

10 tips for organising your export of natural ingredients for health products to Europe

Last updated:

13 January 2026

As an exporter of natural ingredients for health products to Europe, it is important for you to organise your exports correctly and efficiently. You must have a good understanding of your export readiness as well as practical matters regarding your ingredient exports. It is also important to understand regulations, organise your documents, as well as tackle key topics from a sustainability perspective, such as packaging, logistics and certification schemes.

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1. Understand European market regulations and standards

Exporting natural ingredients for health products to Europe requires an understanding of the regulations and standards for this market, as well as for each country in the region. Europe has strict rules to ensure the safety, quality and traceability of natural ingredients entering the market.

As an exporter, you should familiarise yourself with the [EU's sanitary and phytosanitary requirements](#), labelling regulations, packaging standards and health ingredient-specific regulations, including:

- Health claims – The [EU's Health Claim Regulation \(EC\) No 1924/2006](#) establishes rules for making health claims on food products. Health claims refer to statements suggesting a relationship between a food and a health benefit.
- Cosmetics Regulation – Intended use in cosmeceuticals requires compliance with the [EU's Cosmetics Regulation \(EC\) No 1223/2009](#). The obligations of this regulation include conducting safety assessments, notifying cosmetics products through the [Cosmetic Product Notification Portal](#) (CPNP) and complying with labelling requirements.
- General food safety – Compliance with the general principles and requirements for food safety is set out in [EU Regulation 178/2002](#). Meeting these basic requirements is essential for entering the market and building trust with importers and manufacturers.

Two common non-compliance issues that buyers actively monitor are quality and contamination, which has led to rising demand for organic-certified ingredients. Exporters who want to enter the organic market must comply with [EU Regulation 834/2007](#), which outlines organic production requirements for agricultural products. The EU Commission and EU countries offer [various support measures to organic producers](#), including financial help and advice on best practices or adopting innovative solutions. Additionally, the [International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements](#) (IFOAM) provides support for organic certification from production to training.

Most European buyers purchasing natural ingredients for health products will require adherence to [Good Agricultural and Collection Practices \(GACP\)](#) concerning growing, collecting and primary processing of medicinal plants/herbal substances used for medicinal purposes. It covers both cultivated and wild-collected ingredients.

Additionally, the EU Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) guidelines set minimum standards for production processes, quality control and distribution of medicinal products. Full GMP compliance is not always required for raw materials, but understanding the traceability and hygiene expectations is essential.

Figure 1: Certifications that show your commitment to social responsibility



Source: [ProFound](#), 2023

Table 1: Explanation of common social certification standards

Standard	Description
Fairtrade International	Reflects a company's commitment to social sustainability and requires producers to meet a range of economic, environmental and social criteria.

Standard	Description
Fair for Life	Reflects a company's commitment to social sustainability and includes more extensive environmental sustainability criteria than Fairtrade. It relates to responsible supply chains and CSR.
FairWild	A standard focusing on social and environmental responsibility of wild-harvested natural ingredients.
Rainforest Alliance	Main goal is to promote sustainable farming and forestry practices, conserve biodiversity, protect ecosystems, and improve livelihoods of workers and communities.
Certified B Corp	Involves an assessment across five areas, including governance, workers, communities, environment and customers. This standard is a mixture of social and environmental performance and transparency across the supply chain.
SPP	Aims to address some of the key challenges faced by small-scale farmers and producers, including limited access to markets, low bargaining power and unfair trading practices.
Global GRASP	Standard focused on social responsibility and centred around workers' voice, human and labour rights information, human and labour rights indicators, and child and young workers protection.
BSCI (Business Social Compliance Initiative)	A widely accepted auditing system that ensures ethical working conditions across global supply chains.
ETI (Ethical Trading Initiative)	A leading alliance of trade unions, NGOs and companies that work together to promote a base code focused on internationally recognised workers' rights. It is used by many European retailers and buyers.
SEDEX	A global platform for sharing responsible sourcing data that allows buyers to review ethical practices without repeated audits.

Standard	Description
SMETA (Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit)	One of the most widely used audit formats for evaluating labour, health and safety, environment and business ethics.

Source: [ProFound](#), 2025

Acquiring or aligning with one of these standards strengthens your credibility with European buyers and supports long-term success in the market.

Tips:

Talk to your buyer to better understand what their preferences would be in terms of certification and how the market is generally developing for specific certification schemes.

Check whether your potential buyer would be willing to invest in supporting you achieve a certification standard – some will be willing to do this if they are committed to a long-term relationship with you.

