19 in consideration a Frost & Sullivan's Report of the UAE F&B Market, found that the market will register steady growth throughout 2020. They estimated that the overall expenditure on F&B in the UAE was estimated to increase by 6.9% year-on-year, reaching £27 billion in 2020 from £25 billion in 2019.
 - Agriculture represents a very small share of the UAE's economy. The total cultivated land has decreased in recent years, and the UAE remains a major net food importer.
 - Covid-19 has impacted different subsectors in various ways with supermarkets, hypermarkets and grocery stores experiencing increased sales, while the hospitality industry and airline catering have faced a severe decline.
 - The pandemic has also encouraged the already existing shift toward domestic production to help the country achieve food sufficiency and security as per the UAE's National Food Security Strategy 2051.
- Covid-19 has further incentivised The National Food Security Strategy 2051 which was launched in November 2018 aiming to achieve zero hunger by ensuring access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round. The strategy aims to implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production.
 - The initiatives to support strategic goals are anchored in diversification of supply, alternative supply sources, technology-enabled enhancement of local production and international trade links, among others.
 - Aquaculture, vertical farming, drone use and sensors are some of the technologies that are being utilised in to maximise crop production while ensuring good use of resources. This is the start of what will be an expanding role for AgTech in the country's agricultural sector.

Consumer Sentiment and Behaviour– Post COVID

The UAE Government have opened up the economy albeit under strict safety regulations. Post-COVID recovery is expected to be gradual with Expo 2020 playing a major role.

Key Points

- Around 2 in 3 consumers worry about contracting the virus, even as life is returning to some normalcy.
- 64% of UAE consumers are likely to visit malls in the coming few weeks and feel more comfortable in public venues when safety measures and social distancing measures are well-enforced.
- 61% of consumers in the UAE are optimistic their country's economy will recover in the next 2-3 months.
- Over 60% of consumers expect their finances to be impacted for up to 6 months.
- 92% consumers in the UAE have tried a new shopping behaviour since the crisis. Consumers are claiming to reduce their in-store shopping (68%), with 49% claiming to shop online more since the beginning of the crisis.
- 61% are opting for online payments as opposed to cash-on-delivery when shopping online. This behaviour is also likely to stick in a 'post-COVID' reality-with 43% likely to continue using digital payments in-store as well as 48% when shopping online.





Seafood Market Overview

2



Overview of UAE Seafood Market

Fishing is an embedded tradition in the Emirati culture as many of the Emirati ancestors depended on fishing for survival due to the limited agricultural activity.

Key Points

- The strategic position of the UAE at the southern end of the Gulf, lying between the Arabian Peninsula and Iran has contributed significantly to this trade. The country has sea borders to two very distinct water bodies: the largest coastline borders the embayment-like Gulf while the East coast has a border to the more oceanic Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea(also known as the Persian Gulf).
- The majority of catch is taken from Abu Dhabi, since this Emirate comprises over 72% of the sea area of the United Arab Emirates. Abu Dhabi has an estimated 70% of the landed catch in the UAE which equals 4,438 tonnes per year.
- According to the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA), there are approximately 5,115 national and 13,288 expatriate commercial fishermen in the UAE, operating in 5,985 vessels. There are about 16,000 recreational vessels registered with the Federal Authority for Land and Sea Transport in UAE. There are 2,818 active commercial fishers in Abu Dhabi with vessels crewed by 468 Emirati fishers and 2,350 expatriates.
- The economic contribution of the fisheries sector is relatively small in terms of the overall output of Abu Dhabi Emirate and that of the UAE. However, this is outweighed by the cultural importance and significance of the seafood industry to the UAE population.



Abu Dhabi has an estimated 70% of the landed catch in the UAE which equals 4438 tonnes per year.



UAE is reliant on import to meet 70% of its seafood demand.



A shift toward domestic production will help achieve food sufficiency.

Overview of UAE Seafood Market

Consumers are seeking more healthy food options and seafood products are helping to fill the gap. *is perennially strong.*

Top imported Seafood in the UAE
Groups Name
Salmon
Cod fish
Mackerel
Haddock
Tuna
Fish fingers
Turbot fish
Dover sole
Oyster
Mussel
Halibut fish
Prawns
Scallops
Shrimps
Octopus



Salmon is the most imported seafood product in the UAE.



The UAE is the highest consumer market for fish among the GCC countries.



