

Importation of Basmati under Pakistan-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (PSFTA)

1. In terms of the Pakistan-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (PSFTA), the Government of Sri Lanka permits importation of an annual quota of 6000 metric tons of PK385 variety of Basmati rice or Super Kernel Basmati from Pakistan on duty free basis. The Department of Commerce facilitates importation of the said quota by recommending duty waivers to Director General of Sri Lanka Customs.
2. Duty waiver recommendations will be issued on first-come, first serve basis, subject to a maximum quantity of 500 m/t per year per importer, but government/semi-government institutions and community-based organizations maximum quantity will be 1,000 m/t per year.
3. The order of priority for issuance of duty waiver recommendations will be;
 - (i) Government/ Semi-Government and community-based entities
 - (ii) Members of the private sector Importers Associations
 - (iii) Other importers, respectively.

4. Registration Procedure

- 4.1 During the month of October every year, the Department of Commerce will publish a newspaper advertisement in all three languages (Sinhala/Tamil/English) on the availability of annual quota of 6000 m/t of PK385 variety of Basmati Rice or Super Kernel Basmati for duty-free importation during the following calendar year (January- December).
- 4.2 The format of the application and the relevant guidelines will be published in the Department of Commerce website, www.doc.gov.lk
- 4.3 The Department of Commerce will charge a first-time registration fee of Rs. 5,000.00. While registration has to be renewed every year, the renewal fee will be Rs. 1,000.00. However, no first-time registration or renewal fee will be applicable to government/semi-government institutions and community-based organizations.
- 4.4 Although there is no deadline for registration of importers, issuance of duty-waiver recommendations will be subjected to the availability of quota.

5. Documents to be submitted to the Department of Commerce for the registration

- a) Duly filled application (Original) (application can be downloaded from the DoC website).
- b) The original and a certified copy of Company registration (the original will be returned after verification)
- c) Names and Company details of the company directors/proprietor
- d) Brief description of the company activities (Company Profile)
- e) Bank details of the company (Past consecutive 03 months bank statement)
- f) Any other documents/ information requested by the Department of Commerce

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6. Registration of Importers

Once registered, an importer will be issued with an official letter of registration by the Director General of Commerce.

7. Submission of Importer Requests for Duty Waivers

For each and every imported shipment, a registered importer has to submit to Director General of Commerce a formal letter of request for duty-wavier recommendation/s along with the documents listed below.

- a) The Original Letter of Registration issued by the Department of Commerce
- b) Certificate of Origin issued by the Trade and Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP)
- c) Phytosanitary certificate issued by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research Department of Plant Protection of Pakistan
- d) The original and a copy of the Bill of Lading (the original will be returned after verification)
- e) Commercial invoice
- f) Certificate of Fumigation issued by any institute approved the Ministry of National Food Security and Research Department of Plant Protection of Pakistan
- g) Import CUSDEC
- h) Quality certificate/s issued by M/s. Trading Cooperation of Pakistan, confirming the exact variety of Basmati
- i) Packing list
- j) Any other documents requested by the Director General, Department of Commerce

After verification of the above documents, the Department of Commerce will issue a letter of recommendation for duty waiver and hand over its original to the importer, so the importer can produce it to the Director General of Customs. The Department of Commerce will fax a copy of the said letter to Director General of Customs directly for smooth coordination.

8. Variety and quality certification

The Director General of Customs is expected to make necessary arrangements to ensure that the rice imported is of PK385 grade Basmati or Super Kernel Basmati only and the suitability for human consumption. For this purpose, the Director General of Customs will request from the importer, a quality certificate issued by the Quality Assurance body of Sri Lanka that can be accepted to the Director General of Customs, confirming the exact variety of Basmati and the suitability for human consumption.

09. General conditions

The Director General of Commerce may issue any additional conditions / guidelines pertinent to this procedure.