Department for Business & Trade

GREAT
BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

EXPORTING UNDER THE AFCFTA

A Step-by-Step Guide to Trading Food, Drink and Fast Moving Consumer Goods under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in Ghana

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    - Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA)
    - Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate (PPRSD)
    - Food and Drugs Authority (FDA)
    - Ghana Standards Authority (GSA)
    - Federation of Associations of Ghana Exporters (FAGE)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dode Seidu is the Founder and Chief Executive of Africa Trade Academy, a pan-African organisation offering capacity building, research, and advisory services to help Africa's public and private sectors leverage regional and global trade opportunities.

With over 15 years of experience in international trade, trade facilitation, regional integration, customs, and private sector development, Dode is a recognised voice on AfCFTA issues. He has trained customs officials, business executives, and policymakers across Ghana, Ethiopia, Malawi and the SACU region.

Dode has worked with organisations including the World Bank, GIZ, and the AfCFTA Secretariat, and consulted on Ghana's e-Trade Readiness Assessment with UNCTAD. Dode also supported the Ministry of Trade and Industry on the AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol and investment policy reforms.

KEY ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
ASI	Adam Smith International
ATO	Africa Trade Observatory
AWB	Air Waybill
BoL	Bill of Lading
CoO	Certificate of Origin
CUBAG	Customs Brokers Association of Ghana
DBT	Department for Business and Trade
FDA	Food and Drugs Authority
FAGE	Federation of Associations of Ghana Exporters
GEPA	Ghana Export Promotion Authority
GIFF	Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
GNCCI	Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
GRA	Ghana Revenue Authority
GSA	Ghana Standards Authority
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
MANSA	Mansa Repository Platform
MoTAI	Ministry of Trade, Agribusiness and Industry
PAPSS	Pan-African Payment and Settlement Systems
PPRSD	Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate
RoO	Rules of Origin
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
TIN	Taxpayer Identification Number

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

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This guide serves as a comprehensive **roadmap for Ghanaian businesses** looking to successfully export their products under the AfCFTA. The goal of the guide is to streamline the export process by clearly outlining the essential requirements, regulations, and procedures that exporters must adhere to. By providing practical insights, this document will assist businesses in overcoming trade obstacles, discovering potential buyers, and leveraging available trade facilitation opportunities.

WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR

This guide is designed for any **businesses in Ghana aiming to export** the following products under the **AfCFTA:**

- Food Products
- Beverages
- Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)

The guide caters to companies at every stage of export readiness, whether you are simply curious about the AfCFTA export process or fully prepared to trade and seeking confirmation that you have correctly completed all the essential steps.

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

- A straightforward, **step-by-step guide** for exporting products from Ghana under the AfCFTA.
- Information on **trade regulations, compliance necessities, and quality standards.**
- How to access assistance with **customs procedures, required documentation, and logistics**.

THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA) is a free trade agreement that creates a continental single market for goods and services among 55 African Union members with a combined population of 1.5 billion people and a GDP of US$ 3.4 trillion. The AfCFTA came into effect in 2019 and became officially operational in 2021. The agreement also anticipates increased consumer and business spending, with projections of US$6.7 trillion across a market of 1.7 billion people by 2030.

BENEFITS FOR BUSINESS TRADING UNDER THE AFCFTA

The AfCFTA provides significant benefits for businesses in Ghana by establishing a unified market throughout Africa. The key advantages include:

- **Access to a Broader Market:** Companies can connect with over 1.5 billion consumers, significantly widening their customer base beyond Ghana.
- **Lower Tariffs and Trade Expenses:** Reduced or eliminated tariffs enhance the competitiveness of exports and lower the cost of importing raw materials.
- **Boosted Investment and Expansion:** Simplified cross-border trade invites investment, promotes industrial growth, and facilitates business development.
- **Opportunities for SMEs:** Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can thrive by entering new markets with fewer trade restrictions.
- **Job Creation and Economic Advancement:** Increased trade leads to higher production levels, resulting in job opportunities and economic diversification.

By taking advantage of the AfCFTA, Ghanaian businesses can improve their competitiveness, enhance profitability, and foster sustainable growth within the African market.

HOW TO ACCESS THE BENEFITS OF THE AFCFTA

To reap these benefits, Ghanaian businesses must adhere to the export procedures outlined by the AfCFTA. This involves ensuring their products satisfy the Rules of Origin, securing the required certifications, and adhering to customs regulations. By following these steps, Ghanaian businesses can fully leverage the AfCFTA's favourable trade conditions and explore new markets throughout Africa.

ARE YOU READY TO EXPORT?

Before exporting, it is crucial to assess whether your business is fully prepared. This checklist will help you evaluate your **readiness, capabilities, and compliance with export regulations.** If you find gaps in your preparation, don't worry— **turn to the referenced sections or use the links and the guide will walk you through each step**

EXPORT READY CHECKLIST

Registration

- ☐ Registered as a Business (page 9)
- ☐ Registered with Ghana Export Promotion Authority (page 11)
- ☐ Registered with Ghana Export Promotion Authority (page 12)

Export Documentation

- ☐ Product Correctly Classified (page 15)
- ☐ AfCFTA Certificate of Origin (page 16)
- ☐ Product Specific Certificates (page 18)

Logistics and Shipping Documents

- ☐ Invoice (page 31)
- ☐ Packing List (page 31)
- ☐ Insurance Certificate (optional) (page 31)
- ☐ Letter of Credit (optional) (page 31)
- ☐ Bill of Lading/ Air Waybill (page 32)

Importing Country Requirements

- ☐ Meeting Requirements in Importing Country (page 34)

Customs Clearance

- ☐ Customs Clearance Process (page 36)

EXPORTING PROCESS

1

BUSINESS REGISTRATION

REGISTERING YOUR BUSINESS

All businesses in Ghana must register with the Registrar of Companies. The registration process depends on the type of business you plan to operate:

- **Sole Proprietorships:** Businesses owned by one person.
- **Partnership:** Business owned by two or more people.
- **Company:** Businesses that are separate legal entities from their owners.

Sole Proprietorships:

Collect Form A → Submit Form A with the following → Collect your Business Registration Certificate

Payment of fee

TIN

Partnership

Collect Form A → Submit Form A with the Following → Collect your Business Registration Certificate

Payment of fee

Copy of partnership agreement

TIN

Company

Purchase the following forms → Submit the forms along with the registration fee → Receive Certificate of Incorporation

Regulations Form

Form 3

Form 4

Tax Registration Form

Payment of 1% of the stated company capital

TIN

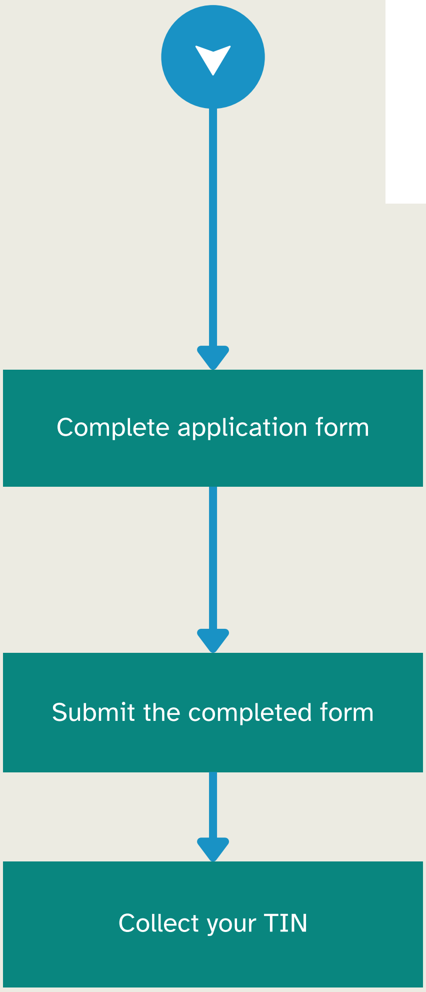
Support Organisations - Office of Registrar Companies:
std.info@orc.gov.gh

Support Links:
- Up to date registration fee information

TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (TIN)

A Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) uniquely identifies taxpayers or potential taxpayers.

- **For individuals:** The Ghana Card Personal Identification Number (Ghana Card PIN) has replaced the TIN issued by the GRA in 2021.
- **For companies:** Register with GRA for the organisation's TIN only after registering at the Registrar of Companies.



Step 1: Download a copy of the Registration Form from the GRA website.