The UAE per capita consumption of seafood is estimated at 28.6 kg per year.

Source: Frost & Sullivan, WTO, UAE Government, The National Food Security Strategy 2051

Overview of UAE Seafood Market

Total Sales of Seafood

Total Sales of Fish and Seafood by Category (Volume '000 tonnes)							% total volume growth	
Groups Name	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2018/19	2014-19
Crustaceans	12.3	12.9	13.6	14.4	15.3	16.1	5.3	5.5
Fish	165.4	173.7	183.9	193.1	201.3	208.0	3.4	4.7
Molluscs and Cephalopods	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	5.2	5.2
Fish and Seafood	179.8	188.7	199.7	209.8	219.0	226.7	3.5	4.7

Fish and seafood registers total volume growth of 4% in 2019 to reach 227,000 tonnes.

Crustaceans is the most dynamic performer in 2019 with total volume growth of 5%.

COVID 19 saw an increased demand for Seafood products as consumers seek to consume more healthier products.

Overview of UAE Seafood Market

Retail Sales of Seafood products is perennially strong.

Retail Sales of Fish and Seafood by Category (Volume '000 tonnes)							% total volume growth	
Groups Name	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2018/19	2014-19
Crustaceans	4.6	4.9	5.1	5.5	5.8	6.1	5.2	5.6
Fish	34.6	36.3	38.6	40.6	42.3	43.8	3.6	4.9
Molluscs and Cephalopods	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	6.4	5.2
Fish and Seafood	40.0	42.0	44.6	47.0	49.1	51.0	3.9	5.0

Retail Sales of Fish and Seafood by Value (AED Million)							% total volume growth	
Groups Name	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2018/19	2014-19
Crustaceans	233.3	250.6	264.7	281.2	306.6	324.9	6.0	6.8
Fish	1,370.7	1,475.4	1,567.0	1,649.8	1,763.0	1,848.0	4.8	6.2
Molluscs and Cephalopods	44.1	46.7	49.0	51.8	56.6	61.3	8.4	6.8
Fish and Seafood	1,648.1	1,772.7	1,880.8	1,982.9	2,126.2	2,234.1	5.1	6.3

Hypermarkets and supermarkets remained the most important distribution channels for fresh fish and seafood.

Independent small grocers such as the stalls in the Waterfront Market are increasing after the opening in June 2017; however, these retailers do not challenge the leadership of hypermarkets and supermarkets.

Hygiene and quality assurance are very important to consumers, hence the drive towards supermarkets and hypermarkets.

Source: WTO, UAE Government, Euromonitor

Overview of UAE Seafood Market

Retail Sales of Fish and Seafood by Packaged vs Unpackaged (% retail volume) **Import demand for overseas products is perennially strong**

Packaged vs Unpackaged (% retail volume)						
Groups Name	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Packaged	52.0	52.5	53.0	53.5	53.6	53.7
Unpackaged	48.0	47.5	47.0	46.5	46.4	46.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Increase in private labelling in supermarkets. Chains like Al Maya have whitelabeled shrimps under their brand and more supermarkets are taking this approach.

Consumers are increasingly seeking convenient food options for their busy lifestyles. Hence the increasing demand for packaged seafood products.

More value added seafood producers are increasing in the UAE.

Source: WTO, UAE Government, Euromonitor

Overview of UAE Seafood Market

Total Sales Forecast.

Total Sales of Fish and Seafood by Category (Volume '000 tonnes)							% total volume growth
Groups Name	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2019/24
Crustaceans	16.1	16.9	17.7	18.6	19.5	20.4	4.9
Fish	208.0	216.7	225.1	233.3	242.2	249.8	3.7
Molluscs and Cephalopods	2.6	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.4	5.0
Fish and Seafood	226.7	236.3	245.6	255.0	264.9	273.6	3.8

Fish and seafood is expected to register a total volume CAGR of 4% over the forecast period to reach 274,000 tonnes in 2024.

Organic fish and seafood continued to grow in 2019, mostly supported by organic salmon.

Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of buying fish and seafood from sustainable fisheries.

Source: WTO, UAE Government, Euromonitor

Overview of UAE Seafood Market

Retail Sales Forecast is perennially strong.

