



JB HARVEST GLOBAL EXPORTS

Fresh Produce Export Compliance & Handling Guide

A practical reference for commercial buyers covering enquiry requirements, product quality controls, export documentation, packaging, traceability, and temperature-conscious logistics.

Prepared for importers, distributors, wholesalers, and food-service buyers

Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India



1. Purpose and Scope

This guide outlines the standard commercial information and operational controls commonly required when arranging exports of fresh fruits, vegetables, and other agricultural produce from India. It is designed to help buyers prepare a complete enquiry and understand the typical steps from product confirmation to shipment.

Important compliance note

Import requirements vary by product, destination country, season, port, and buyer specification. Final documentation, treatment, inspection, labelling, and testing requirements must be confirmed for each shipment with the buyer, relevant authorities, customs broker, and logistics partners.

Information required from the buyer

- **Product:** commodity, variety, grade, size or count, maturity, and any specific tolerances.
- **Volume:** required quantity, preferred minimum order quantity, and shipment frequency.
- **Destination:** importing country, final port or airport, and consignee details.
- **Packaging:** carton or crate format, net weight, labelling language, palletisation, and retail or bulk requirements.
- **Timeline:** requested loading window, delivery target, and whether the order is spot, seasonal, or recurring.
- **Commercial terms:** preferred Incoterm, payment method, currency, inspection terms, and insurance responsibility.
- **Compliance:** destination-specific permits, residue limits, treatment protocols, lab tests, certificates, or approved facility requirements.

Recommended enquiry format

Field	Example
Product	Fresh pomegranate - commercial export grade
Quantity	1 x 40 ft reefer container
Destination	Jebel Ali, UAE
Packaging	3.5 kg ventilated cartons, buyer label
Delivery window	Loading during the second half of September
Other requirements	Phytosanitary certificate, agreed residue testing, palletised cargo

2. Product Quality, Inspection and Traceability

Fresh produce quality is evaluated against agreed commercial specifications. The applicable criteria should be documented before procurement or packing begins so that both parties use the same acceptance standard.

Typical quality checkpoints

- Variety, size, weight, colour, maturity, firmness, appearance, and internal quality where relevant.
- Absence of visible decay, pest damage, excessive bruising, cuts, soil contamination, or foreign matter.
- Uniformity within the package and conformance with the agreed grade and tolerance limits.
- Packaging integrity, ventilation, net weight, label accuracy, and pallet condition.
- Temperature at packing, loading, and dispatch where temperature control is required.

Traceability controls

Traceability should allow a shipment or lot to be linked to procurement, packing, inspection, and dispatch records. Depending on the product and buyer requirement, a lot reference may include supplier or farm identification, harvest or procurement date, packhouse date, batch number, carton marking, pallet number, and container details.

Buyer approval is essential

Representative product specifications, packaging artwork, label wording, and any requested photographs or pre-shipment inspection arrangements should be approved before final packing whenever commercially practical.

Food safety and residue requirements

Destination markets may prescribe maximum residue limits, microbiological criteria, contaminant limits, treatment restrictions, and approved sampling methods. Testing should be arranged only against the agreed specification and through an appropriate laboratory where required. A test report is not a substitute for verifying the importing market requirements.

Packaging and labelling considerations

- Use food-contact suitable materials appropriate for the commodity and transit duration.
- Provide sufficient strength, ventilation, cushioning, and moisture management for the selected transport mode.
- Confirm net weight, gross weight, carton count, dimensions, and pallet pattern before freight booking.
- Apply required labels such as product name, origin, packer/exporter details, lot reference, net weight, handling instructions, and buyer-specific marks.
- Use pallets, straps, corner boards, liners, absorbent materials, or modified-atmosphere solutions only where suitable and agreed.

3. Export Documentation and Shipment Readiness

The exact document set depends on the commodity, destination, transport mode, Incoterm, payment method, and regulatory requirements. The following list is a commercial reference rather than a universal checklist.