You will require one of the following documents:

- Certificate or letter of business registration
- Copy of a valid National ID

Step 2: Complete the form and submit it to any of the following agencies:

- Office of the Registrar of Companies
- Domestic Tax Revenue (Income Tax & VAT) Office
- Custom Division Office

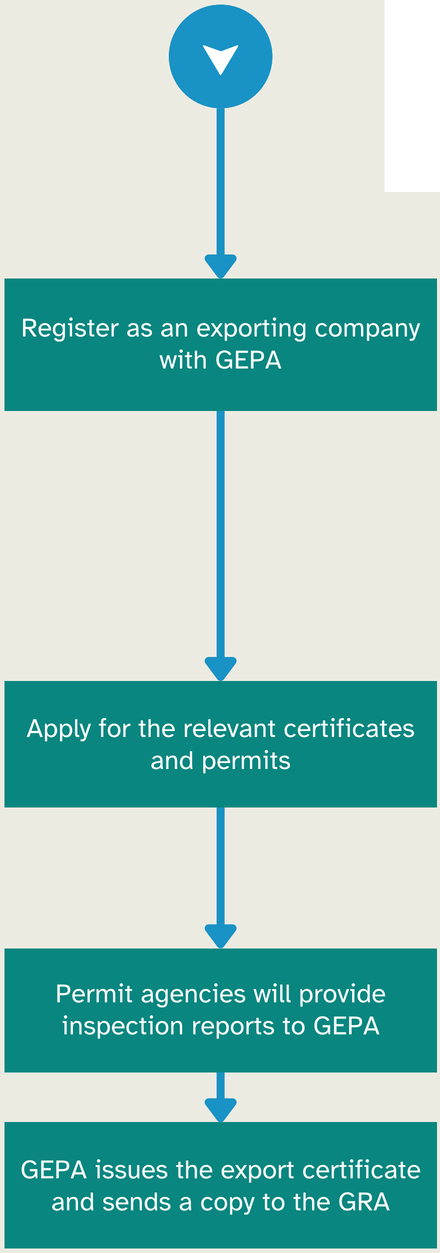
Step 3: Collect your Taxpayer Registration Certificate upon completion of the registration formalities.

Support Links:

- GRA TIN frequently asked questions

REGISTERING AS AN EXPORTER

Before you begin exporting your products under the AfCFTA, you must **register as an exporter** with the [Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA)](). This is a mandatory step for all businesses looking to export goods from Ghana, and it helps ensure your products meet the necessary legal and quality standards.



Step 1: Register as an exporting company with GEPA. The registration process can be done in two ways:

- Complete a soft copy of the Export Registration Form (shared by a GEPA Export Officer upon contacting the office) and submit the Form together with a scanned copy of the business registration certificate to GEPA.
- Visit a GEPA office to complete the form. Submit the completed form with a photocopy of the business registration certificate.

Step 2: Determine which certificates and permits are required to export your product. Apply for and obtain the relevant certificates or permits from the appropriate permit-issuing agency, depending on the products. To find what certificates are needed for your product and how to obtain them, turn to chapter 4 (page 16).

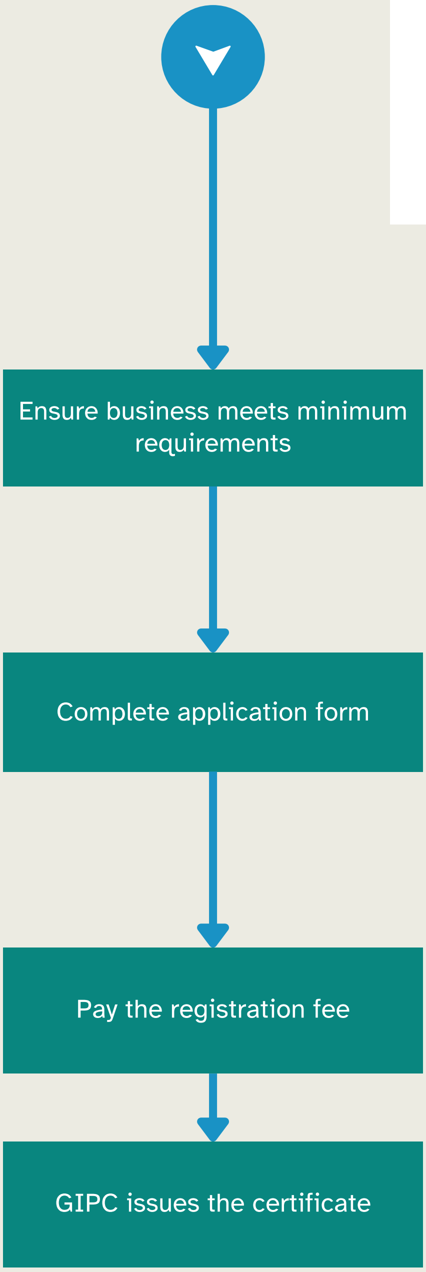
Step 3: After the permit issuing agencies have inspected your consignments, they will provide an inspection report and recommendations to GEPA with copies to you.

Step 4: If the inspection reports are satisfactory, then GEPA will complete the registration and issue the applicant with an export certificate and send a copy to the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA).

Support Links:
- GEPA registering as an exporter guidance

GHANA INVESTMENT PROMOTION CENTRE REGISTRATION

The Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) is mandated to register all enterprises in Ghana under GIPC Act 2013 (Act 865). Registered companies will benefit from import duty exemptions for machinery and equipment, tax rebates and holidays and protection against expropriation and repatriation of profits.



Step 1: Ensure your business meets the minimum foreign capital requirements, is operating within the bounds of Ghana's investment laws and is eligible for applicable incentives and protections under the law. These are described in the GIPC Act 2013 (Act 865).

Step 2: Complete a GIPC application form and attach the following documents:

- Certificate of incorporation
- Companies Constitution
- Company Profile
- Company Beneficial Ownership Information

Disclose in the application the source of your businesses investment capital supported by the relevant proof.

Step 3: Once the application is approved the company is required to pay the applicable registration fee.

Step 4: GICP Certificate will be issued, this certificate must be issued within a minimum of 5 working days of a complete and approved application.

2
REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

ADHERING TO RULES OF ORIGIN

Understanding the Rules of Origin (RoO) is essential for businesses looking to export under the AfCFTA. These rules **determine whether a product qualifies for preferential tariff treatment,** ensuring that only goods **wholly obtained or sufficiently processed** within AfCFTA member states **benefit from reduced duties**. The AfCFTA RoO applies to both the General and Specific RoO:

- **General RoO:** Applies to a particular chapter of the HS and serves as a default when there are no specific rules outlined for a product.
- **Product-specific RoO:** Applies to the specific HS heading or subheading, these override the general rules when applicable, providing clarity on complex products.

CLASSIFYING YOUR PRODUCT

Determine the correct HS code for your product

Step 1: Find the HS Code

- Use the support links to correctly determine the HS code for your product.

Consult the AfCFTA Manual

Step 2: Consult appendix IV of Annex 2 and locate the specific rules associated with your products HS code.

Assess compliance against criteria

Step 3: Determine whether your product meets the criteria outlined. If the product meets the necessary criteria it qualifies as originating from an AfCFTA member state.

HS CODE: COCOA BEANS

HS2	HS4	HS6
08	01	12
Chapter	Heading	Subheading

Support Links:

- GRA Tariff Book
- ICUMS HS Code Support

RULES OF ORIGIN REQUIREMENTS

Once you've classified your product and identified the applicable RoO from Appendix IV, the next step is to assess whether your product meets the origin criteria. Under the AfCFTA, goods can qualify as originating in one of two ways: by being **wholly obtained in a State Party, or by undergoing substantial transformation.** The diagram below outlines these pathways and the specific approaches used to determine substantial transformation.

RULES OF ORIGIN REQUIREMENTS

Rules of Origin

Wholly Obtained Products: Goods that are exclusively produced in your country, without incorporating materials from any other country.

Substantial Transformation: This may be founded on one or more of the following approaches:

Change in Tariff Heading: Products that include any non-originating materials must undergo local processing that results in a new HS classification.

A Criterion of Value Added: When the value added of a good increases up to a specified level expressed by percentage.

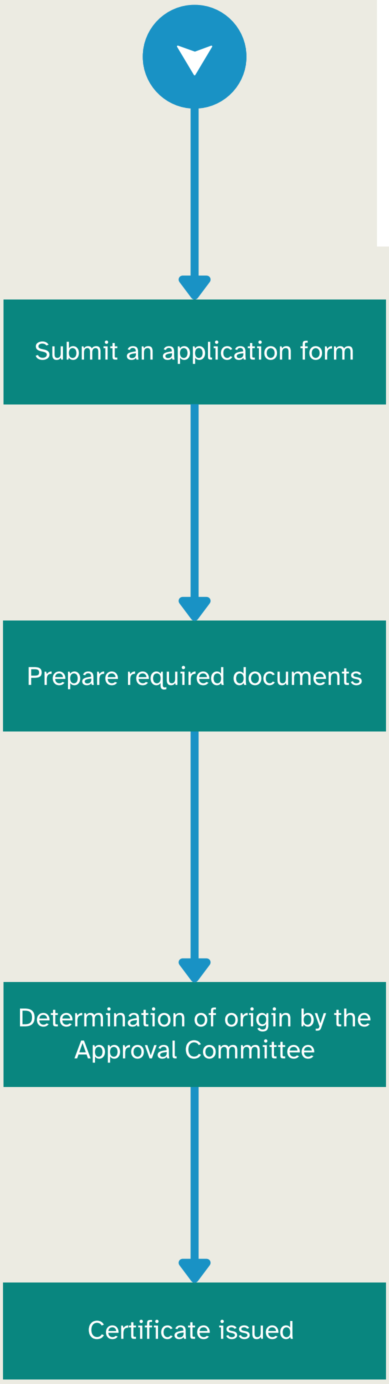
Specific Processing: Establishes product-specific processing requirements that must be completed to qualify for origin designation.

