



Fact Sheet: Licensing of Food Businesses Safe Food for Canadians Regulations

Under the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR), food businesses need a licence based on the activities they conduct. Food businesses that conduct any of the following activities are required to obtain a licence:

- import food
- manufacture, process, treat, preserve, grade, package, or label food to be exported or sent across provincial or territorial borders
- export food that requires an export certificate – even if not preparing the food
- slaughter food animals from which meat products are derived for export or to be sent across provincial or territorial borders
- store and handle a meat product in its imported condition for inspection by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

Find out if and when you need a licence by using our [licensing interactive tool](#). It only takes 5 minutes.

How does it work?

A business may choose to apply for one licence that covers all of its establishments, activities and types of food, or multiple licences that would cover unique combinations of establishments, activities and types of food.

To apply for a licence, a business must submit an application to the CFIA providing:

- activities for which a licence is being sought
- location(s) of establishment(s) where the activities will be conducted
- types of foods for which a licence is being sought
- attestation that they have preventive controls in place.

If a business holds a registration or licence issued under the Canada Agricultural Products Act, the Fish Inspection Act or the Meat Inspection Act:

- it remains valid until it expires, even though the SFCR are now in force, as long as there is a statement on it that it is also a licence issued under the Safe Food for Canadians Act (SFCA).

Once expired, food businesses will need to apply for a licence under the SFCR.



Sign up for [My CFIA](#) today to access a growing number of online services including, licences, export certificates, as well as electronic payment options.

Why it matters

Currently, not all food businesses require a licence. Licensing helps the CFIA to:

- better identify food safety risks in order to target inspections
- communicate important food safety information directly to food businesses
- take enforcement actions, ranging from requiring corrective measures to suspending or cancelling a licence, when regulatory requirements are not met

[Learn more](#) at www.inspection.gc.ca/safefood.

You may also be interested in:

- [Licensing interactive tool.](#)
- Video: [Get Ready for the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations](#)
- Understanding the SFCR: [A handbook for food businesses](#)
- [Questions and Answers: Licensing](#)
- [Food business activities that would require a licence under SFCR](#)
- [What to consider before applying for a Safe Food for Canadians Licence](#)
- Video: [Requesting a Safe Food for Canadians Licence](#)