Forecast Retail Sales Forecast of Fish and Seafood by Category (Volume '000 tonnes)							% total volume growth
Groups Name	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2019/24
Crustaceans	6.1	6.5	6.8	7.1	7.4	7.7	4.7
Fish	43.8	45.5	47.0	48.7	50.3	51.9	3.4
Molluscs and Cephalopods	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.3	5.0
Fish and Seafood	51.0	53.0	54.9	57.0	59.0	60.9	3.6

Forecast Retail Sales of Fish and Seafood by Value (AED Million)							% total volume growth
Groups Name	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2019	2019/24
Crustaceans	324.9	343.9	359.6	378.0	394.2	408.2	4.7
Fish	1,848.0	1,915.8	1,979.4	2,052.9	2,119.8	2,186.6	3.4
Molluscs and Cephalopods	61.3	64.9	68.2	71.6	75.2	78.4	5.0
Fish and Seafood	2,234.1	2,324.7	2,407.2	2,502.5	2,589.1	2,673.1	3.7

Frozen fish has experienced a remarkable growth during 2019, and is expected to continue with a similar growth rate over the forecast period.

Dubai will continue to invest in modernising its trading infrastructure to accommodate a higher number of traders efficiently, such as investing substantially in fishing fleets and equipment.

Throughout 2019, foodservice was a continuously growing channel for fish and seafood players.

Overview of UAE Seafood Market

Top imported Seafood from the UK 2019

Groups Name	Total Weight	Total Quantity
Salmon	1351.26621	120,654
Cod fish	150.44392	41,292
Tuna	70.18501	168,653
Mussel	66.82772	12,865
Haddock	62.17499	27,741
Fish fingers	59.34784	18,351
Sea bass	45.03747	8,934
Trout	26.41968	1,923
Prawns	24.35864	25,509
Fish cakes	20.46563	45,781
Oyster	19.89269	14,691
Sardines	18.99502	28,741
Mackerel	17.00884	22,109
Fish fillet	16.13939	7,349
Dover sole	14.0332	1,463
Scallop	12.81155	1,897



14% Increase in UK seafood imports.



With Expo 2020 approaching, the magnitude of this growth for foodservice is only going to be stronger, as consumers choose to eat out more often, demanding more cosmopolitan food.



About 1,273 tonnes of seafood was Imported from the UK in 2019.



Food Import Regulations

3

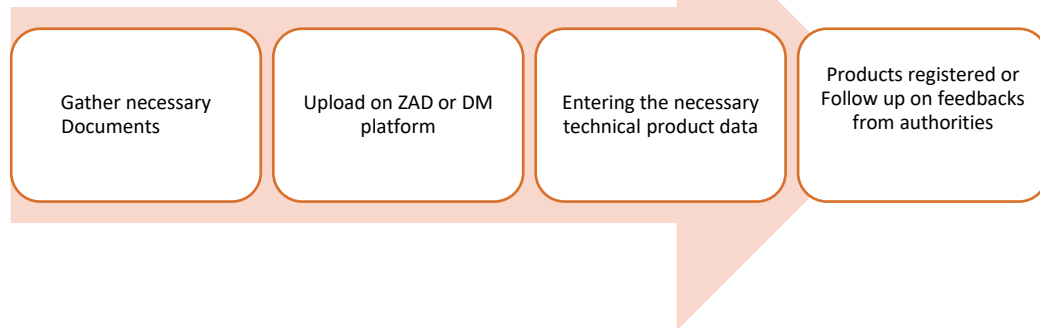


Food Import Requirement

There are two main platform for product registration: ZAD which is a federal platform for all food products and Dubai Municipality. demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

- The UAE authorities have succeeded in unifying a number of food & drink standards and regulations. All food products imported through their entry points must be registered and labels are pre-approved by the local municipality.
- Prior authorisation is required from the UAE Ministry of Environment and Water for all foodstuff imports, animals and their products, animal feeds, additives, all alcoholic beverages, pork products and tobacco products.
- Imported and locally produced food products are treated equally regarding food safety regulations and labelling requirements. All food shipments to the UAE are inspected to ensure compliance with labelling and shelf-life regulations.

Product Registration Process:



بلدية دبي
DUBAI MUNICIPALITY

Products to be sent into the UAE needs to be registered on either the ZAD or DM platform.

Only a locally registered company can process and complete any product registration on any of the platform.

