

Always consult the Finnish Food Safety Authority (Evira) as to what customs controls and permits are required for importing plants and/or animals to Finland.

Plants

The Finnish Phytosanitary Act provides for the import of plants and parts of plants to Finland from EU countries and from outside the EU. Phytosanitary regulations strive to prevent the spread of dangerous pests into Finnish plant production.

For example, the palm thrips is a pest to be destroyed as referred to in the Phytosanitary Act, and the phytosanitary authorities are to be contacted when palm thrips are sighted or when their presence is suspected. Palm thrips have entered Finland a few times with cut orchids.

Import from EU countries

A passenger is allowed to import small quantities of plants, parts of plants, and other plant products such as fruit, vegetables and seeds for personal use from EU countries, including the Azores and Madeira.

An exception to this is seed potatoes which can only be imported under certification with a ZP (protected zone) plant passport. Host plants of fire blight* can be imported only from a buffer zone or a protected zone under a ZP plant passport. The import of coniferous plants and derived timber products from Portugal is subject to restrictions.

Import from European countries outside the EU

A passenger may, without a phytosanitary certificate and for personal use, import items including the following for example from Russia, Norway and the Canary Islands:

- 5 nursery plants with root balls, for example trees, shrubs and perennials, except host plants of fire blight*.
- 5 potted plants (Note! Orchids are subject to CITES restrictions).
- 3 kg of flower bulbs, tubers and corms.
- 3 kg of fresh citrus fruit. Other fruit, berries and vegetables can be imported for personal use.
- 500 g of seeds.
- 20 cut flowers, and
- other plant products which do not require a phytosanitary certificate.

The import of potatoes whether for food or seed, host plants of fire blight*, soil (arable), compost and manure is prohibited.

Import from countries outside Europe

From countries outside Europe, including Turkey, a passenger is allowed to import for personal use a maximum of 20 cut flowers, as well as seeds and plant products which do not require a phytosanitary certificate.

The organic soil imported with plants is also subject to a

phytosanitary certificate as concerns most countries. Among other items, the import of potatoes, host plants of fire blight*, plants of the genus Citrus, many coniferous plants and soil is prohibited.

Other import of plants, parts of plants and plant products from outside the EU and Europe requires a phytosanitary certificate issued by the plant protection authority of the country in question and a plant inspection in Finland.

***Host plants of fire blight whose import is prohibited:**
Amelanchiers, hawthorns, chaenomeles, cotoneasters, quinces, loquats, apple and pear trees, medlars, firethorns and sorbus.

Dogs, cats and ferrets

Restrictions on the import of animals help prevent the spread of animal diseases (such as rabies and echinococcosis) into Finland.

- **Rabies** is a disease of the central nervous system caused by a virus which can infect both animals and humans. Rabies results in the inevitable death of infected animals and humans. The outbreak of rabies in humans can usually be prevented with a vaccination treatment which must be started immediately after exposure to the virus.
- **Tapeworm infection** in humans can cause cysts to form e.g. in the liver or in the lungs. Humans can become infected through the faeces of animals carrying tapeworms, and in 10–20 per cent of the cases the infection leads to death.

A pet not intended to be sold or delivered to a new owner is regarded as a pet imported by a passenger.

The import is considered commercial if the animal is intended to be sold or delivered to a new owner, if the animal is being sent to Finland without an accompanying natural person, or if a passenger imports a total of six or more animals.

An animal imported from outside the EU must be imported into Finland through an approved place of arrival where the importer must present the animal to the customs authority for inspection. The only approved place of arrival for air traffic is the Helsinki-Vantaa Airport.

The animal must be marked for identification with a **microchip** or a clearly readable tattoo before being vaccinated against rabies. As of 3 July 2011, only microchips are accepted as marks of identification. If the animal was marked before 3 July 2011 with a clearly

readable tattoo, and the certificate issued by a veterinarian shows that the tattoo was made before 3 July 2011, the identification of the animal is acceptable.

The animal must have a **pet certificate, a so-called pet passport**, which contains the information on the identification of the animal as well as an entry by a veterinarian on a valid rabies vaccination, medication against echinococcosis and a possible rabies antibody test. The pet passport is used in the EU member states.