Assess whether the different certification systems you are considering are in line with your vision and mission as a company and whether they align with your marketing strategy.

2. Organise your sampling strategy to win trust

Your sample is your first real export to a potential buyer. A well-prepared sample can determine whether you will collaborate with a buyer or not. Research by Muriigi shows that [supplier assessment criteria determine 57.1% of procurement process performance](#). This means European buyers evaluate your business capabilities through your sampling process before they fully assess your product quality.

Many natural ingredients exporters miss this important chance to demonstrate professionalism. Some send poor-quality samples, forget key documentation or never follow up after shipping. Buyers notice this quickly and will move on if you do not give them a reason to trust you.

Sampling opportunities should be treated like a mini export order. Executing the sampling process well shows your attention to detail, communication skills and reliability. The better you perform in the sampling stage, the stronger your impression will be.

Before you ship a sample, you should:

- Ask the buyer what they need the sample for (product development, quality check or sensory evaluation);
- Confirm the exact requirements (quantity, format, packaging and documentation);
- Schedule the sample shipments at suitable times (avoid holiday periods);
- Track all sample requests in a simple log system.

Sample quantity and packaging vary by product and buyer use case, so always check with the buyer first. Typical sample formats include:

- Quantity: 20–30kg for industrial trials (such as dried powders); 100–500g for laboratory testing or formulation work (such as extracts or oils).
- Packaging: Durable, food-grade resealable plastic or pouches for dried powder; amber glass bottles or sealed jars for oils and volatile ingredients; double-bagged, moisture-resistant material for botanical or wild-harvested samples.
- Labelling: Include product name, batch number, harvest and expiry date, storage information and certifications.
- Branding: Add your company logo and full contact information to show attention to detail.

Create a simple tracking system that captures the entire sampling journey.

Figure 2: Example of a sample checklist for a ginger exporter

Sampling Checklist for Ginger Powder Exporters

Preparation

- Has the buyer specified the grind size they need (e.g. fine 80 mesh)?
- Did you confirm whether they want dried ginger powder or fresh-dried?
- Do they want organic certification or regular grade?
- Are you clear if they need it for lab testing, product development, or formulation trials?
- Have you confirmed the sample quantity (e.g. 100g for lab test, 20kg for processing trial)?
- Did you check if they prefer glass jars, plastic tubs, or foil pouches for packaging?
- Are you including a Certificate of Analysis (CoA) or lab test for microbiological content?
- Have you clarified if they need batch traceability documents?
- Do you know their delivery deadline (especially if targeting seasonal launches)?
- Is their request logged in your sample-tracker sheet?

Packaging and Sending

- Is the ginger powder packed in food-grade, sealed packaging?
- Does the label include: "Zingiber officinale," batch code, expiry, harvest date?
- Have you included recommended storage conditions (cool, dry place)?
- Have you printed or emailed your product specification sheet?
- Did you include a brochure or business card with your company logo?
- Is the tracking number recorded and shared with the buyer?

Follow-Up and Feedback

- Have you confirmed delivery with the buyer?
- Did you follow up with an email asking: "Was the colour and aroma what you expected?"
- Have you logged their feedback on flavour, texture, colour, and potency?
- Have you scheduled a next follow-up call or email to keep the conversation going?

Source: [ProFound](#), 2025

This system helps you record each sample request date and all details related to the buyer's needs. You can also document shipment dates and add tracking information so you can answer delivery questions quickly. Keep a clear follow-up schedule to ensure you do not miss any opportunities, and record all buyer feedback with clear action points.

For high-potential buyers, include a brief production process overview or a QR code linking to a short video. This

extra information is small, but it can set you apart from competitors.

Tips:

Before sending any sample, use a standardised checklist that covers packaging, labelling, documentation, courier tracking and delivery terms. Use this checklist to train your team so everyone follows the same process.

Store templates for product specifications, lab results, certifications and your company profile in one central folder. This allows you to respond quickly and consistently to new sample requests.

Set calendar reminders to follow up with buyers 5–7 days after they receive the sample. Ask for feedback, confirm next steps and use this moment to build the relationship.

3. Master your buyer communication rhythm

According to [McKinsey & Company](#), 50% of supply chain disruptions are caused by miscommunication and poor documentation. To succeed in the European market as an exporter of natural ingredients for health products, you need a high-quality product and reliable, responsive communications habits. Communication is part of your product. If you respond slowly to buyer emails or requests, or if your messages are unclear, buyers may assume you will be unreliable with shipments and documentation as well.