Food Import Requirement

Labelling and Packaging

demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

- All labels must be written in Arabic or both Arabic and English. The labelling must be difficult to remove or altered and must be clear and easy to read. The label must show the following:
 - Brand name
 - Product name (a summarised description of the food product)
 - The food ingredients (arranged according weight or volume)
 - Production & expiration dates of all products
 - Name of the food manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer
 - Net weight or volume
 - Country of origin
 - Product barcode
 - Lot (batch) number
 - Storage conditions (if applicable)
 - Mentioning the ingredients which may cause hypersensitivity
 - Language of the label should be in Arabic. Approved stickers could be used to translate the food labels in the Arabic language
 - Instructions for using the product (if needed)
 - Displaying the nutritional information is optional (except the products with special uses such as baby foods, foods for patients, etc).

- The label must not be:
 - False, misleading or deceiving.
 - Suggest that it is another foodstuff.
 - Data must not be covered, altered or obliterated.

Food Import Requirement

Dating of Foodstuffs

demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

- Requirements:
 - Production and expiration date should be printed on the original package or label
 - It is prohibited to write such dates manually or indicate them on a sticker (including the sticker that is used for Arabic translation)
 - Double dates are not allowed
 - Production & expiration shall be clearly printed, embossed, or engraved and difficult to erase
 - Day – month – year shall be indicated on food products with a validity of three months or less. Month – year shall be indicated on food products with a validity of more than three months

Exporters Role



- Comply with UAE Food Standard
- Labelling and shelf life of packed foods.
 - Products standards.
 - Document Requirements.

Importer Role



- Apply to DM/ZAD service
- Food label assessment and registration.
 - Follow inspection and release procedure.
 - Submission of required documents.

Food Import Requirement

Dating of Foodstuffs

Import demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

- Production/expiry dates must be engraved, embossed, printed or stamped directly onto the original label or primary packaging at the time of production, using indelible ink. P/E dates printed on stickers are not an acceptable alternative, as well as U.S. bar coding in lieu of P/E dates. Only one set of P/E dates on the label is permitted. P/E dates must be printed in the following fashion, depending upon the shelf life of the product:
 - Day/month/year for products with a shelf life of three (3) months or less
 - Day/month/year or month/year for products with a shelf life longer than three (3) months.
- Under the month/year format, the last day of the month is considered the expiry date. Exporters who list the first day of the month following the expiry date have run into issues when trying to clear shipments. The month may be printed in numbers or letters. For example, both 3/18 and March 18 are acceptable formats.

Required Document:

- Health Certificate from Authorized Government Entity
- Halal Certificate (for the meat, poultry & its products)
- Packing list
- Other certificate for specific consignment
- Pork-free diet certificate for farmed fish, seafood, and its products
- Organic Certificate (if claimed)
- GMO free Certificate (if claimed)
- Other Certificate as per the Circular

Food Import Requirement

Dating of Foodstuffs

Import demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

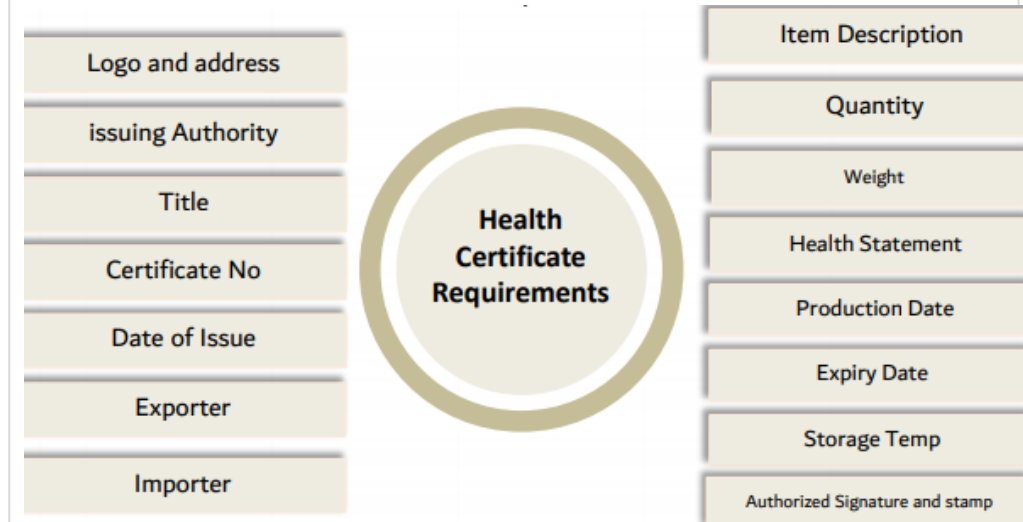
- The word "Production" or the letter "P" must precede the production date. The expiry date must be preceded by one of the following statements: "Expiration (date)"; "Fit for.....from the date of production"; "Use by (date);" "Use before (date);" "Sell by (date);" "Valid until (date) from the date of production;" or the letter "E."