Animals imported from non-EU countries must have an **official certificate in accordance with the EU regulation, issued by a veterinarian approved by a competent authority** in the country of departure, showing the identification data on the animal, certification of rabies vaccination and medication against echinococcosis. **(For returning pets, however, pet passports originally issued in an EU country are accepted.)** The medication against echinococcosis must be given in a country other than Finland; medication given in Finland before departure is not accepted. The original certificates of vaccination or certified copies of them as well as the results of the antibody test must be enclosed to the veterinary certificate. The certificate form is available for printing on Evira's website.

Please note: The certificate form will change on 1 January 2012.

The animal must be vaccinated against **rabies** with an inactivated vaccine compliant with the international OIE standard at least 21 days before import.

When imported from any non-EU country, dogs and cats younger than three months and vaccinated against rabies must be accompanied by a certificate in Finnish, Swedish or English, issued by the vaccinating veterinarian, stating that the rabies vaccine was administered according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Dogs and cats younger than three months and not vaccinated against rabies can be imported into Finland only from the rabies-free countries listed on Evira's website, under the conditions stated on the website.

The import into Finland of unvaccinated **ferrets** under the age of three months is prohibited.

When an animal is imported from another EU country or from a country outside the EU where the risk of rabies infection is low, determining rabies antibodies is not required prior to import. These countries are listed on Evira's website.

If the import takes place from countries other than the ones mentioned above, for example from Brazil, India, Turkey or Thailand, the animal must be tested for rabies antibodies before import. The antibodies must be determined in a laboratory approved by the EU.

However, the period between the vaccination and the blood test must be at least 30 days. The animal cannot be imported to Finland until three months after the blood test.

Dogs must have a certificate issued by a veterinarian verifying that the dog, 5–1 days (120–24 hours) prior to its arrival in Finland, and in a country other than Finland, has been given an appropriate dose of an approved medicine against **tapeworms** that cause echinococcosis. On Evira's website, you can find further information on employing the so-called 28-day rule to medicate dogs that travel on a frequent basis and have an EU pet passport.

Medication against tapeworms is not required for dogs imported directly from Sweden, Norway (excluding Svalbard), Britain, Ireland or Malta. As of 1 January 2012, medication against tapeworms is no longer required for cats.

Rabbits, hares and other rodents kept as pets

A maximum of five rabbits, hares or other rodents can be imported as pets by a private person without the animals being subject to any import requirements other than the EU safeguard measures and the CITES requirements and, when importing such animals from non-EU countries, that they must arrive in Finland through an approved border crossing point where Customs inspects them in connection with its controls. This procedure requires that the import is not commercial and that the animals arrive with the passenger and are not intended to be sold.

Foodstuffs of animal origin

Passengers are not allowed to import meat, meat products, milk or dairy products from non-EU countries with the following exceptions: There are no restrictions on imports from Andorra, Liechtenstein, Norway, San Marino and Switzerland. Passengers are allowed to import a maximum quantity of 10 kg of foodstuffs of animal origin from Croatia, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland.

Exceptions are infant formula, baby food and foodstuffs required for special medical reasons, of which a maximum quantity of 2 kg can be imported. The products must be of well-known brands and in their original, unopened retail packages when they are not used, and it should be possible to store them in room temperature.

A passenger is allowed to import 20 kg of fish products or one gutted fish regardless of weight. However, the weight restriction does not apply to the above mentioned countries subject to exceptions nor to the Faroe Islands or Iceland.

Products derived from other animals, such as honey, frogs' legs, snails and eggs can be imported in quantities not exceeding 2 kg.

Endangered animal and plant species and derivative products

The import, export, trade and possession of endangered species is subject to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, CITES. The purpose of CITES is to protect endangered species of animals and plants from extinction by preventing illicit trade in the species.

The import and export of endangered animal species, as well as products derived thereof, require a licence. A CITES import permit is required, for example, for the furs of wild felines, wolves and bears, as well as for ivory, birds of prey, parrots, corals, many species of reptiles, and their derivatives.