You can build a simple process for buyer communication with four steps:

1. Set a response standard by replying within 24 hours, even if it is only to acknowledge the email and promise details later;
2. Use a checklist approach to answer all topics in buyer inquiries point by point, such as pricing, volumes, certifications, lead times and shipping;
3. Schedule regular updates by sending proactive messages during sampling, production and shipping. A short email every two weeks shows reliability;
4. Prepare your documents early and organise technical and sustainability files in advance. If possible, keep in a master folder ready for quick sharing.

Figure 3: Example of a documentation readiness matrix for exports of natural ingredients for health products

Frequency of Request

		Low	High
Time Sensitivity	Low	PREPARE Company history R&D capabilities Seasonal production plans Social responsibility reports	PRIORITISE Product specifications Certifications Technical data sheets Sustainability practices
	High	MONITOR Harvest forecasts Special processing methods Quality control procedures Traceability details	URGENT ACTION Pricing structure Compliance certificates Available inventory Shipping documents
		<i>Have ready within 1-2 weeks Set reminders to update quarterly</i>	<i>Pre-prepare and update monthly Keep on hand at all times</i>

Source: [ProFound](#), 2025

This matrix shows how to organise your documentation based on how often buyers request certain documents and how time-sensitive those requests are. Focus first on the 'Urgent action' category, because these documents are requested often, need to be ready fast and must always be up to date and easy to access. Next, work on the 'Prioritise' category for documents that buyers ask for often but that are less time-sensitive. This simple system ensures you are not rushing to find important information when buyers contact you.

Things may not always go to plan. If you miss a deadline, acknowledge it immediately and give a new realistic timeline. For quality concerns, respond with facts and avoid excuses. Document all communication about issues to prevent any misunderstanding. In Europe's natural ingredients market, how you communicate is often as important as what you sell.

Tips:

Create a shared inbox for buyer communication with clear ownership.

Build a communication tracker in Excel or [Google Sheets](#) with columns for the last message sent, next action, and pending documents.

Implement cloud storage with [Google Drive](#) or [Dropbox](#) and organise folders for each buyer.

Use scheduling tools like [Calendly](#) to coordinate meetings across time zones.

4. Choose payment terms that protect your business and build trust

Your payment terms are one of the most important parts of your export process. They affect your cash flow, buyer trust and risk level. To organise your exports professionally, treat payment terms as a strategic decision and balance security with flexibility for the buyer.

Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages of different payment terms

Payment method	When to use it	Advantages	Disadvantages
Letter of Credit	High-value transactions, first-time buyers, unfamiliar markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Very secure for both exporter and buyer because the bank guarantees payment once conditions are metBuilds trust with new or large buyersReduces default risk in new markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expensive for buyers due to bank fees and administration costsTime-consuming to process and documentMistakes in documents can delay or block payment
Cash In Advance	High-risk buyers; small, urgent or customised shipments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Exporter receives payment before dispatch, with almost no financial riskSimple process through bank transfer or credit cardImmediate access to funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">High-risk for buyers who must pay before seeing the productMay discourage new buyers looking for more balanced termsOften seen as inflexible

Payment method	When to use it	Advantages	Disadvantages
Open Account	Long-term, trusted relationships with strong payment history	<p>Low-cost and convenient for both parties</p> <p>Encourages larger and repeat orders</p> <p>Reduces administrative work</p>	<p>High risk for exporters, comes after delivery of goods</p> <p>Buyer may delay or fail to pay</p> <p>Can cause cash-flow pressure for small exporters</p>
Documentary Collection	Moderate-value trades with established buyers	<p>Cheaper than a Letter of Credit while still involving banks</p> <p>Documents are released to the buyer only after payment or acceptance</p> <p>Offers basic control over goods</p>	<p>Bank does not guarantee payment; buyer can still default</p> <p>Not suitable for high-risk markets</p> <p>Delivery delays can occur if documents are mishandled</p>

Source: [ProFound](#), 2025

Example: Ghanaian exporter of moringa powder

Let us look at an example of a Ghanaian exporter of moringa powder for clarity.

- Exporter: A small business in Ghana exporting moringa powder.
- Buyer: A new organic health-food buyer in Germany.
- Order Value: €12,000.
- Challenge: The buyer is new and untested, but the exporter wants to build a long-term relationship.

How could this exporter organise their payment process?

Map out payment options

Start by mapping out your payment options and create a simple chart that links each method to the level of risk and type of buyer:

- If you work with a first-time buyer and the order is above €10,000, use a Letter of Credit (LC) to protect both parties and establish trust.
- For small, customised or high-risk orders—especially when the buyer is unknown—choose Cash in Advance to secure payment before production or shipping.
- Once you build trust with a returning buyer who has completed at least three successful orders, you can consider offering an Open Account, ideally supported by trade-credit insurance.