Document	Purpose / application
Commercial invoice	Seller, buyer, goods description, quantity, value, currency, terms, and other required customs information.
Packing list	Package count, net and gross weight, dimensions, marks, pallet details, and shipment references.
Transport document	Bill of lading, sea waybill, air waybill, or other carrier document, as applicable.
Phytosanitary certificate	Issued by the competent authority when required for regulated plants and plant products.
Certificate of origin	Provided where required by the buyer, customs, trade agreement, or banking terms.
Inspection or test report	Used only when contractually or regulatorily required and based on the agreed scope.
Fumigation or treatment certificate	Applicable only where a specified treatment is required and permitted.
Insurance certificate	Required when insurance is arranged by the seller or under the agreed commercial terms.
Other destination documents	May include import permits, health declarations, conformity records, chamber documents, or buyer forms.

Pre-dispatch verification

- Confirm final product, quantity, packaging, labels, consignee details, and shipping marks.
- Verify carrier booking, container type, temperature set-point if applicable, cut-off time, and port requirements.
- Check document names, addresses, descriptions, quantities, weights, values, and reference numbers for consistency.
- Document loading condition, seal number, container number, and dispatch temperature where relevant.
- Share draft documents with the buyer or bank for review when the transaction structure requires it.

4. Temperature-Conscious Handling and Logistics

Fresh produce remains biologically active after harvest. Transit performance depends on product condition, maturity, pre-cooling, packaging, airflow, relative humidity, temperature stability, handling time, and the characteristics of the selected route.

Operational principles

- **Commodity-specific planning:** Confirm the product's suitable temperature and handling range before booking transport.
- **Pre-cooling:** Reduce field or packing heat where required before loading into refrigerated transport.
- **Airflow:** Use packaging and loading patterns that permit the intended circulation of conditioned air.
- **Loading discipline:** Avoid unnecessary exposure, delays, door openings, and mixed cargo that may create incompatibility.
- **Monitoring:** Use calibrated temperature measurement or data logging when agreed for the shipment.
- **Handover control:** Record key timings and condition at transfer points, particularly during cross-docking or customs inspection.

Reefer shipment readiness checklist

Step	Verification point
1	Container appears clean, dry, odour-free, and suitable for food cargo.
2	Ventilation, humidity setting, fresh-air exchange, and temperature set-point are confirmed.
3	Cargo temperature is checked against the agreed loading range.
4	Cartons and pallets are arranged to avoid blocking airflow channels.
5	Container and seal numbers are recorded and loading evidence is retained.
6	Monitoring device details are documented where a logger is used.

No single temperature suits every commodity

Temperature, ventilation, and humidity settings must be selected for the specific product and shipment. Some commodities are sensitive to chilling, ethylene, moisture loss, or incompatible mixed loading.

5. Commercial Coordination and Buyer Responsibilities

A successful shipment requires timely decisions and consistent information from the exporter, buyer, customs broker, inspection parties, carrier, and destination representatives. Delays in approvals or changes after packing can affect cost, documentation, product condition, and sailing schedules.

Buyer responsibilities typically include

- Confirming that the product may be imported and that all required permits or registrations are valid.
- Providing accurate consignee, importer, tax, customs, and destination delivery information.
- Approving specifications, labels, packaging, document wording, and inspection requirements on time.
- Arranging destination customs clearance, duties, taxes, port handling, and local delivery unless otherwise agreed.
- Communicating any market-specific requirements before procurement, packing, or booking begins.
- Inspecting documents promptly and notifying the exporter of discrepancies before originals or final electronic documents are issued.

How to request a quotation

Submit your enquiry through the JB Harvest website with the product name, quantity, destination country or port, packaging preference, and expected delivery timeline. The export team can then review availability, specifications, logistics options, and commercial terms.

Include in your enquiry	Why it matters
Product and variety	Determines seasonality, sourcing, quality criteria, and regulatory classification.
Required quantity	Supports packing, freight, pallet, and container planning.
Destination port/country	Determines route, document set, import requirements, and transit time.
Packaging preference	Affects cost, ventilation, product protection, dimensions, and labelling.
Required timeline	Helps align harvest, procurement, packing, inspection, and carrier schedules.

JB Harvest Global Exports

Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India

Commercial enquiries: please use the enquiry form on the JB Harvest website.

Disclaimer: This publication is a general commercial reference and does not constitute legal, regulatory, customs, food-safety, or technical advice. Requirements must be verified for each shipment with the competent authorities and qualified service providers.