Support Links:

- AfCFTA Rules of Origin Manual

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

Once you've confirmed that your product meets the AfCFTA RoO, the next step is to **apply for a Certificate of Origin (CoO)**. This official document **proves that your goods are made in Ghana** and q**ualify for preferential tariff treatment** under the AfCFTA. Preferential tariff treatment refers to reduced or zero import duties granted to goods, giving them more favourable access to a market compared to standard tariff rates.



Step 1: Submit a CoO application form. This can be completed in two ways:

- Log in to ICUMS on the *'registering as an exporter'* section, enter the document number to be given an inspection appointment.
- Complete a manual form and submit to the Ghana Chamber of Commerce and Industry (either National or Regional Office).

Step 2: An AfCFTA RoO Inspection Team will inspect and verify the authenticity of your business and product information. A joint team, comprising officers of Ministry of Trade, Agribusiness and Industry (MoTAI), Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GNCCI), Customs and either Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) or Ghana Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) will verify your location, the authenticity of your business and product certificates, and the origin of your raw materials.

Step 3: The AfCFTA RoO Approval Committee will consider the Inspection Team's reports and, with the guidance of the Customs Division, determine the origin of products following the AfCFTA RoO. The meetings of the Committee are convened by MoTAI after it has received an adequate number of inspection reports from the Inspection Team.

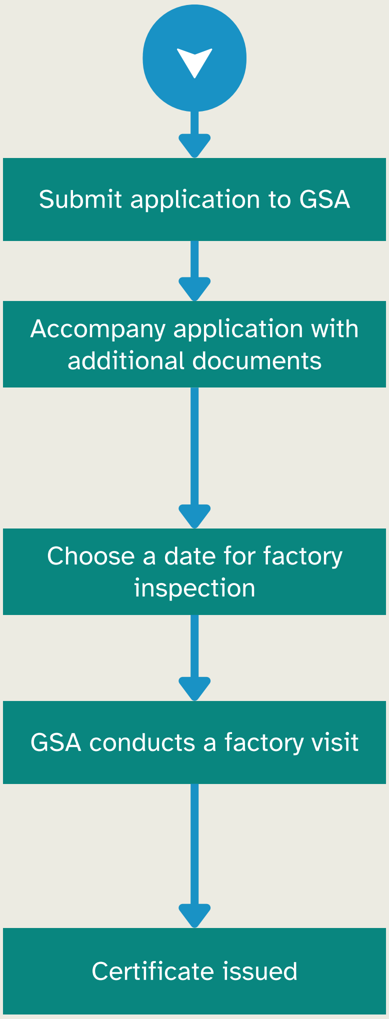
Step 4: The AfCFTA CoO is issued to the product approved by the AfCFTA Approval Committee every time there is an export.

- The CoO is generated electronically when you submit export details to GNCCI either manually or through ICUMS.
- When the application process is done manually, the CoO is printed by GNCCI for embossment and certification by the Customs Division.

GSA CERTIFICATION

The **GSA certification** provides assessment and impartial third-party attestation that your product **meets GSA's standards**. The requirements of the standards are available in standards documents specified by a regulator. A product that passes the GSA certification obtains a certificate or a mark of conformity with the standard.

All exporters are required to obtain this certificate. Up-to-date **price information can be found here.**



Step 1: Apply to GSA using the prescribed form and pay the approved fee.

Step 2: Ensure that the application is accompanied by proof of:

- Adequate manufacturing facility
- Testing facilities
- Qualified testing personnel

Step 3: The application is registered, and you will be informed. You will also be requested to indicate a convenient date for the preliminary factory inspection.

Step 4: The GSA will conduct a factory visit to determine your capability to produce goods according to the relevant Ghana Standard, especially with respect to raw materials, the process of manufacture, manufacturing capability, and quality control facilities, including testing equipment and supervisory staff.

Step 5: A licence is granted only if the factory inspection and test reports are satisfactory and they sign a certification agreement as well as agree to operate a well-defined Scheme of Testing and Inspection (STI) as approved by the GSA.

Support Links:

- GSA Product Certification Scheme

3

PRODUCT SPECIFIC COMPLIANCE

PRODUCT SPECIFIC PERMITS

Different products require different **permits and certifications** before they can be exported from Ghana. These depend on the **nature of the goods**, food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural items, all have their specific requirements.

This page provides a clear overview of the key permits, certificates, and regulatory approvals needed for different product categories. Use the table below to quickly **identify which approvals apply to your product** and which pages to navigate to, to understand the process of obtaining the permits.

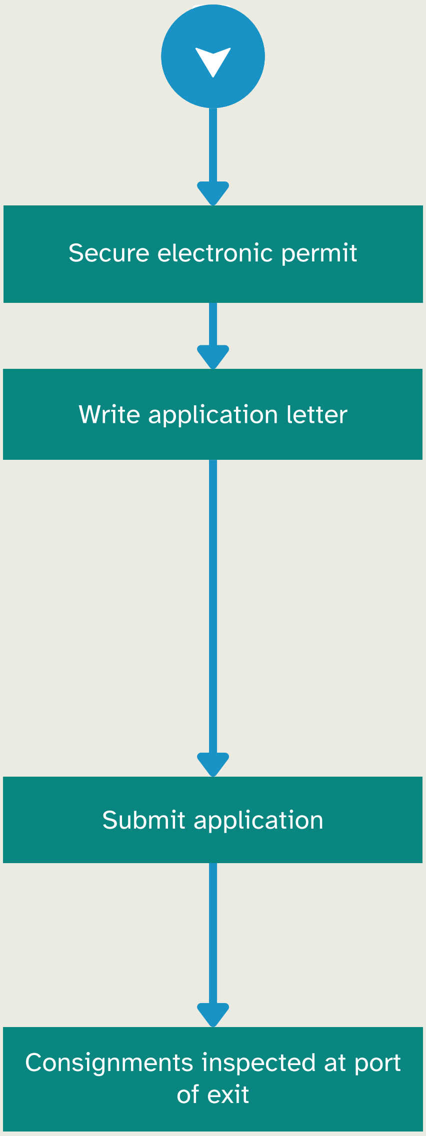
Product	**Required Permits**
Food and Beverages (pre-packaged)	• FDA Export Permit (page 17)
Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	• Phytosanitary Certificate (page 18) • FDA Export Permit (page 19)
Frozen Meat, Fish & Seafood	• FDA Export Permit (page 20)
Palm Oil	• FDA Export Permit (page 21)
Cosmetics & Household Chemicals	• FDA Permit (page 22)
Cocoa, Coffee, Shea & Cashew	• Export Registration with COCOBOD (page 23)

FDA PRE-PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS

The Ghana FDA requires those **exporting pre-packaged goods** to obtain a permit before exporting. For information, visit the FDA Pre-Packaged Goods Export Guide here.

Requirements

- **Registration and Production:** Pre-packaged foods must be registered with the FDA
- **Non-Confirming Consignments:** The applicant shall be held responsible for any consignment found to be non-compliant after the consignment has been inspected. If the consignment is found to be unwholesome, it shall be disposed of.



Step 1: Secure an electronic permit (eMDA), these are issued for the exportation of a particular consignment and shall be presented to customs only once.

Step 2: To apply for a customs clearance permit, write an application letter including:

- Batch numbers
- Quantities per batch
- Pack sizes
- Total Quantity

Address and send the letter to:
The Chief Executive
Food and Drugs Authority
P.O. Box CT 2783
Cantonments,
Accra

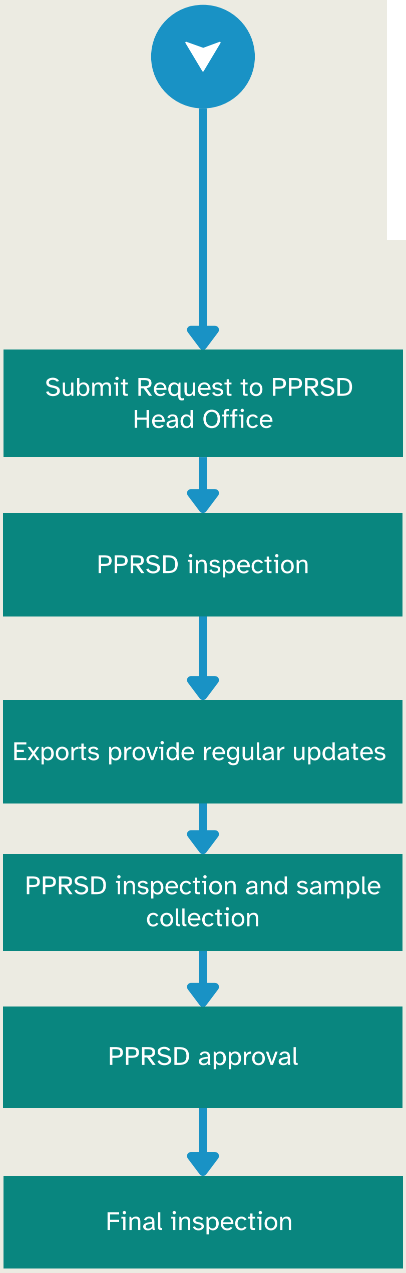
Step 3: Submit the following information on the “item details” on the eMDA portal during application:

- Full name (including Brand Name) of the product
- FDA Product registration number
- Name and contact number of authorised person

Step 4: Consignments will be physically inspected at the port of exit. Non-conforming consignments shall be detained by the FDA.

PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATE

Before exporting **fresh fruits, vegetables**, or other **plant-based products** from Ghana, exporters are required to obtain a **Phytosanitary Certificate** issued by the **Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate (PPRSD)** of the **Ministry of Food and Agriculture**. This certificate verifies that the consignments have been inspected and found to be **free from harmful pests, diseases, and contaminants**, in compliance with the plant health requirements of the importing country.



Step 1: You must register with the PPRSD alongside the farm(s)/outgrowers of your products.

Step 2: PPRSD will conduct an inspection of your facilities, including packhouses and farms where your export product is cultivated. You and your farmers will be registered in the PPRSD Traceability System and will be provided a unique code.

Step 3: For traceability purposes, you and your farmers should provide regular updates to the PPRSD Traceability System of their good agronomic practices (e.g. pesticide application)

Step 4: Before harvest, PPRSD inspectors will conduct their inspection and collect samples for incubation and lab analysis to diagnose insects and nematodes, and for viruses.

Step 5: If the sample passes the lab analysis, PPRSD will give the go-ahead for harvesting and packhouse cleaning and packaging for exports.

Step 6: At the point of exit, PPRSD inspectors conduct a final inspection and issue a phytosanitary certificate for the export consignment.

FDA PERMIT: FRUITS & VEGETABLES

The Ghana FDA requires those exporting **fresh fruits and vegetables** to obtain a permit before exporting. For information, visit the FDA Fruit and Vegetable Export Guide here.

Requirements

- **Licensed Storage Facility:** A Fresh fruits and vegetables facility must be licensed.
- **Product label:** Label should include storage temperature and instructions on handling.
- **Temperature Record:** For independent temperature records throughout the voyage, a self-contained single-point temperature recorder must be available in the container for review during the physical inspection. Preferably, it should be fitted at the second package down at the door end near the centre of the stow. Any means of taking temperature records must be available during physical inspection.

Submit letter of intent

Step 1: Submit a letter of intent for the export to the FDA's Head Office, Accra, FDA Heights, Tema, or any of FDA's Regional Offices across Ghana.

Address and send the letter to:
The Chief Executive
Food and Drugs Authority
P.O. Box CT 2783
Cantonments,
Accra

Prepared complementary documents

Step 2: Ensure the following documents are attached to the letter of intent:

- Packing list indicating product details and quantities.
- Commercial invoice
- Copy of FDA product registration certificate
- Certificates of analysis of the products
- Phytosanitary reports (where applicable)

Collect export documents

Step 3: All FDA-regulated products being exported must be accompanied by:

- Approved Export Permit
- Manufacture and Free Sale Certificate

FDA PERMITS: FROZEN MEAT

The Ghana FDA requires those **exporting frozen meat, fish, shellfish and other aquatic invertebrates** to obtain a permit before exporting. For information, visit the Frozen Meats Export Guide here.

Requirements

- **Certificates and Records:** Valid authority-issued certificates and crew vaccination records must be available during inspection.
- **Temperature Control:** Frozen goods must be kept at -18 °C ±3 °C or below during transport.
- **Temperature Records:** Containerised cargo must include a single-point recorder. Bulk consignments must show how temperature was tracked during the voyage.
- **Contamination:** If contamination (e.g. Listeria) is confirmed by FDA labs, the entire consignment will be destroyed at your expense.

Obtain an electronic permit

Step 1: Secure an electronic permit (eMDA). The following information must be submitted in the "item details" column on the eMDA portal:

- Full name of the product
- Name and contact number of the Authorised Person
- Batch numbers, quantities per batch, pack sizes and total quantity.

Address and send the letter to:
The Chief Executive
Food and Drugs Authority
P.O. Box CT 2783
Cantonments
Accra

Include necessary information on packaging

Step 2: Include the following on the packaging of your frozen item:

- Country of supply
- Net weight
- Product batch
- Shelf-life
- Storage temperature
- Handling instructions

Consignment inspected at the port of exit

Step 3: Consignments will be physically inspected at the port of exit. Non-conforming consignments shall be detained by the FDA.

FDA PERMITS: COSMETICS & CHEMICALS

The FDA requires those exporting **cosmetics and chemicals** to obtain a permit before exporting. For information, visit the **FDA Cosmetics and Household Chemical Substances Export Guide here.**

Requirements

- **Presentation:** The presentation of the product shall not have any resemblance in spelling, pronunciation of the name and packaging to another product previously registered by the Authority.
- **Samples:** Samples submitted for registration shall be in the final package proposed for marketing of the product in Ghana and shall have 60% of their shelf-life remaining. This notwithstanding, products with a shelf life of less than 24 months shall have at least 80% of their shelf life remaining at the time of submission.
- **Labelling:** All samples of products submitted shall conform to current labelling regulations
- **Ingredients**: The Business must submit documentation stating the specific enzymes used in the formulation of powder detergents and justifying the mode of culturing the enzymes.

Send an application letter

Step 1: To apply for a customs clearance permit, write an application letter including:

- Application form
- Cover letter
- Product information
- Labelling information
- Certificate of analysis

Address and send the letter to:
The Chief Executive
Food and Drugs Authority
P.O. Box CT 2783
Cantonments
Accra

Submit samples

Step 2: Submit 6 samples of the product and 2 of each variant or size where applicable.

FDA assessment

Step 3: The FDA will assess the submitted documentation and samples for completeness and compliance. Samples may be subjected to laboratory testing to verify safety and quality.

Support Links:
- WACOMP Compliance Guide

FDA PERMITS: PALM OIL

The FDA requires those exporting **palm oil** to obtain a permit before exporting. For information, visit the **FDA Palm Oil Export Guide** here.

Requirements

- **Registration:** The palm oil to be exported must first be registered with the FDA.
- **Adulterants:** The consignment must have no presence of Sudan dyes (I-IV) or any other adulterants.

Send an application letter

Step 1: To apply for customs clearance permit write an application letter including:

- Batch numbers
- Quantities per batch
- Pack sizes
- Total quantity
- Payment of fee charged per consignment

Address and send the letter to:
The Chief Executive
Food and Drugs Authority
P.O. Box CT 2783
Cantonments
Accra

FDA conduct inspections at processing facility

Step 2: Prior to screening and clearance, the FDA will conduct inspections at the processing or packing facility to ensure that Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) are adhered to.

FDA conduct independent investigations

Step 3: The FDA conducts independent investigations for all batches of consignments and check for the presence of Sudan dyes (I-IV) or other adulterants.

Include necessary information on packaging

Step 4: Include the following information on the packaging of the frozen item:

- Country of supply
- Net weight
- Product batch
- Shelf-life
- Storage temperature
- Handling instructions

Consignment inspected at the port of exit

Step 5: Consignments will be physically inspected at the port of exit. Non-conforming consignments shall be detained by the FDA.

Support Links:

- GMP Guidance

COCOBOD REGISTRATION

The Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) is the government agency responsible for the regulation, production, and marketing of cocoa. Any exporters of **Cocoa, Coffee, Shea nuts and Cashew nuts require this registration.**

Requirements

- **Registration and Production:** You must be registered as a Licensed Buying Company (LBC) and must have participated in the internal marketing of cocoa for a minimum period of two cocoa crop years.
- **Purchase Requirements:** Have purchased a minimum of 10,000 tonnes of cocoa per year over the immediately preceding two consecutive crop years.
- **Personnel Requirements:** Have personnel who possess the relevant technical know-how and experience in external marketing, or can demonstrate that it has access to the requisite human resources.
- **Financial Requirements:** Must demonstrate that it has access to adequate financial resources.