Set clear internal guidelines

This exporter has a simple internal rulebook:

- Use LC for first orders above €10,000.
- Use Cash in Advance for any buyer with poor credit or urgent small orders.
- Offer Open Account only after 3 successful and timely payments.
- Track every buyer's method and reliability in a payment log.

In this case, the exporter may offer an LC for the first €12,000 shipment to the German buyer.

Prepare bank documents early

Knowing that LCs involve paperwork and bank fees, the exporter:

- Works with the bank to prepare all required LC documents in advance.
- Reviews the buyer's LC terms line by line to avoid mismatches.
- Submits documents quickly to prevent delays.

This preparation helps the exporter avoid a week-long shipping delay and builds trust with the buyer.

Include payment terms in your export checklist

The exporter may add a 'Payment Terms' section to the internal shipment checklist:

- Buyer's preferred method confirmed and logged.
- Payment due date clearly stated.
- All bank documents completed and filed.
- Any payment guarantees (LC or insurance) stored in the export folder.

This system keeps the exporter organised and makes follow-up easy.

This example shows how a small exporter can stay organised, reduce risk and build trust with a new buyer by choosing the right payment method for the situation.

Figure 4: Payment method risk and trust overview

Method	Risk Level (Exporter)	Buyer Trust Needed	Admin Load	Cost
Cash In Advance	Low	Low	Low	Low
Letter of Credit	Low	Medium	High	High
Documentary Collection	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Open Account	High	High	Low	Low

Source: [ProFound](#), 2025

Tips:

Familiarise yourself with the expectations of European buyers and the prevalent payment methods for natural ingredients to make more informed decisions.

Make sure to agree on payment terms before signing a contract. Consider your financial and other risks and benefits pursuant to these terms.

Seek the guidance of financial institutions, such as banks or agents, to understand your negotiation options. Several leading financial institutions support exporters of natural ingredients to Europe, including [Afreximbank](#), [EXIM Bank India](#), [Oikocredit](#), [Root Capital](#) and [Triodos Bank](#).

5. Choose the most efficient and sustainable international transport method

As an exporter of natural ingredients for health products, choosing the right international transport method is important. It affects delivery times, costs and meeting your buyer's expectations. Transport also shapes how buyers see your professionalism and your approach to sustainability.

One of the most important aspects of international trade is making sure your goods arrive on time. European buyers prefer shorter delivery times so they can meet market demand quickly. However, this must be balanced with cost efficiency and sustainability.

- Air freight is faster but much more expensive and less sustainable.
- Sea freight is slower but more cost-effective and often preferred for bulk shipments.

European businesses pay more attention to sustainability and carbon footprint. For this reason, [sea freight is seen as the more sustainable alternative](#).

When deciding between air and sea freight, consider four elements:

1. Quantity: Small or urgent shipments may need air freight; bulk shipments often suit sea freight.
2. Product nature: Fragile or time-sensitive goods may require controlled environments or fast delivery.

3. Route reliability: Some sea routes may involve delays or port congestion.
4. Carbon impact: Some buyers avoid air freight because of high emissions.

You can use websites such as [Freightos](#) for market insights, rates and information on sea and air freight. The World Shipping Council also offers useful resources on sustainable shipping solutions, statistics and cost comparisons.

Tips:

Use [Freightos](#) to estimate the shipping costs based on different parameters like origin, destination, volume and transport method.

Consult with industry experts and leverage their experience for better decision-making related to cost-saving strategies and efficient transportation methods.

Read these [ten tips on international freight](#) and apply some of these lessons to your company.

6. Organise and maintain a smart export document system

Exporting natural ingredients to Europe requires more than a quality product. If your documents are incomplete, outdated or disorganised, your goods may be delayed, returned or rejected. A report from [Artemus Group](#) found that incomplete or inaccurate documentation is a major cause of customs-clearance delays. European buyers evaluate not only your product but also how you run your business. A disorganised document system signals a disorganised supplier.

You therefore need a folder and a checklist of all export documents. Use one central folder (digital or physical) and create a checklist. Group your documents into three categories:

1. Documents required for every shipment

These are standard documents needed to move goods across borders and comply with customs.