Example of correct format:

P: 15/02/2016 E: 14/02/2017

Source: Dubai Municipality

• Health Certificates



- Document issued by the authorized body from the country of origin to indicate the fitness for human consumption.
- The original certificate must be submitted to the inspector at the entry port during the inspection of the consignment.

Food Import Requirement

Banned Food Additives demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

Banned Food Additives

- The following are the most popular banned additives in UAE. The Municipality has the right to stop any product which contains other chemicals they deem unacceptable in the country.

Common Errors Exporters Make

- Claims: UAE.S 2333
 - The claim should be clear.
 - The statement should be logical and realistic.
 - It should not mislead the consumer.
- Translation:
As per the standard of GSO 9 for food labelling, all the details should be in Arabic.
 - Sometimes the exporter place a wrong translation.
 - The English statement is not matching the Arabic one (English should match the Arabic).
- The registration should be done before shipment arrives.

Common banned ingredient

E.Number	Name
E104	Quinoline Yellow
E105	Fast Yellow
E107	Yellow 2 G
E123	Amaranth
E124	Ponceau 4 R
E127	Erythrosine
E131	Patent Blue V
E142	Green S
E924	Potassium Bromate (Bread products)
E952	Cyclamate
E1510	Ethanol (alcohol)



Import Duties

4



Import Duties

Tariffs and Duties is perennially strong.

- There is a 5 percent duty rate on most imported food and drink products which enter the UAE. Alcoholic beverages are subject to duty of 50 percent. Products brought into a free zone within the UAE are exempt from import duties. However, goods exported from a free zone into any of the Emirates are treated as imports and are liable for customs duty.
- Such duties are levied on the Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) value. Some goods including all transit cargo, are exempt from duty (for example foodstuffs, medicines and public sector imports) although the customs authorities may call for a cash or bank guarantee as security, refundable to the owner of the goods on their re-export outside the UAE.
- The UAE's customs tariffs are based on the World Customs Organisation nomenclature system. Duties may be levied ad valorem or specific to the goods concerned.
- The UK customs classification helpline (Tel: 01702 366 077) provides advice on customer classification numbers. The helpline is open from 09.00-16.30.
- Enquiries can also be e-mailed to classification.tso@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk.

Import Duties

VAT was introduced in the UAE on 1st January 2018 which will of course have implications for the F&B retail sector. The introduction of VAT has not negatively impacted the growth in the sector. demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

- VAT was introduced in the UAE on 1st January 2018 which will of course have implications for the food and drink retail sector. It is hoped that this will not have any negative impact on growth in the sector, although it will take a period of adjustment for consumers initially. As a general rule, 5% is being applied to goods and services in the UAE. There are some major exemptions for 'big ticket' items such as school fees, healthcare and private lease agreements which have assuaged concerns about VAT fueling inflationary pressures.
- Just as in the UK, companies are collecting the levy on behalf of the government and firms should now know their filing deadlines, with SMEs typically having to report on a quarterly basis and larger firms obliged to file monthly.
- There will be no direct impact on exporters as VAT only applies to UAE based companies. However, it is important that UK companies are aware of developments and how, for example, their distributors & resellers are applying VAT in terms of the end price for the consumer. British exporters should also be aware that UAE importers are obliged to record and pay a 'reverse charge' when bringing in goods from overseas meaning that the tax and administrative burden falls on the UAE buyer.
- Further information on UAE food and drink regulations can be found here - <https://www.dm.gov.ae/wps/wcm/connect/2a153865-07d6-4ed1-a661-68f2990d3ac2/IMPORT+AND+RE-EXPORT+REQUIREMENTS+FOR+FOODSTUFF+Eng.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>



Route to Market

5



Route to Market

There are several routes to entering the market in the UAE. Most food & drink retail outlets have a preference to import through a consolidator which can ease out the pressure of labelling requirements. demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

Consolidator

- A consolidator is probably the most efficient and practical way of distributing food products in the UAE. The advantage for UK companies is that they can export very small quantities, without the hassle of sending in bulk to various distributors.
- The big disadvantage in this method is the inability to monitor the products in market and really understand marketing factors and potential.
- Several supermarkets in the UAE have tie-ups or their own consolidating offices in the UK, which makes it easier for UK food and drink companies to export their products to the retailer via those in-house consolidators.