Register your business with COCOBOD

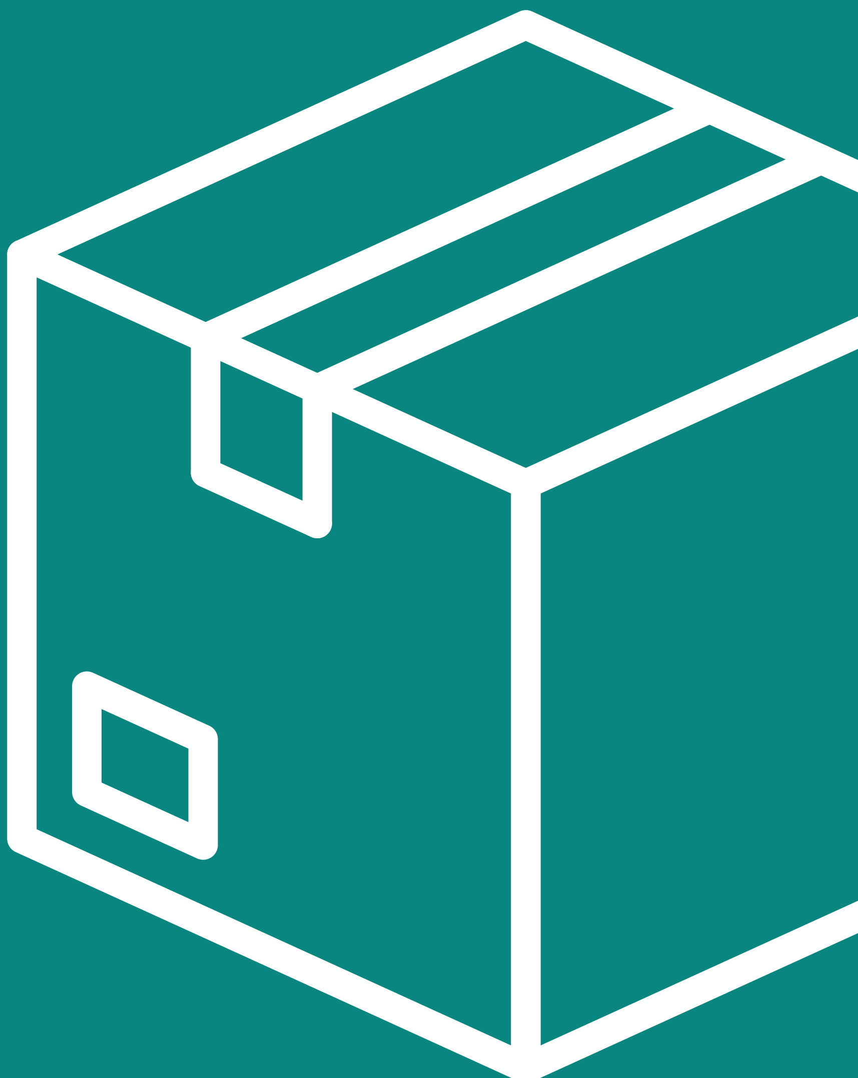
Include the necessary documents with the application

Step 1: Register your business by downloading a registration form and submitting it to COCOBOD.

Step 2: Submit the application to COCOBOD with the following documents:

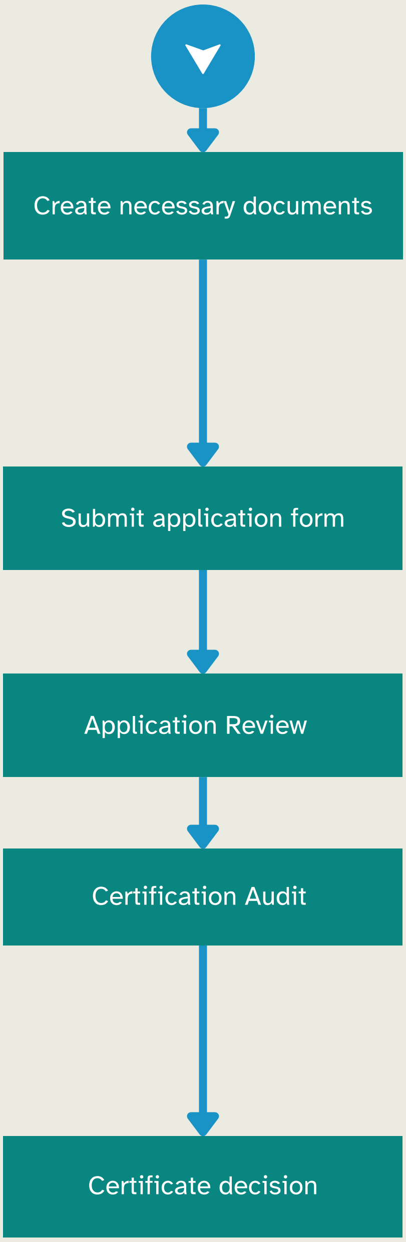
- Name of the company and registered trade mark
- Date of incorporation
- Nature of business
- Major shareholders of the company
- Names of directors and management personnel
- Registered head office address and banker's reference

4
PACKAGING AND LABELLING



HAZARD ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS (HACCP)

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) is a globally recognised system for **identifying and managing food safety risks** throughout production, processing, and packaging. Obtaining a HACCP certificate shows that your **business has implemented a structured food safety system**, giving confidence to buyers, customs officials, and regulators that your products meet international standards.



Step 1: Apply for the certification with GSA. Include the following documentation:

- HACCP Plan: a document describing the activities developed following the principles of HACCP to ensure control of hazards.
- Food safety policies
- Record of implementation and internal audits

Step 2: Submit an application form along with:

- A completed preliminary information questionnaire
- A copy of your business registration certificate.
- Your HACCP manual and all supporting documentation.

Step 3: The GSA will review your application to ensure completeness and adequacy. If satisfactory, they will issue a certification contract outlining the scope and fees.

Step 4: The certification audit will be completed in two ways:

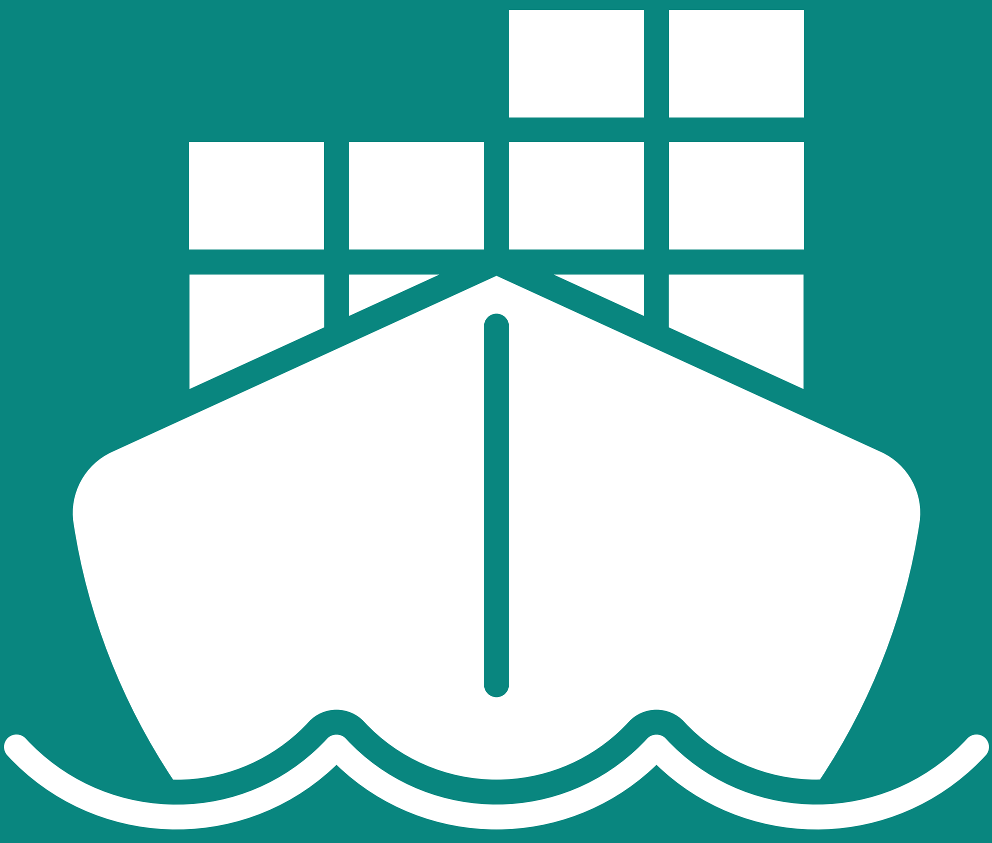
- Stage I Audit: Evaluation of your documented HACCP system to ensure it meets GSA requirements.
- Stage II Audit: On-site assessment to verify the effective implementation of your HACCP system, including interviews, observations, and review of records.

Step 5: After successful audits and resolution of any non-conformities, the GSA's Approval Committee will review the audit reports. If all requirements are met, a HACCP certificate will be issued.