- Commercial invoice - Describes the goods, quantity, total value, and terms of sale. The commercial invoice serves as a basis for customs valuation and provides information to the buyer.
- Packing list - Lists the contents of the shipment, including item description, quantity, weight and dimensions. It is not required by customs authorities but helps them understand what is in the container if they decide to open it.
- Bill of lading - Issued by carrier and serves as a receipt and proof of shipment. There are different types of bills of lading, such as negotiable or non-negotiable. The type depends on the specific requirements.
- Certificate of origin - The main reason to have one is because it helps customs officials verify the accuracy of the information provided and ensure compliance with trade regulations. Moreover, with a certificate of origin, you can take advantage of specific preferential trade agreements that may exist between the country you are exporting to and the country you are exporting from.

2. Trust-building and competitive advantage documents

These documents are not always required but help you stand out and build buyer confidence.

- Certificate of Analysis (CoA) - Shows lab test results for product safety and quality. Many buyers will not approve your product without a recent CoA from a certified lab.

- Product specification sheets – Technical details of the product, including origin, moisture content and other parameters. This helps buyers decide if your product fits their formulation or processing needs. [Here is an example of a production specification sheet for milled ginger.](#)
- Traceability reports – Batch coding and supply-chain information. These reports show your ability to track the product from source to shipment, which is now a common expectation in Europe. [Here is an example of a traceable supply chain route for pepper, cumin and turmeric.](#)
- Food safety certifications – Examples include HACCP and ISO 22000. These show that your processes meet international food safety standards and reduce perceived risk for buyers.
- Social or sustainability certifications – Examples include Organic, FairWild or Fairtrade. These certificates can help you access premium markets and value-driven buyers.

3. Buyer-specific and customisable documents

These documents depend on the buyer and often vary per shipment or customer.

- Code of Conduct – A signed agreement on ethical sourcing, human rights and related standards.
- [Good Manufacturing Practices \(GMP\)](#) certification – Shows that your manufacturing processes meet defined quality standards and ensure consistent, safe production of health products.
- [Safety data sheets](#) – Provide information about safe handling, storage and potential hazards associated with your natural ingredient. These are very important when the ingredient is classified as hazardous or needs special handling warnings and instructions.

Figure 5: Document checklist for exporting natural ingredients for health products

Required Documents		Checklist	Other Documents	Checklist
Certificate of Origin	Form A – used if your country is part of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences	Y/N	Certificate of Analysis	Y/N
	EUR.1 – used if your country has signed the preferential trade agreement with the EU	Y/N	Product Specification	Y/N
Commercial Documents	Proforma Invoice – used to show importer exact amount to be paid and payment method	Y/N	Export Certificate	Y/N
	Commercial Invoice – used by customs authorities as evidence of export	Y/N	Weight Certificate	Y/N
	Packing List – used to specify number of goods in individual packages and gives gross and net weight	Y/N	Certificate of Inspection	Y/N
Administrative and Transport Documents	Phytosanitary Certificate – some natural ingredients for health products require testing before being exported	Y/N	Blacklist Certificate	Y/N
	Health Certificate – suppliers must provide to EU customs authority if exporter country is part of a stricter import condition	Y/N	CITES Certificate	Y/N
	Transport Documents – depending on mode of transport, including Bill of Lading, Road Waybill, Rail Waybill, Airway Bill and FIATA Bill of Lading	Y/N	Voluntary Certificates	Y/N
			Financial Insurance Document	Y/N
			Contract	Y/N

Source: ProFound, 2023

Tips:

Search for a freight forwarder in your country through the website of the [International Federation of Freight Forwarder's Associations](#). You can also find a list of [recognised ship agents and brokers](#) on the website of the Federation of National Associations of Ship Brokers and Agents (FONASBA).

[Explore the safety data sheet search tool](#) by inputting your product name and checking the search results to see what a SDS should look like.

7. Purchase export insurance

As an exporter, you need to be aware of and consider insuring against the risk of unexpected events. Some of the risks include non-payment by buyers, cargo damage or loss during transit, political instability, and unforeseen events such as natural disasters or economic crises. By purchasing export insurance, you will be covered against the potential risks involved in export procedures. The insurance policy you purchase can help you recover the monetary value of the goods.

Export credit insurance

The main aim of export credit insurance is to protect you from non-payment. The main advantage of purchasing export credit insurance is to protect you against buyer's slow or non-payment for your natural ingredients.

Here are some common export credit insurance schemes you can purchase:

- Short-term insurance: Includes a repayment period of up to one year
- Single-buyer policy: Best used to reduce the risk of working with a single buyer
- Multiple-buyer policy: Best if you export to a range of customers

Some of the most common credit insurance companies for agricultural products are [Euler Hermes](#), [Zurich Insurance Group](#) and [Credendo](#). The price for insurance depends on the risk involved in the transport, your history and annual turnover.

