

Moving fishery products or bivalve molluscs from Great Britain and non EU countries into Northern Ireland

How to move or import fishery products or bivalve molluscs for human consumption from Great Britain or non EU countries into Northern Ireland.

If you are moving goods under the NI Retail Movement Scheme please see Northern Ireland Retail Movement Scheme: how to register and seal consignments - GOV.UK. The following guidance relates only to movements to NI that fall outside of the NI Retail Movement Scheme.

'Fishery products' means all seawater or freshwater animals (except for live bivalve molluscs, live echinoderms, live tunicates and live marine gastropods, and all mammals, reptiles and frogs) whether wild or farmed and including all edible forms, whole fish or parts and products of such animals.

'Bivalve molluscs' means filter-feeding lamellibranch molluscs. Filter feeders are at risk of ingesting dangerous bacteria and biotoxins. Because of this risk these species can only be commercially harvested from classified production areas. These areas are monitored to ensure they meet [legislative standards](#).

Movement from GB and approved non-EU countries into Northern Ireland

Movements to Northern Ireland (NI) must meet the following conditions:

- come from an approved non-EU country
- be accompanied by an appropriately signed export health certification
- come from [EU-approved fishery product establishments](#) or approved bivalve mollusc production areas
- enter NI through an officially designated Point of Entry (POE) where veterinary/hygiene checks are carried out by an Official Fish Inspector (OFI)
- all consignments must be pre-notified to the POE prior to arrival
- meet the public health conditions for the production and placing on the market of fishery products and bivalve molluscs are outlined in Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 and Regulation (EC) 853/2004

Some approved non-EU countries are only allowed to export either fishery products or bivalve molluscs. You can check under which category your product falls in Regulation [2021/405](#).

Great Britain (GB) has been listed by the EU as an approved third country.

Requirements to move a consignment

Registering on TRACES NT

To move fish into NI you need to register on TRACES NT, which is an EU online platform used when importing certain products including food of animal origin and certain food of non-animal

origin. DAERA has [guidance on how to register on TRACES NT](#).

Pre-notifying the arrival of products

You need to pre-notify the arrival of fishery products or bivalve molluscs into NI using a Common Health Entry Document (CHED-P) on Traces NT. This must be done at least 24 hours prior to arrival. Some Point of Entries (POEs) will allow four hours pre-notification due to the perishability of fishery products or live bivalve molluscs (LBMs). Consult the local councils who conduct the checks for further information.

DAERA has [guidance on completing a CHED-P](#).

Health certificate

You need to provide an export health certificate (EHC), except for direct landings of fresh fish in NI ports from UK-flagged fishing vessels. Fishery products and bivalve molluscs have different EHCs.

Catch certificate

You may need to provide a catch certificate (see more details below under [Illegal fishing](#)) however these are not required for LBMs.

Controls at point of entry in NI from GB and non-EU countries

To move fish and fishery products and LBMs into NI, the consignment should enter via a Point of Entry (POE) in NI, where Official Fish Inspector (OFI's) will carry out any necessary checks.

[DAERA has details of the Northern Ireland Points of Entry](#) including location, direction signage and what is expected on arrival.

Documentary checks

Documentary checks will be carried out at the point of entry into Northern Ireland. To avoid delays it is essential that all necessary documents are complete, accurate and submitted within the notification timelines. The 24 hour pre-notification period will allow POE staff time to raise any errors with traders and ensure as swift a journey through the POE as possible.

Identity and physical checks

Identity check

This is a visual inspection to ensure that documents accompanying the food consignment match the labelling and the content of the consignment. All fishery products and bivalve molluscs are subject to an identity check, in some cases this may just be an official seal check. POE staff will check to ensure the establishment and country of origin listed on the labelling have both been approved for import into the EU. If you are using an official seal, [include details in your CHED-P](#).

Physical check

A physical check on food may include checks on:

- the means of transport
- packaging
- labelling
- temperature
- fitness of product

Sampling for analysis and laboratory testing may be carried out in line with the National Monitoring Plan and any other check necessary to verify compliance with food law. Fishery products and bivalve molluscs are selected for physical inspection at rates established in [Regulation 2019/2129](#).

There are additional [provisions for implementing Intensified Official Controls](#) (IOCs). This allows for additional checks (e.g. sampling) for products that previously had serious failures (e.g. presence of veterinary residues in farmed shrimp) or subject to fraudulent practices. In addition, there are specific protection measures for specific fishery products from certain countries, e.g. farmed fishery products from India require test certificates and 50% sampling rate requirements.

Identification marking

Consignments of fishery products and bivalve molluscs must display an identification mark in accordance with [regulatory requirements](#), which apply to most products of animal origin.

It is the responsibility of food businesses in NI to ensure their products do not pose a health risk to the public. The destination food business operator (the NI based food premises), at its own discretion, will carry out a system of their own checks under a predefined HACCP (food safety management) plan to meet required hygiene standards.

You can find more information in our [Guidance on health and identification marks](#).

Illegal fishing

Fish movements into NI from GB and non-EU countries are subject to requirements related to [Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated \(IUU\) fishing](#).

These movements require certification (a validated catch certificate) detailing when the fish was caught and that the vessel was acting legally.

A catch certificate and other IUU documentation may be required to accompany fish intended for human consumption, where:

- you directly move fish from GB to NI
- fish landed in GB ports (including Isle of Man) by NI flagged vessels is subsequently moved to NI
- fish sourced from GB flagged vessels landed in GB ports is subsequently moved by you as the trader to NI
- you move fish products to GB and some form of processing/storage is completed in GB before onward movement to NI (you may have to provide details to complete the relevant catch certificate information for the GB trader)

You do not need an export catch certificate if you are moving any of the following:

- farmed fish and farmed shellfish
- freshwater fish or freshwater shellfish
- fish fry or larvae
- some molluscs (including mussels, cockles, oysters, and scallops)

See the full [list of products excluded from the definition of 'fishery products'](#).

For further information read [Create a UK catch certificate guidance](#).

Storage document for fish stored on premises in GB but not processed

If you're moving fish from GB to NI, for any fish sourced from another country that has been stored in GB for 24 hours or longer, but not processed in any way, you'll need to [create a storage document](#). You must keep a copy of the catch certificate from the original consignment with the storage document.

Processing statement - for fish processed in GB

If you're moving fish from GB to NI, for any fish sourced from another country that has been processed in GB, you'll need to [create a processing statement](#). You must keep a copy of the catch certificate from the original consignment with the processing statement.

Imports of scallops from the United States

Imports of live, frozen or processed bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates and marine gastropods for human consumption from the United States are only permitted from Washington State and Massachusetts.

However, food business operators may import the adductor muscle from pectinidae (scallops) of non-aquaculture origin, completely separated from the viscera and gonads.