

EXPORTING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS/FRESH PRODUCE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



1. What are the key requirements for exporting agricultural products/fresh produce and which Government agencies are to be approached to complete the export process?

Commercial Farms, Individual Farmers/Growers, and Consolidators/middlemen can become major exporters in Jamaica. Once you have concluded your contract with an overseas buyer to export more than 20lbs of agricultural product/fresh produce, you will

need to comply with the following requirements to complete the export process¹. Included below are summary steps to export agricultural products/fresh produce and the key agencies involved.



The requirements of each agency are included in subsequent responses to questions outlined in this FAQ. Before commencing the export process, exporters should also ensure that their facilities are internationally accredited where relevant as detailed in question # 8 below. It is also important that you consult with your overseas buyers to establish whether you would need to satisfy any specific market requirements prior to engaging the export process.

NB. For the exportation of mangoes to the USA, exporters will be required to engage the Plant Quarantine Produce

Inspection Branch for special instructions. Kindly note that mangoes from Jamaica must be irradiated or undergo hot water treatment before they are allowed into the U.S. market. Kindly work with your overseas buyer to arrange for and undertake the irradiation process in the USA.

Additionally, [these established packing houses](#) are approved to export mangoes to the USA and can be engaged should you have products available for that market.

1. Those individuals/entities exporting less than 20lbs of produce or those exporting for non-commercial purposes will not be required to have a certified packing facility or register as an exporter but will still have to obtain a phytosanitary certificate prior to exporting the items in new, clean packages (re-use is not permitted). Only one shipment of this nature will be permitted each month.

2. What are the steps to set up a commercial Farm in Jamaica?

In order to set up a commercial farm in Jamaica, product research and farm planning are important. By following the steps outlined [here](#), you will be guided on how to set up a commercial farm.

For assistance with determining the suitability of crops for the identified farm, you may contact the Rural Agricultural Development Authority ([RADA](#)) office closest to you.

3. What are the requirements of the Plant Quarantine Produce Inspection Branch in facilitating the export of agricultural products/fresh produce?

Before attempting to export agricultural products (fresh produce and dried herbs), exporters must engage the Plant Quarantine Produce Inspection Branch (PQPI) of the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries (MoAF) using the procedure outlined [here](#) to obtain a packing house letter.

Exporters are required to build or utilise a packing house facility guided by the requirements outlined [here](#).

The PQPI ensures that only the highest quality, pest free cut flowers and fresh produce are exported from and imported into the island. As such the PQPI also issues a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) attesting the plant and plant produce is pest-free prior to each shipment.

A Phytosanitary Certificate is issued after the consignment has been thoroughly inspected and found visibly free from pests. Treatment information such as the date of the treatment, dosage rates and the chemical used for the treatment, is recorded on the certificates.

A Phytosanitary Certificate issued by an exporting country will attest to the importing country's import

phytosanitary requirements under a section classified as additional declaration.

For further details, you may contact the PQPI at:

193 Old Hope Road
Kingston 6
Telephone: 876 977 0637/876 977 6401
Fax 876-927-1904
Email: webmaster@moa.gov.jm

OR

Sangster's International Airport
Montego Bay Export Complex
Telephone: 876-979-2586
Contact Person: Ms. Debbie Binns
Email: webmaster@moa.gov.jm

4. Are there existing packing houses that I can use to facilitate my shipments?

In the event that you opt not to build your own packing house, there are established and certified packing houses found [here](#) that may be engaged in a private contractual arrangement to provide this service for you. You will need to get a letter from the packing house, indicating that you/your company has engaged the services of the packing house to pack for export. That letter will be submitted to the PQPI, who will then issue you an official letter to be uploaded to ASYCUDA to complete the Exporter Registration process.

5. What are the requirements of JACRA in facilitating the export of agricultural products/fresh produce?

The Jamaica Agricultural Commodities Regulatory Authority (JACRA) is responsible for the regulation, promotion, standardization, and development of the following regulated agricultural commodities industry: cocoa, coffee, coconut, and spices (nutmeg, pimento, ginger, and turmeric) and any by-products from these commodities.



A JACRA export licence is required once a regulated commodity to be shipped exceeds 5kg. Licences are also required for by-products/derivatives of the regulated commodities such as oils. In the case of coffee or cocoa by-products, a licence will be required if the content comprises more than 1% of the product being exported. Exporters who fall in these product categories must present their JACRA licence to JAMPRO as part of the exporter registration process.

Further information on JACRA's requirements and procedures, may be accessed [here](#).

6. Once I have received licences/permits from the PQPI and/or JACRA, what is the process to register as an exporter?

As per the JAMPRO Act, 1990, Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) is the agency which facilitates the exporter registration process.

In order to begin the online registration process, all individual exporters will be required to present a government issued ID, TRN and have a working email address. Companies who are desirous of exporting will be required to present their company's Certificate of Incorporation/Business Registration and a working email address. A more comprehensive guide to the exporter registration process and the agencies involved in same, may be perused [here](#).

7. Why would I need a Certificate of Origin from the Trade Board Limited (TBL) when exporting my agricultural products/fresh produce?

A Certificate of Origin may be issued in the context of preferential trade agreements between Jamaica and various export markets, which enable exporters to benefit from tariff/duty exemption or tariff/duty reduction for eligible exports; OR it may be requested by the Customs Administration in the importing country, importers, freight forwarders or banks. Click [here](#) for details on how to engage with the Trade Board Limited and the

procedure for applying for a certificate of origin.

8. Are there any international standards/market requirements pertaining to the certification of my facility when supplying overseas markets?