The below are some of the popular consolidators operating in the Middle East.



Route to Market

There are several routes to entering the market in the UAE. Most food & drink retail outlets have a preference to import through a consolidator which can ease out the pressure of labelling requirements. demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

Distributor

- Most of the larger distributing companies cover all sectors in the trade, including hotels/service industry and retail. The majority of hotels in Dubai prefer to buy products through a well-established local distributor. In addition, a good distributor should be able to offer advice on the local market, product potential and detailed import regulations.
- The average importer mark-up on food products is about 10-15 percent. Most distributors supply the retail and/or the food service industry including hotels, restaurants, catering companies and airline companies.
- Some larger well-established distributors supply the retail industry and describe themselves as sales and marketing support service companies. They work extensively around the year on product launches, advertising, public relations, events and exhibitions.
- Some distributors are proactive in working with renowned chefs to conduct workshops, kitchen courses and other business development activities that promote new products to their network.

The below are some of the popular seafood distributors operating in the UAE.



East Fish Processing

Route to Market

There are several routes to entering the market in the UAE. Most food & drink retail outlets have a preference to import through a consolidator which can ease out the pressure of labelling requirements. demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

Direct to Retailers

- The majority of supermarkets prefer to procure directly from a consolidator. There are some leading supermarkets who still favour the traditional route of sampling the product directly from the manufacturer. Retail food prices are generally 20-25 percent above import/wholesale prices.

The below are some of the popular retailers operating in the UAE.



Route to Market

There are several routes to entering the market in the UAE. Most food & drink retail outlets have a preference to import through a consolidator which can ease out the pressure of labelling requirements. demand for overseas products is perennially strong.

Business Set-up

- The option of setting up a manufacturing base in the UAE is becoming more popular within the sector. The free zones are the most effective way of owning 100 percent of the company, thus offering a more productive business and tax incentive to foreign companies. However, companies in the free zones can't trade onshore and would still need onshore distributors/agents for them to supply to the foodservice and food retail sectors. There are more than 37 free trade zones operating in the UAE and below are some of the popular free zones in UAE:
 - Jebel Ali free trade zone
 - Dubai airport free zone
 - Dubai Multi Commodities Centre
 - Dubai Logistics City
 - Ras Al Khaimah Free Trade Zone
 - Dubai International Financial Centre





Business Etiquette and General Information

6



Business Etiquette and General Information

The UAE is a Muslim country and it is important that visitors are aware and show respect to the local traditions and sensitivities and always behave and dress modestly, particularly when visiting religious sites.

Language

- Arabic is the most commonly spoken language, followed by English. When dealing with a government agency, Arabic is required for all official documents, forms, laws and decrees are in Arabic. Arabic is often preferred within some public sector organisations. Therefore, it helps to have a working knowledge of the language – although you will find English is the common language of business.
- English is widely spoken throughout the country. It is preferable to have one side of your business card printed in Arabic; however, this is not compulsory.
- During meetings you should:
 - Exchange business cards immediately after introductions, presenting with both hands or with the right.
 - Do not offer anything with your left hand, nor receive anything with your left hand.
 - Keep cards on the table, do not put them away immediately.



Business Etiquette and General Information

Personal relationships are a vital key to success in doing business in UAE. It is preferable for exporters to have a face-to-face business dialogue with their UAE counterparts. Face-to-face meetings are preferred, as phone or emails are sometimes seen as impersonal. *for overseas products, the market is perennially strong.*

Meetings and Presentations

- Appointments should be made no more than two weeks in advance and confirmed a few days before the actual meeting as priorities may change. This step is necessary to build trust and bond with your local partner. It's important to connect with the decision maker in your target organization. This can be achieved via introduction by a mutual contact, exhibitions, networking receptions or through the British Centres for Business (BCB) in the form of a Trade Advisory Service (TAS). Through a TAS, the BCB can provide a programme-arranging service, whereby your company would be introduced to the most appropriate contact and an appointment can be confirmed on your behalf.
- Continuous personal contact with potential and existing partners/clients and regular visits to the market are of the utmost importance and it is natural for the business relationship to be built with time.
- The customary greeting is "As-salam alaikum" (peace be upon you), to which the reply is "Wa alaikum as-salam" (and upon you be peace). When entering a meeting, general introductions will begin with a handshake. You should greet each of your Emirati counterparts individually. Avoid shaking hands with the opposite sex unless they extend their hand first.
- When you are in the UAE, especially on business, coffee, as well as tea, will often be offered to you in offices and at Arab's homes. Offering coffee is symbolic of hospitality.