Support Links:

- GSA Guidelines for HACCP Certification

5
LOGISTICS AND SHIPPING DOCUMENTS



FINDING CUSTOMS AGENTS AND FREIGHT FORWARDERS

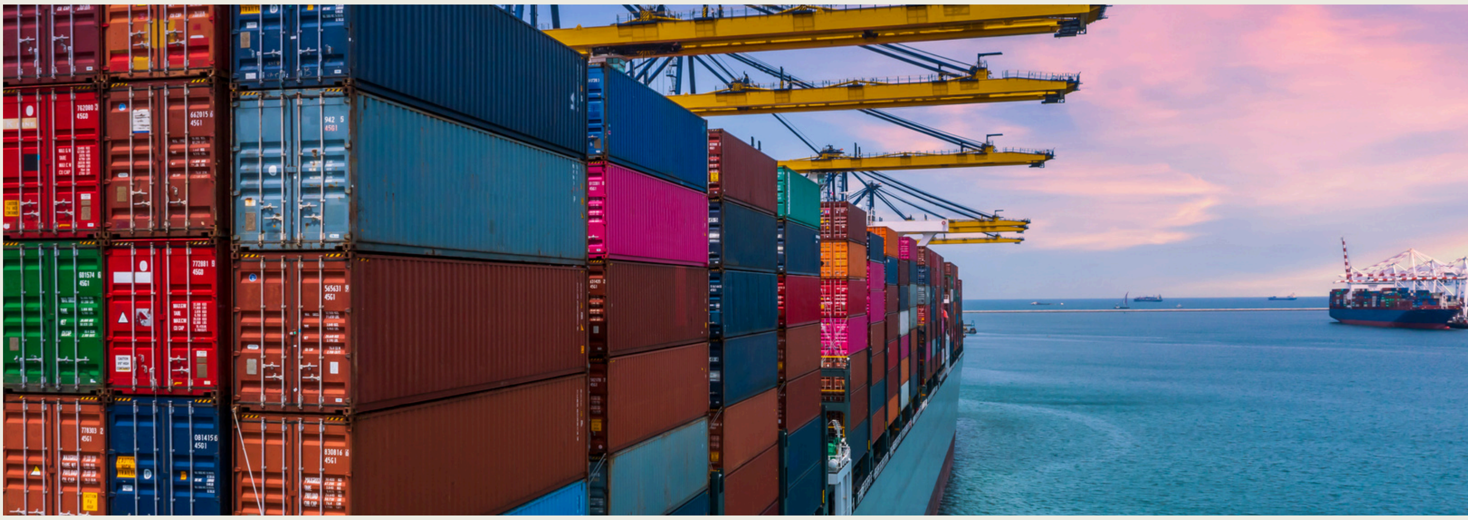
A customs agent (or customs broker) **facilitates the export process by handling customs clearance**, **preparing documentation, and ensuring compliance with trade regulations**. Customs agents act as **intermediaries between exporters and customs authorities**, helping to navigate regulatory requirements and streamline the shipping process. Engaging a licensed customs agent can **reduce administrative burdens and minimise the risk of delays**.

A freight forwarder is a **logistics specialist** who manages the **coordination and shipment** of goods from one destination to another. They handle key aspects of the export process, including **booking cargo space, arranging transportation**, consolidating shipments, and managing export documentation. Freight forwarders work closely with shippers to ensure goods are transported efficiently and cost-effectively.

HOW TO FIND CUSTOMS AGENTS AND FREIGHT FORWARDERS

Choosing the right partners is essential, they play a key role in ensuring your goods are classified correctly, documentation is completed accurately, and shipments clear customs efficiently, avoiding costly delays or penalties. To find a reputable customs broker or freight forwarder, we recommend visiting the websites of the following organisations:

- Customs Brokers Association of Ghana (CUBAG)
- Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (GIFF)



CUSTOMS DOCUMENTS

To successfully export under the AfCFTA and avoid delays at customs, you'll need to prepare a set of core trade documents. These include the packing list, commercial invoice, letter of credit, and insurance certificate. Each plays a vital role in ensuring your shipment is properly recorded, valued, financed, and protected.

This page explains the purpose of each document and guides you through how to obtain or prepare them, so you can export with confidence and compliance.

PACKING LIST

Description: A detailed document listing the contents of your shipment, including item descriptions, quantities, dimensions, and weights. It helps customs officials, freight forwarders, and buyers identify and verify the goods.

How to Obtain: You prepare the packing list once the goods are packed. Your freight forwarder or exporter may also help create it, but the information must come from your business.

COMMERCIAL INVOICE

Description: An official document issued by the exporter to the buyer detailing the transaction. It includes product descriptions, quantities, prices, total value, currency, payment terms, and buyer/seller details.

How to Obtain: You generate it from your business, usually through your accounting or sales system. Templates are widely available and should follow international standards.

LETTER OF CREDIT (OPTIONAL)

Description: A secure payment method issued by the buyer's bank, guaranteeing that payment will be made to the seller upon meeting specified conditions.

How to Obtain: The buyer applies for the letter of credit at their bank. Once issued, your bank will notify you of the terms. You must comply exactly with the letter of credit instructions when preparing your export documents.

INSURANCE CERTIFICATE (OPTIONAL)

Description: A document confirming that the goods being exported are insured during transit. This typically covers damage, loss, or theft.

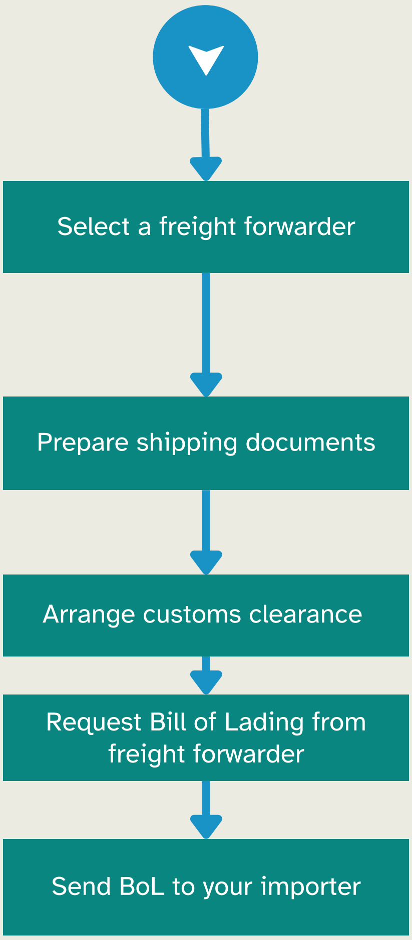
How to Obtain: Obtain it from a shipping or trade insurance provider. Your freight forwarder or logistics partner can also help you secure cargo insurance and issue the certificate.

BILL OF LADING / AIR WAYBILL

When exporting goods, your transport document depends on the mode of shipment. Either the Bill of Lading (for sea freight) or the Air Waybill (for air freight). These documents serve as a confirmation of receipt of goods, a contract of carriage and provide shipment tracking.

Key difference:

- The Bill of Lading is negotiable and can transfer ownership of goods.
- The Air Waybill is non-negotiable and cannot transfer ownership.



Step 1: Choose a freight forwarder, shipping line or airline cargo service.

Step 2: Prepare shipping documents:

- **Commercial Invoice:** Includes details about your shipment, including the destination, product type, weight, and volume.
- **Packing List:** Specifies weight, dimensions, and packaging details of the shipment.
- **Certificate of Origin**

Step 3: Arrange customs clearance through a customs agent.

Step 4: Request the Bill of Lading or Air Waybill from your freight forwarder. They will issue a draft bill, you must then review and confirm that all details are accurate.

Step 5: You will be issued the final BoL or AWB, which you should send to your importer.

Common Pitfalls

- **Mismatched Information:** Inaccuracies between the BoL and the cargo, such as differences in weight, or quantity, can cause delays.
- **Misidentification of Parties:** Shipper, consignee, or notify party names or addresses that are incorrect. Make sure the shipper and consignee information is accurate.
- **Inadequate Documentation:** Omitting crucial consignee information or delivery instructions.
- **Cargo Condition Variations:** Discrepancies in the description of the condition or nature of the goods.
- **Date Differences:** Variations in the shipment date may impact on insurance coverage.

6
REQUIREMENTS IN IMPORTING COUNTRY

IMPORTING COUNTRY REQUIREMENTS

Before you export your product under the AfCFTA, it is essential to understand the **import requirements in your target market**. Each African country has its own **rules, procedures and standards for imported goods**. These may include specific documentation, labelling regulations, health and safety standards, permits, and customs clearance processes. **Failure to comply may result in delays, penalties, or rejection of the goods at the border.**

This page outlines some resources **to check the rules that apply in different AfCFTA member states**, and provides **links to tools and resources** that **help exporters navigate these requirements with confidence**. Taking the time to do this research will ensure a smoother export process and help your business take full advantage of the AfCFTA's preferential trade terms.

IMPORT REGULATIONS CHECKLIST

- [ ] Inspection requirements
- [ ] Labelling and packaging requirements
- [ ] Product quality, safety or performance requirements
- [ ] SPS and hygienic requirements
- [ ] Traceability requirements
- [ ] Product specific requirements
- [ ] Requirement to pass through specified port of customs
- [ ] Product specific requirements
- [ ] Storage and transport requirements
- [ ] Product specific requirements

THE AFRICAN TRADE OBSERVATORY

The **African Trade Observatory (ATO)** is an **online platform powered by the ITC Market Access Map** to support businesses, policymakers, and trade professionals in making **informed decisions under the AfCFTA**. It provides up-to-date data on **intra-African trade flows, tariff rates, non-tariff barriers,** and market access conditions across African countries. For exporters, the ATO is a valuable resource for identifying high-potential markets, **monitoring trade trends, and understanding the regulatory environment** in **different AfCFTA member states**. The platform also tracks the implementation of AfCFTA commitments, helping users stay informed about changes that could affect their exports.

