



International Shipping & U.S. Customs Guidelines

For Exhibitors at the Americas Food & Beverage Show

The following guidelines are intended to help international exhibitors successfully import food, beverages, and alcohol into the United States for participation in the Americas Food & Beverage Show. Compliance with U.S. regulations is essential to ensure the timely and lawful arrival of your goods.

1. General Overview

International exhibitors must comply with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Food & Drug Administration (FDA), and other federal agencies such as the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). Products entering the U.S. for trade show exhibition purposes are subject to temporary import requirements, product declarations, safety standards, and advance filings.

2. Food Products: Requirements for Entry

a. Foreign Supplier Verification Program (FSVP)

If you are importing food products (including samples) into the U.S., you are required to have a U.S.-based FSVP Agent. The agent ensures the imported food complies with U.S. safety regulations as outlined by the FDA.

b. Prior Notice to FDA

Prior Notice is required for all food products imported into the U.S.

3. Alcoholic Beverages: Special Import Rules

a. Secure a Licensed Importer of Record

All alcoholic beverages must be imported by or through a U.S.-licensed Importer of Record authorized to bring alcohol into the country.



b. Required Documentation

Each alcohol shipment must include a Commercial Invoice with full product descriptions including brand, alcohol content, bottle size, and value.

c. Prior Notice to FDA

Just like food products, alcoholic beverages also require Prior Notice submission to the FDA.

4. Temporary Imports: Using an ATA Carnet

The ATA Carnet is an internationally recognized customs document that allows for the temporary duty- and tax-free entry of goods into the U.S. for exhibition purposes.

5. Preparing Your Shipment

Include all required documents: Commercial Invoice, Prior Notice, FSVP Agent information, Importer of Record for alcohol, ATA Carnet (if applicable).

6. Additional Tips

Start early. Keep copies of all documents. Monitor your shipment. Be prepared for inspection.

7. Important Resources

CBP Guidance on Trade Show Imports: <https://www.help.cbp.gov/s/article/Article1286>

TTB - Importing Alcohol: <https://www.ttb.gov/import-export/itd/importing-alcohol-for-trade-shows>

FDA Prior Notice System: <https://www.access.fda.gov>

ATA Carnet: <https://uscib.org/ata-carnet-export-service/>