Incoterms

To better understand the [rules that define the responsibilities of parties involved in the export transaction](#), you need to know about [International Commercial Terms](#) (Incoterms).

Incoterms are internationally recognised trade terms that define the responsibilities of buyers and sellers in international transactions. These are useful to exporters because they help you establish clear guidelines for the allocation of costs, risks and obligations. The result from this process is a smoother international trade operation.

One of the most common Incoterms for you as an exporter of natural ingredients for health products is [Free on Board](#) (FOB). FOB states that the importer is responsible for the container when loaded, and for arranging and paying for the insurance.

Another common Incoterm is [Cost, Insurance and Freight](#) (CIF). Although the liability and risk for the container under CIF is still the importer's, CIF requires that the exporter take care and pay for the freight insurance. If you fail to do so and something happens to the goods during transit, the importer will file a lawsuit against you for not having complied with their requirements. In the case of CIF, the insurance policy must be presented to customs upon arrival of the vessel at the destination port.


As an exporter, you must have a clear understanding of the obligations related to each Incoterm. Not only is it

important for you to be clear on the responsibilities you have, but it will also help you when pricing your goods for export. For example, FOB requires less time investment and expenses for your company – for this reason, your product must be priced accordingly.

Usually, the cost of your freight insurance will depend on the total value of the goods for export as well as the origin of the container and the distance it must travel. For example, a shipment from Nigeria to Europe will be much cheaper than a shipment from Peru.

Some international insurance companies with a department for freight insurance are [Gallagher](#), [Maersk](#) and [AIG](#). You can find many other companies online. Oftentimes, importers have a specific insurance company they will require their supplier to work with.

Figure 6: Incoterms rules and responsibilities quick reference guide



		Freight Collect Terms					Freight Prepaid Terms				
Groups	Any Mode or Modes of Transport	Sea and Inland Waterway Transport				Any Mode or Modes of Transport					
Incoterm [®]	EXW Ex Works (Place)	FCA Free Carrier (Place)	FAS Free Alongside Ship (Port)	FOB Free On Board (Port)	CFR Cost and Freight (Port)	CIF Cost Insurance & Freight (Port)	CPT Carriage Paid To (Place)	CIP Carriage & Insurance Paid to (Place)	DAP Delivered at Place (Place)	DDP Delivered at Place Unloaded (Place)	DDP Delivered Duty Paid (Place)
Transfer of Risk	At Buyer's Disposal	On Buyer's Transport	Alongside Ship	On Board Vessel	On Board Vessel	On Board Vessel	At Carrier	At Carrier	At Named Place	At Named Place Unloaded	At Named Place
Obligations & Charges:											
Export Packaging	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller
Loading Charges	Buyer	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller
Delivery to Port/Place	Buyer	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller
Export Duty, Taxes & Customs Clearance	Buyer	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller
Origin Terminal Charges	Buyer	Buyer	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller
Loading on Carriage	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller
Carriage Charges	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller
Insurance	Negotiable	Negotiable	Negotiable	Negotiable	Negotiable	*Seller	Negotiable	**Seller	Negotiable	Negotiable	Negotiable
Destination Terminal Charges	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller	Seller
Delivery to Destination	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Seller	Seller	Seller
Unloading at Destination	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Seller	Buyer
Import Duty, Taxes & Customs Clearance	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Buyer	Seller

*CIF requires at least an insurance with the minimum cover of the Institute Cargo Clause (C) (Number of listed risks, subject to itemized exclusions)
 **CIP now requires at least an insurance with the minimum cover of the Institute Cargo Clause (A) (All risk, subject to itemized exclusions)
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 This is general information for guidance purposes only. IncoSolutions Pty Ltd is not responsible for these contents nor do the contents listed above contain all details. For a full and complete description, refer to the full version of Incoterms. 2020 by the International Chamber of Commerce at the ICC website.

Source: [Incodocs](#), 2023

Tips:

Ensure that you have detailed information about your business at hand. Information on your revenue plus risk and liabilities is required to create a policy specific to your business as an exporter.

Speak with an insurance broker to have a better idea of what documentation is needed to purchase insurance. The typical documentation you require will be basic information about your company and a copy of an invoice and the name of your buyer.

Check whether your government offers export credit insurance or other export insurance programmes.

Reassess your insurance needs and update coverage as you expand and enter new markets.