7

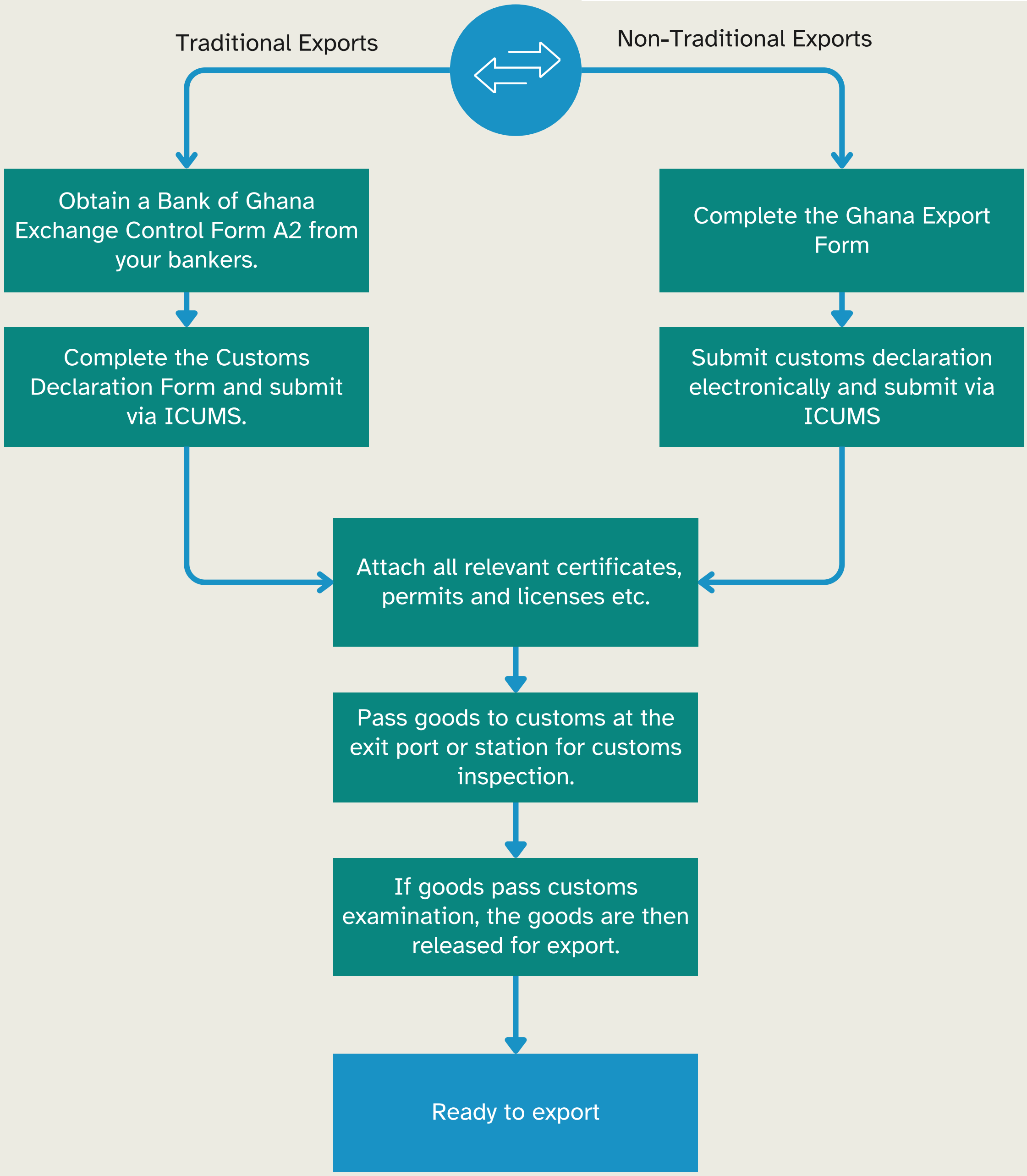
CUSTOMS CLEARANCE

CUSTOMS CLEARANCE PROCEDURE

After obtaining all the necessary registrations, certifications, and permits, your final step before exporting is completing the customs export procedures. These are the official steps required by the Ghana Revenue Authority (Customs Division) to approve your goods for shipment.

Traditional Exports: This comprises products such as cocoa beans, lumber and logs, electricity and Unprocessed gold and other minerals.

Non-traditional Exports: This includes all exportable goods, rather than those captured under Traditional Exports.

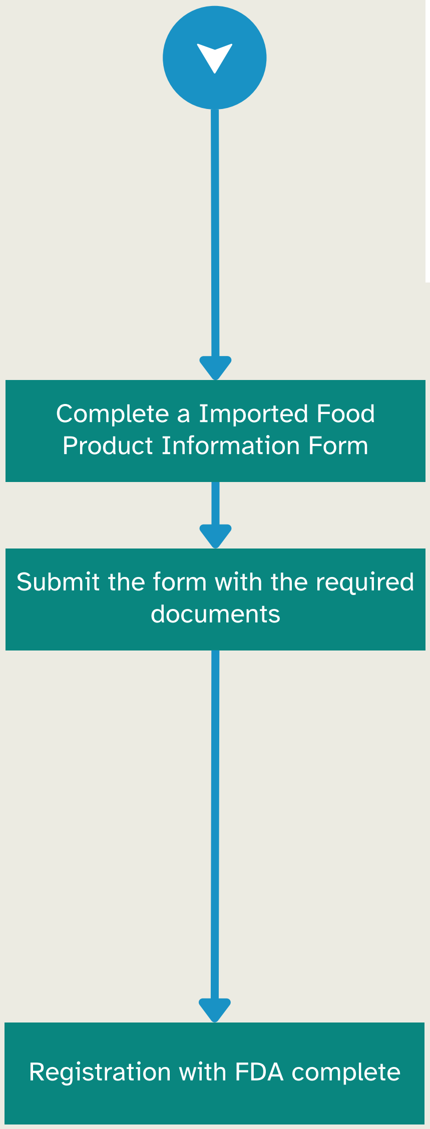


IMPORTING PROCESS

FDA IMPORT REGISTRATION

Ghanaian companies seeking to **import food products** under the AfCFTA must **register as a food importer** through the **Ghana FDA**.

Only company owners or competent company representatives with adequate knowledge of the company can **completed the application form.** This means clearing agents are not allowed to complete the registration.



Step 1: Complete the FDA Imported Food Product Information Form.

Step 2: Submit the form to the FDA, alongside the following documents:

- Copy of business registration certificate
- Registration as Importers Fee, GHC 400.

Address and send the letter to:
The Chief Executive
Food and Drugs Authority
P.O. Box CT 2783
Cantonments,
Accra

Step 3: Your import registration with the FDA is completed. Where all requirements for registration have been met, the registration process shall take a **maximum of 30 working days**.

Support Links:
- FDA Food Importer Guide

PROCESS FOR IMPORTING

Ghanaian companies seeking to import under the AfCFTA **must meet the following key conditions**:

- Importer should ensure that goods fall within the **90% liberalised tariff schedule (category A).**
- The country of origin/exporting country should be a **State Party to the AfCFTA.**
- Goods must have an AfCFTA **Certificate of Origin issued from the source country**.

Acquire all necessary documents

Step 1: Acquire all relevant licenses, permits, and certificates:

- Original waybill or Bill of Lading
- Attested invoice
- Packing list
- Import Declaration Form (IDF) from the Ministry of Trade
- Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) from GRA or Ghana Card PIN
- Required permits from any of the regulatory agencies, such as the FDA, GSA, etc., depending on the type of goods.
- Duly signed:
  - Certificates of Origin or
  - Origin declaration or
  - Producer/Supplier declaration

Create Bill of Entry using the customs procedure code

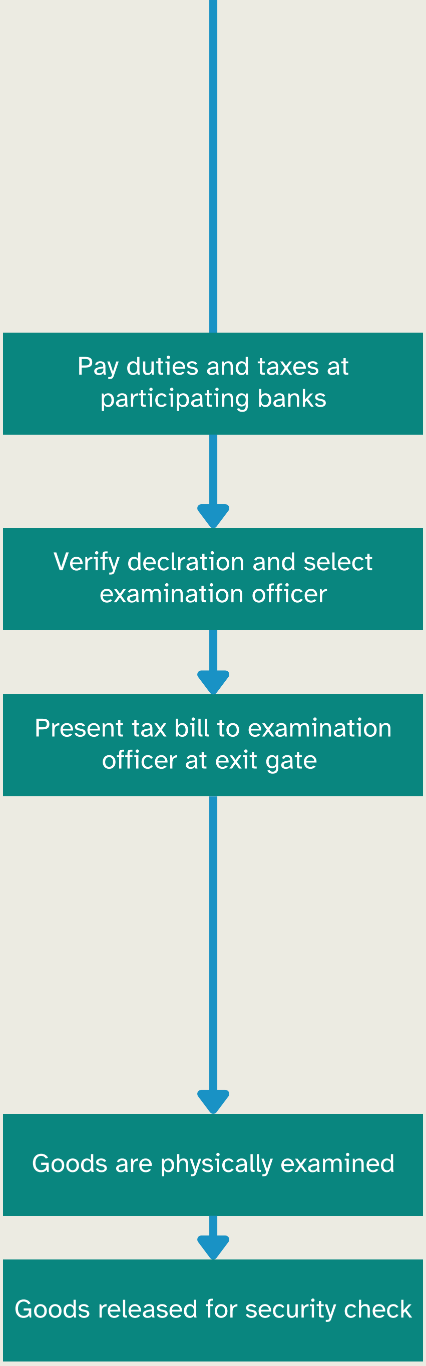
Step 2: Create a Customs Bill of Entry using the correct customs procedure code (CPC).