The import and export of endangered plant species, as well as products derived thereof, also require a licence. A CITES import permit is required, for example, for hardwood timber products, cacti and many species of orchids.

For import from the EU territory, a copy of the import permit or re-export certificate, or a separate EU CITES certificate is sufficient.

The permits must be acquired well in advance before the journey because they cannot be acquired afterwards.

A passenger is allowed to import a maximum amount of 125 g of caviar without an EU CITES import permit.

Firearms and edged weapons

The transport and import of firearms, firearm supplies and parts of firearms into Finland for private purposes from any country, including the EU territory, is subject to restrictions. Gas sprays are also subject to restrictions.

The import of knuckle dusters, shurikens, edged weapons disguised as other objects, tasers, electric batons, spring batons and precision slingshots is prohibited.

Copyright infringing products

The import of products infringing intellectual property rights, such as counterfeit CDs, DVDs, computer games and software, even for personal use, is prohibited.

There is reason to doubt the origin of a product when, for example, an unused product is offered for sale at a price which is considerably cheaper than normal.

Do ask questions! We are happy to give you more information.

Medicines

From the EEA countries, a passenger is allowed to import prescribed medicinal products and products intended for self-treatment and for personal use in a quantity which corresponds to a maximum of one year's use. From non-EEA countries, a passenger is allowed to import a quantity which corresponds to a maximum of three months' use.

From a Schengen country, a passenger is allowed to import for personal use a medicinal product categorised as a narcotic substance in a quantity which corresponds to a maximum of 30 days' use. The passenger must also have the prescription and a transport certificate, that is, a Schengen certificate which has been acquired in the passenger's home country upon purchasing the prescription medicines. This means that a person living in Finland is not allowed to import narcotic medicines acquired in other Schengen countries into Finland.

From non-Schengen countries, a passenger is allowed to import for personal use a medicinal product categorised as a narcotic substance in a quantity corresponding to a maximum of 14 days' use. Furthermore, there are stricter limitations for the import of medicinal products which contain buprenorphine and methadone.

When required, the passenger must be able to prove that the medicinal product is intended for personal treatment. For prescription medicines, this can be done by presenting the prescription or a medical certificate which the passenger must be carrying when arriving in Finland. A Schengen certificate can be acquired from a pharmacy in Finland, when necessary.

Veterinary medicinal products

A passenger is allowed to import legally acquired veterinary medicinal products intended for pets in a quantity which corresponds to a maximum of one month's use. These products must neither contain narcotic substances nor be vaccines or other immunological veterinary medicinal products. Veterinary medicinal products must be imported at the same time with the animal to be treated.

The EU countries are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The EEA countries include the EU countries as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

The Schengen countries are Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

Choose the right corridor

When you arrive at Customs, choose the **red corridor** if you are carrying goods that are subject to customs clearance or declaration or if you are not sure which regulations apply. Otherwise, choose the **green corridor**. If you arrive from another EU country, choose the **blue corridor**.

Always check the current regulations before your journey.

Finnish Food Safety Authority, Evira, www.evira.fi

- Plants, parts of plants and plant products
- Dogs, cats, ferrets, rabbits and rodents
- Other animals and foodstuffs of animal origin
- List of approved border crossing points for animals

Finnish Medicines Agency, Fimea, www.fimea.fi

Ministry of the Environment and the Finnish Environment Institute, www.ymparisto.fi

- CITES import permits and re-export certificates
- Border crossing points for animals of CITES species

The National Police Board, www.poliisi.fi

- Firearms, edged weapons and dangerous objects

Copyright Information and Antipiracy Centre, www.antipiracy.fi, e-mail: info@antipiracy.fi

Customs Information, tel. +358 20 690 600. You can also submit your questions electronically at www.tulli.fi.

Further information is available in our leaflet **Customs Instructions for Passengers**.



Help us uncover customs offences by calling the tip-off phone at +358 800 1 4600 or by submitting an anonymous tip-off using the online form at

www.tulli.fi

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Import Restrictions for Passengers

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