8. Ensure you use the correct packaging for export

As an exporter of natural ingredients for health products, packaging is part of your export system. If your packaging is not suitable, your product can be damaged, delayed or stopped at customs. These problems are avoidable when you follow the right process. Packaging matters for three reasons:

1. It protects your product from moisture, light and physical damage during transport and storage;
2. It helps **preserve quality**, freshness, aroma, and nutritional value;
3. It builds buyer confidence, because good packaging signals that you are professional and detail-oriented.

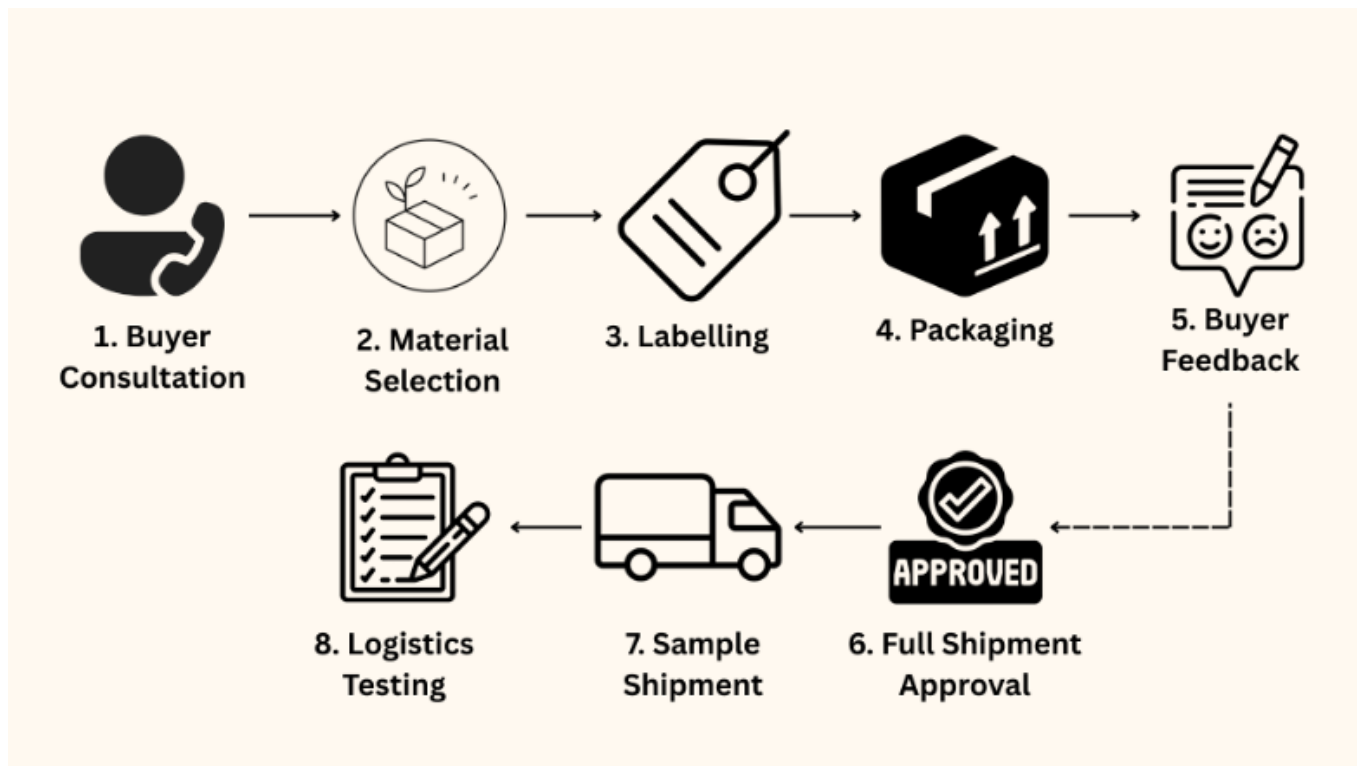
Some of the most protective options include moisture-resistant bags, airtight containers and outer layers that protect light-sensitive products.

Before choosing your packaging, align with buyer preferences and international standards. Ask each buyer about their preferred packaging formats and request photos or examples from previous shipments. Record these preferences in a buyer-profile spreadsheet. Then speak with your logistics provider to confirm that the packaging will last throughout the journey.

European countries are also tightening packaging laws. Through the EU Green Deal, recyclability and waste reduction are now priorities. For example, Spain has introduced a 25% import tax on plastic-packaged products, which means Spanish buyers must avoid plastic packaging. Look into renewable, biodegradable and recyclable packaging. Glass and metal may work, but their weight can increase freight costs and fuel use.