40C01	Direct Home Consumption Under AfCFTA

Sbumit declration in ICUMS

Step 3: Submit the declaration in ICUMS. Your clearing agent will submit this, which must include all the above documentary requirements, before or after the arrival of the goods. The ICUMS will process the declaration in the following stages:

- Classification
- Valuation
- Approval



Step 4: Pay duties and taxes at the participating banks. This is done by your Clearing Agent, and the duty to be paid is dependent on the cost of the goods, type of goods and rates specified for the goods.

Step 5: Verify the declaration and select the examination officer through ICUMS.

Step 6: Your Tax bill received from the bank is presented to the examination officer or scanning officer, or releasing officer at the exit gate, depending on the risk levels, with different colour indications:

Red: Mandatory physical examination

Yellow: Digital scan

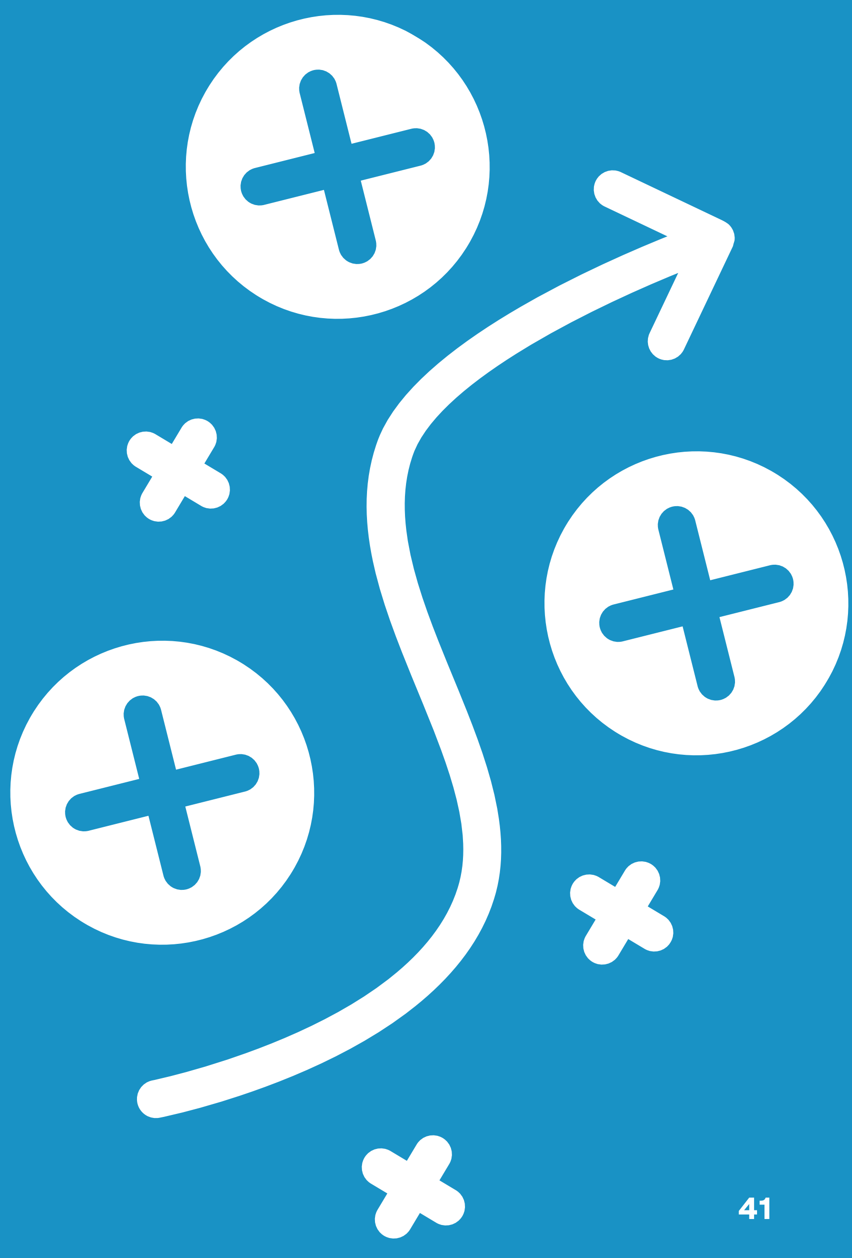
Green: Released at gate but scanned automatically at MPS port

Step 7: Your goods are then positioned for physical examination.

Step 8: Convey released goods to the exit gate for a security check, accompanied by the waybill.

Support Links:
- GRA Import Procedures
- NCO Procedures for Imports Guide

COMMON TRADING CHALLENGES



CHALLENGE 1: OBTAINING AFCFTA INFORMATION

The AfCFTA is a dynamic agreement, with **protocols, tariff schedules, and rules of origin still being negotiated** and implemented across different countries. This means the **requirements for exporting under the AfCFTA can change**, and it's important for businesses to **check the latest information before every shipment.**

The AfCFTA, its protocols and implementation is evolving. Before every export, check for the most updated information on the following:

- **Status State Parties Ratification:** Not all African countries have fully ratified or implemented the AfCFTA yet. Export benefits such as tariff reductions or streamlined customs processes only apply between countries that have ratified and implemented the agreement. Before exporting, check whether the destination country is a participating AfCFTA State Party.
- **Applicable Tariffs:** AfCFTA tariff schedules are being rolled out in phases, and rates can vary by country and product category. Updated information will show whether your product qualifies for reduced or zero tariffs in a specific country, helping you price competitively and avoid unexpected duties at the border.
- **Rules of Origin:** To benefit from AfCFTA tariff preferences, your product must meet the RoO requirements. These rules may change as more product-specific guidelines are negotiated. Checking the latest criteria ensures your goods remain eligible and your documentation is accurate.

Further tools developed by the AfCFTA Secretariat and its partners:

- **For due diligence and information about other SMES and financial institutions:** MANSA is a repository platform which provides a single source of primary data required for the conduct of customer due diligence on African entities, Financial Institutions, Corporates and SMEs. The platform also provides a complementary collection of information on investment in Africa, country profiles and traded products/ services of African countries, enabling insights into Africa.
- **For Intra-Africa Payments, use the Pan-African Payment and Settlement Systems (PAPSS)**: PAPSS is a platform designed to facilitate cross-border payments and settlements in Africa. PAPSS ensures instant or near-instant transfers of funds between originators in one African country and beneficiaries in other African currencies.

CHALLENGE 2: PREPARING FOR NON-TARIFF BARRIERS

When exporting Food, Drinks, or FMCG products, it's not just tariffs you need to think about, many countries also require permits, licences, and product authorisations before goods can enter their markets. **These are known as Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs).** NTMs include any rules, regulations, or procedures, aside from tariffs, that can affect how much, how fast, or whether your goods can be exported. When such measures are applied in a way that **unfairly restricts trade**, they become **Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs).**

To avoid delays or rejected shipments, it's important to research these requirements in advance. You can use the **Africa Trade Observatory (ATO)** to check market access conditions in your destination country, and this short video tutorial shows how to navigate the platform.

SUPPORT CONTACTS

NATIONAL AFCFTA COORDINATION OFFICE

Phone +233 202 480 378

Website https://afcftagh.org/

Email info@afcftagh.org

Address Ground Floor,
Africa Trade House,
Ambassadorial Enclave,
Liberia Road,
Accra, Ghana

GHANA EXPORT PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Phone + 233 302 740 909

Website https://www.gepaghana.org/

Email gepa@gepa.gov.gh

Address 9th, 10th and 11th Floor,
Africa Trade House,
Cruickshank Road,
West Ridge,
Accra, Ghana

GHANA REVENUE AUTHORITY-CUSTOMS DIVISION

Phone +233 024 243 5662

Website https://gra.gov.gh/customs/

Email info@gra.gov.gh

Address Off Starlet 91 Road Ministries,
Accra, Ghana

GHANA NATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Phone +233 302 662 860

Website https://www.ghanachamber.org/

Email info@ghanachamber.org

Address No. 3 Norley Street,
North Dzorwulu,
Accra, Ghana

SUPPORT CONTACTS

FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY (FDA)

Phone +233 302 235 100

Website https://fdaghana.gov.gh

Email fda@fda.gov.gh

Address No. 17 Indian Ocean Street, Nelson Mandela Avenue, Shiashie, Accra, Ghana

PLANT PROTECTION AND REGULATORY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Phone +233 303 977 526

Website https://mofa.gov.gh/site/directorates/technical-directorates/plant-protection-regulatory-services

Email pprsdghana@gmail.com

Address Pokuase Mayera Rd, Pokuase, Accra, Ghana

GHANA STANDARDS AUTHORITY

Phone +233 302 506 991-5 / 500 065/6

Website https://www.gsa.gov.gh/

Email gsanep@gsa.gov.gh
gsadir@gsa.gov.gh

Address GA-288-5605, Okponglo, Accra

MINISTRY OF TRADE, AGRIBUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Phone +233 302 686 528

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