Business Etiquette and General Information

Working hours can vary between the Emirates and may also change between summer and winter. overseas products is perennially strong.

Working Hour

- The public sector takes a Friday/Saturday weekend. In the private sector some companies take Friday and others Friday/Saturday. Friday is the Muslim holy day and many smaller retailers are closed until mid-afternoon or evening. Most retail outlets remain open until late evening.
- The private sector has traditionally worked a split shift from 0830-1300 and 1600-1900 Saturday to Thursday. Increasingly though the private sector is adopting a 0900-1700 working day.
- Federal government and administrative offices in United Arab Emirates generally work from 0730-1430 Sunday to Thursday. Working hours vary during Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting. Most officials work from 0900-1300, but many useful contacts can be made and renewed during and after the evening 'Iftar' meal.
- Banks are open from 0800-1300 Sunday to Thursday.



Business Etiquette and General Information

The UAE is a considerably modern country in relation to the rest of the Middle East region. As such, many traditional attitudes and business practices are evolving towards a more westernised approach. ~~overseas products is perennially strong.~~

Negotiations

- It is essential to obtain legal, financial and taxation advice, along with undertaking necessary research, all of which are critical when considering new markets. Ensure all your documents are reviewed by an appropriate advisor before signing anything.

Currency

- The unit of currency is the UAE Dirham (AED). One Dirham is made up of 100 fils. The currency is pegged to the US Dollar at a rate of AED 3.67 to \$1.

Telephones

- The international dialing code for the UAE is +971. Landline numbers in Dubai are prefixed with 04; Abu Dhabi with 02 and mobile numbers with 050, 052, 055, 056, or 058.

Hotels

- When you are planning your visit to the UAE please bear in mind that hotel space is at a premium. During the high season (October-May) it can be very difficult to find good quality hotel accommodation. The problem is particularly acute around the dates of major exhibitions.

Business Etiquette and General Information

The UAE is a considerably modern country in relation to the rest of the Middle East region. As such, many traditional attitudes and business practices are evolving towards a more westernised approach. **overseas products is perennially strong.**

Getting Around

- The easiest way to get around during a visit to the UAE is by taxi. They are generally clean, inexpensive and efficient. There are a number of taxi companies in the UAE and taxis are available at all major hotels and shopping malls.
- They can also be flagged on the street. All are metered. The starting charge for a taxi flagged in the street is 3 Dirhams between 0600 and 2200 (3.50 between 2200 and 0600).
- Taxis from the airport start at 20 or 25 Dirhams depending on the time of day. There are many local and international car hire companies operating in UAE. Visitors will require an international driving licence in order to hire a car in UAE.
- Uber also functions in the UAE and can be used to commute around. The Uber app is the same as the one in the UK. There is also a local based Uber style company called Careem. Unless you are going to a major landmark (e.g. a hotel or mall) a public taxi will expect you to direct them to your desired destination. While Ubers and Careems are slightly more expensive than a public taxi, the advantage of an Uber or Careem is that they are reliable, trackable and use GPS and you will not need to direct them.



Contacts

British Embassy, Abu Dhabi

Address: Khalid bin Al Waleed St (Street 22), PO Box 248, Abu Dhabi

Tel: +971 2 610 1111

Fax: +971 2 610 1585

Email: commercial.abudhabi@fco.gov.uk

British Embassy, Dubai

Address: Al Seef Road, PO Box 65, Bur Dubai

Tel: +971 4 309 4444

Fax: +971 4 309 4302

Email: ukti.dubai@fco.gov.uk

British Centres for Business

Wuraola Ogundimu

Trade Manager, Consumer & Retail

Tel: +971 4 369 2899

Mobile: +971 52 905 3143

wuraola.ogundimu@bcbuae.com

www.linkedin.com/in/wuraola-ogundimu-4523a872/