In all cases, packaging must protect the ingredient content, its integrity, and comply with buyer expectations. By prioritising good packaging practices, you can safeguard your product quality, comply with regulations and maintain a competitive edge in the European market. Invest in good-quality packaging materials and designs that align with your importer's needs and market expectations.

Figure 7: End-to-end packaging journey



Source: [ProFound](#), 2025

Tips:

Read this report on [packaging guidelines for ocean freight](#) to learn about possible solutions for your product and company.

Work closely with your importer and packaging suppliers to identify the best solution for your product.

Choose lightweight and durable material that can withstand transportation conditions while reducing your overall environmental footprint.

Add a QR code to your packaging to show your product's origin story and traceability.

9. Look for support from government and non-government agencies

There are numerous export agencies that offer specialised knowledge and support to exporters aiming to enter new markets. The agencies implement programmes that involve valuable market insights tailored to specific European industries. It is highly recommended to join these programmes, as they provide insights into the regulations necessary for compliance and offer information on relevant industry trends within the European food industry.

It is important to note that acquiring this knowledge may require adjusting your business operations. Neglecting to use the tools and resources offered by various value chain and matchmaking programmes could result in missing out on crucial opportunities in the European market.

The services provided by these export agencies include training, coaching, remote guidance, participation in trade fairs and business-matching. These services are typically delivered by European sector experts who possess extensive knowledge to guide exporters on market entry and trading strategies.

For example, these experts are well-informed about the requirements and expectations of European buyers. Participating in an export promotion programme offers networking opportunities that allow you to connect with potential European buyers. Additionally, your involvement in such networking events enhances your company's credibility and demonstrates your commitment to meeting buyers' needs.

Some government, non-government and commercial organisations that can provide you with assistance are:

Government agencies

- **CBI** – the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries is a Dutch government agency that assists exporters in developing countries who want to enter European markets for export. They offer coaching, trade fair visits, training and market studies to help exporters access European markets.
- **IPD** – the Import Promotion Desk supports importers and tour operators in their search for overseas business partners, opening new supply sources for them in selected developing countries and emerging markets. And for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the partner countries, IPD facilitates access to the EU market.
- **OTGS** – Open Trade Gate Sweden supports companies from developing countries that want to export to Sweden and the European Union. They help exporters understand rules and procedures and provide market information.
- **SIPPO** – the Swiss Import Promotion programme's overall objective is to integrate developing and transition countries into world trade by advising and supporting over 40 business support organisations (BSOs) in 11 partner countries.
- **FINNPARTNERSHIP** – Finnpartnership promotes business between Finland and developing countries to generate positive development impacts. It mainly offers services on business partnership support and matchmaking.

Non-government agencies

- **COLEAD** – the Committee Linking Entrepreneurship-Agriculture-Development is a Europe-based organisation focused on promoting sustainable and inclusive agricultural trade and development. The organisation provides a range of services including technical assistance, market access and development, standards compliance, institutional strengthening, and networking and advocacy.
- **ITC** – the International Trade Centre is a development agency of the United Nations that promotes sustainable trade for exporters. The organisation provides export management, supply chain management, packaging, and marketing and branding services.
- **africrops!** – africrops! specialises in sourcing, production and export of African botanical ingredients for the food, beverage, cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries. They focus on sustainable sourcing, processing and value addition, quality control and certification, and export and distribution.

Figure 8: Logos of different support organisations in Europe



Partners in
Transformation
Import Promotion Desk



CBI
Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Open Trade
Gate Sweden
National Board of Trade



International
Trade
Centre



Source: ProFound, 2025

Tips:

You can participate in international trade fairs and conferences related to health products and natural ingredients to identify potential organisations that can support you.

Join trade associations, as they often have partnerships with government agencies and NGOs and can provide valuable networking opportunities.

Establish an online presence so that you can be identified by BSOs and NGOs active in the field of agriculture and international cooperation.

Explore [ITC's SME Trade Academy](#) platform for free resources on becoming a successful exporter of agricultural products.

10. Read our natural ingredients for health products studies for practical tips

CBI has published several studies by industry experts containing detailed information for organising your exports to Europe. Consult product-specific studies, such as [baobab](#), [aloe vera](#), [moringa](#), [plant proteins](#) and [seaweed](#), for in-depth information on your natural ingredient. Following the information and [tips on finding buyers](#), [doing business](#) and [going digital](#) will improve your chances of entering European export markets.

Tip:

Visit the [CBI market information platform for natural ingredients for health products](#) and read the

studies that are most relevant to your company and the products you export. You can choose to read them online or download them in PDF format.

[ProFound - Advisers in Development](#) carried out this study on behalf of CBI.

Please review our [market information disclaimer](#).