Demand for food safety is growing in key markets across the world due to complex challenges in today's food supply chain. As a result, many of the world's largest food retailers are mandating supplier certification to Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) schemes.

An exporter, in considering which certification to acquire, must be guided by the requirements of the export market being targeted.

There are a number of national/international certifications available for businesses seeking to export agricultural products/fresh produce and to ensure compliance with Good Agricultural Practices.

Relevant certification available include the:

- [Certification of Agricultural Produce-CAP](#) (local certification for farmers);
- Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point ([HACCP](#)) recognition programme (which also applies to local agro-processors)
- [Global Gap certification](#) - This certification gives the consuming public and retailers the assurance that food being consumed has reached acceptable levels of safety and quality. Without this certification, producers can be denied access to intended markets. This standard is increasingly becoming compulsory as it provides evidence of good agricultural/fish farming practices to most retailers.

Additionally, exporters to Europe and other markets areas (Asia and America) also need to comply with the production standards determined by the GLOBALGAP certification scheme. Additional information can be found at globalgap.org.

- [Canada GAP](#) - This certification combines national food safety standards with a certification system for the safe production, storage and packing of fresh fruits and vegetables. Canada GAP targets producers, packers and storage intermediaries and aims at helping this group implement food safety procedures in their facilities. Additional information can be found at www.canadagap.ca.

Fresh Produce exporters to the US must also comply with the Produce Safety Rule under the US Food Safety Modernisation Act (FSMA) found [here](#). Additional information can be accessed from the Food Safety Modernisation Branch of the Bureau of Standards.

9. Does JAMPRO have a listing of service providers who can assist my facility in achieving international accreditation?

JAMPRO has compiled a list of independent service providers who are willing to assist farmers in acquiring Global Gap certification. [These entities](#) may be contracted directly by individual farmers.

The National Certification Body of Jamaica (NCBJ), an agency of the Ministry of Industry Investment and Commerce (MIIC) also offers assistance to farmers and exporters to acquire local and international certification, including the Global Gap certification, CAP and HACCP outlined above.

The NCBJ may be contacted via their website for further information.

10. Are there any special requirements for the export of Organics?

Organic food products are increasingly in demand throughout the world as a means of guaranteeing quality and safety for consumers.

The Bureau of Standards of Jamaica (BSJ) has developed a locally recognized organic Certification Programme to aid and improve the Jamaican Organic Industry. The programme is administered by the NCBJ and offers certification which will allow a farm or processing facility to sell, label and represent their products as organic locally. For information on

any special requirements for the export of organics, exporters may engage the NCBJ for details on their Organic Certification Programme or contact the Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement (JOAM) via their website.

11. What is the procedure and documentation required by Jamaica Customs Agency for the shipment of products by air or sea:

In order to export by sea or air, exporters will have to adhere to the following procedure:

EXPORTING BY SEA



- Complete booking with the shipping company
- Complete the Electronic Single Administrative Document (E-SAD) within the Automated Systems for Customs Data (ASYCUDA WORLD).
- Scan and upload Commercial Invoice and requisite regulatory approvals (permits)
- Pay customs processing and PAJ fees. where the value of the goods is below USD500.00, no processing fee is applicable.
- Contact Jamaica Customs Contraband Enforcement Unit 24 hours before loading goods into container. Contact numbers are 876-9237641 or 876-7573912
- Complete Dock Receipt issued by shipping agent (terminal purposes).
- Present dock receipt to wharf office (pay security fee)



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- Pay customs processing fee
- Deliver cargo to wharf

EXPORTING BY AIR



- Complete customs declaration including invoice, certificate/ permit (where applicable), tally sheet and dispatch form.
- Contact Jamaica Customs Contraband Enforcement Unit 24 hours before delivering goods to the airline. Contact numbers are 923 7641 or 7573912
- Present documents and goods to export officer for checking, signing and numbering.
- Pay customs processing fee (\$3,005). Where the value of the goods is below USD500.00, no processing fee is applicable.
- Deliver cargo to airline's warehouse
- Present tally sheet along with dispatch form to the airline representative who will facilitate the entry of goods into the warehouse.
- Some airlines may require prior booking.

12. What are the export market opportunities for Jamaican agricultural products/fresh produce and how does JAMPRO assist exporters in finding markets?

Jamaican farmers currently export agricultural products/ fresh produce to over 60 countries¹. Opportunities for

Jamaican fresh produce have been identified in the areas of:

- hot peppers
- papayas
- mangoes
- sweet potatoes
- Irish potatoes
- onion
- breadfruit

Primarily, JAMPRO assists exporters in the following ways:

- **Inward missions** - JAMPRO facilitates buyers virtually or when they visit Jamaica. JAMPRO schedules individual business meeting with buyer and suppliers based on the buyer's expressed interests. This is of no cost to the supplier
- **Trade Fair participation** - JAMPRO coordinates participation in various Trade Shows. This is done on a cost sharing basis with suppliers.
- **Outward missions** - JAMPRO facilitates outward missions into a market with suppliers and arrange business to business (B2B) matchmaking meetings.
- **Buyer recruitment** - Our team facilitates buyer introduction to entities that are export ready. .

Prior to introducing Jamaican suppliers to international buyers, JAMPRO requires that your business is export ready. To assess your export readiness, you may complete the Export Readiness Checker found [here](#).

Additionally, businesses will be asked to share their export history, company profile, markets of interest, certifications acquired, production capacity and export capacity.

¹ Source:
<https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/JAM/Year/2017/TradeFlow/EXPIMP/Partner/by-country#:~:text=In%202017%2C%20Jamaica%20major%20trading,Trinidad%20and%20Tobago%20and%20Colombia>



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