



# **Export Guide for Ethiopian Micro, Small and Medium- sized Enterprises**

Focus on Five Agricultural Products  
with Export Potential

Daystar Management Consultancy PLC

# Export Guide for Ethiopian Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: Focus on Five Agricultural Products with Export Potential

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# About the guide

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This guide is written for small and medium scale farmers and exporters as well as others who work in agriculture in Ethiopia.

It is written to help stakeholders understand regulations and processes; as well as build their capacities to conform with sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements.

In this guide, you will find discussions on:

- The importance of conformity with SPS standards;
- Agencies that set and enforce standard requirements;
- Requirements for select Ethiopian crops;
- Ethiopian certification processes; and
- Fees required for certification.

## 1.1 Why SPS Is Important

Ethiopian exporters are required to meet the international requirement that any consignment of plants or agricultural commodity should be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate issued by the Ministry of Agriculture. The certificate is an evidence that the Ministry of Agriculture finds the consignment to be substantially free from diseases and pests and conform with the current phytosanitary regulations of the importing country.

Conformation to SPS requirements mean:

- Farmers will be able to negotiate for and sell their crops at a good price;

- Customers in other countries will want to buy from Ethiopia because of good reputation and credibility; and
- Reliable supply of nutritious food to stay healthy

## 1.2 Agencies that Set and Enforce Requirements for Ethiopian Crops

There are a number of agencies and organisations that determine and ensure the level of good standards needed for exports of agricultural products to both regional and international markets. Such agencies are based in Ethiopia as well as in other countries. Some of them are governmental agencies while others are non-governmental.

These organisations perform functions including:

- Product testing;
- Assessment and inspection of consignment, farmland and warehouses;
- Set standards;
- Metrology and calibration (i.e., ensuring that weights and measures are uniform and accurate);
- Certification and accreditation (i.e., ensuring that involved organizations and

individuals are qualified and equipped to follow due process);

**Ministry of Agriculture** is the responsible ministry to implement the regulations.

**Plant Health and Quality Regulatory Directorate of Ministry of Agriculture** is an officially designated National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) responsible for inspecting and issuing phytosanitary certificate.

**Ethiopian Standard Agency (ESA)** sets the key phytosanitary requirements for each product as part of the Ethiopian Standard (ES) quality requirements for specific products. ESA being a member of the International Standard Organization (ISO), its standards are well aligned with the standards issued by ISO.

ESA coordinates the development and enforcement of Ethiopian standards which are developed by **National Technical Committees** whose membership are drawn from multi-sectoral institutions responsible for education, research, certification, inspection, testing, regulatory bodies, and consumer associations, among others.

## 1.3 Requirements for Export of select Agricultural products

Certification is a significant requirement to increase marketability and prices of Ethiopian products. Given that Ethiopia's top export earners are agro-based, conformation requirements are related to damages caused by parasites of animal or vegetable origin; visible extraneous matter affecting appearance; bruising; and defects in growth and formation.

The agriculture sector in Ethiopia has the potential to propel Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) into exporting lines, especially to open markets such as the European Union (EU) that provide preferential treatment to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) of which Ethiopia is a member. This guide provides an overview of the regulatory, institutional and other relevant arrangements in place that can be leveraged to optimally utilise opportunities of exporting to the EU.

The specific export agro-products covered in this manual are: green coffee, sesame seeds, fresh cut multi-floral roses, haricot bean seeds and chickpea seeds. These export commodities are selected based on their significant share in the Ethiopian export profile. More than half of Ethiopia's export earnings are from coffee (excluding roasted and decaffeinated), sesamum seeds and cut flowers and flower buds.

## PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS

# Requirements for Green Coffee



## Standard reference

The Ethiopian standard for green coffee is referred to as Green Coffee Standard ES-787, updated in the year 2002. The standard identifies general as well as physical and chemical requirements for green coffee.

What are the standard requirements?

- Moisture content should not exceed 11.5% and shall not be less than 10% by mass.
- The levels of pollutants, pesticide residues, trace metals, heavy metals, and any other harmful materials should not be more than codex recommended limits.
- The coffee should be free from excessive dirt, stones, glass, metallic pieces, and any foreign odour.
- It needs to be stored in storage conditions of 20°C and 60% relative humidity for more extended periods of safe storage.

## Attestation required on certificate

The standard required for this commodity is for it to be clean and reasonably free from any extraneous matter and free from

contamination. The essential physical and chemical requirements include moisture content, pesticide residues, and contaminants.

The attestation required on the certificate includes assurance that the consignment is:

- Heat-treated using appropriate procedures or standards.
- Found to be free from seed borne or seed transmitted diseases and other pests.
- Free from natural soil.

## Private standards

Buyers in European markets may have additional requirements that go beyond nationally set standards. For coffee they may demand exporters to provide information on the quality of the coffee, number of defects, altitude of where the coffee has grown, picking processes of cherries and rating of the cupping protocol. Exporters also have to be familiar and comply with the continuously published International Coffee Council resolutions. Furthermore, particularly if also exporting roasted coffee beans, exporters need to comply with Quality Management System (ISO 9001) or Food Safety Management (ISO 22000) (based on hazard analysis and critical control points principles).

## PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS

# Requirements for Sesame Seed



### Standard reference

The Ethiopian standard setting specifications for sesame seed is referred to as Sesame Seed Standard (ES-439). The latest available update was published in the year 2012.

What are the standard requirements?

- Sesame seeds need to be free from contamination and from infestations, including alternaria sesame (blight); cylindrosporium sesame (anguler leaf spot); drechliera sesame (leaf blotch); pseudomonas sesame (bacterial leaf spot); xanthomonas sesame (bacterial leaf spot); and other seed-borne diseases and parasitic weed seeds.

- On the use of land intended for growing the seeds, the land should be prepared in a way that is timely and with a clean level seedbed. The standard also requires prevention of contamination and soil-borne diseases emerging from plants grown in the previous seasons. In addition, seed crops grown in the last season should be from a certified seed of varietal purity.
- The sesame seed lot and seed field should comply with the minimum number of years needed for rotating sesame seed production.

Table 1 below presents some of the specified conditions, along with the test methods, which are related to SPS parameters.

**Table 1: Minimum requirements for sesame seed certification**

Characteristics Seed	Breeder/ Pre-Basic A	Basic Seed B	Certified Seed				Test Method
			C1	C2	C3	C4	
Field standard							
Rotation (min, year)	3	2	1				
Isolation (min, meters)	100	50					
Off types & types & another cultivar (max %)	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	
Laboratory standard							
Pure seed (min %)	99	98	97	97	97	97	ES 472
Other crop seed (max %)	NS	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	ES 473
Weed seed (max %)	NS	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	ES 472

Infected /infested/ seeds (max%)	NS	N. S	ES 476				
Inert matter (max%)	NS	1	1	2	2	2	ES 472
Germination (min %)	NS	90	87	85	85	85	ES 474, ES 475
Verification of species cultivar	-	-	-	-	-	-	ES 477
Moisture content (max %)	8	8	8	8	8	8	ES 478

NS= Not specified; ES= Ethiopian standard

## Attestation required on certificate

The seeds are:

- Heat-treated using appropriate procedures or standards.
- Found to be free from seed borne or seed transmitted diseases and other pests.
- Free from natural soil.

## Private standards

Buyers in European markets may have additional requirements that go beyond nationally set standards. For sesame they may demand exporters to put in place quality and food safety management system in place. Adopt good agricultural practices. At the minimum, adopt basic Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles for food safety management. Exporters may also have to present to food manufacturing importers a recognised food safety management system certification such as the British Retail Consortium, International Featured Standards and ISO 22000.

## PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS

# Requirements for Haricot Bean Seed

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### Standard reference

The standard governing haricot bean seeds is **the Haricot Bean Standard (ES-429)**, which was published in 2012.

What are the standard requirements?

- The bean seeds should be free from contaminated, infested, or infected seeds with bean common mosaic virus; colletotrichum lindemuthianum (anthracnose); corynebacterium flaccumfaciens (halo blight); xanthomonas phaseoli (bacterial blight); and other seed-borne diseases and parasitic weed seeds.
- The land intended for haricot bean seed production should be prepared in a timely way and with a clean, level seedbed. Seed fields for haricot bean seed crops should be

protected from contamination and build-up of soil-borne diseases from similar plants grown in previous seasons unless the seed crops grown during the last season were from a certified seed of varietal purity.

- Comply with the minimum number of years required for rotating haricot bean seed production.
- It also requires field control plots for classes of pre-basic, essential and all subsequent certified seed generations (except for commercial seed crops) to determine the distinctness, uniformity, and stability of the grown seed variety, and the value for cultivation and use.

Table 2 below presents the minimum standards required for certification for haricot bean seed (including kidney beans) and methods of testing.

**Table 2 Minimum requirements for haricot bean seed certification**

Characteristics Seed	Breeder / Pre-Basic A	Basic Seed B	Certified Seed				Commercial Emergency Class E	Test Method
			C1	C2	C3	C4		
Field standard								
Rotation (min, year)	2	2	1	1	1	1		
Isolation (min, meters)	10	5	3	3	3	3		
Off types & other cultivar (max)	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5		
Laboratory standard								
Pure seed (min %)	99	98	97	96	96	95	93	ES 472
Other crop seed (max %)	NS	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.7		ES 473
Weed seed (max %)	NS	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4		ES 472
Infected/infested/ seeds (max %)	NS	0.05	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	ES 476
Inert matter (max%)	NS	1	1	2	2	2		ES 472
Germination (min %)	80	70	70		70	70	70	ES 474
Verification of species and cultivar	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	ES 477
Moisture content (max %)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	ES 478

NS= Not specified; ES = Ethiopian standard

## Attestation required on certificate

The seeds are:

- Heat-treated using appropriate procedures or standards;
- Found to be free from seed borne or seed transmitted diseases and other pests
- Free from natural soil.

## Private standards

Buyers in European markets may have additional requirements that go beyond nationally set standards. European importers may demand for the Global good agricultural practices (GLOBALG.A.P) certification. While in principle importers are expected to accept equivalent standards, they may prefer and demand those that are present within their nation. For example, an importer from the Netherlands may demand the Dutch HACCP code rather than one from the International Food Standards. In general, European importers of beans may demand exporters to put in place Integrated Pest Management\_system for beans production; and provide certification on organic beans



## PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS

# Requirements for Chickpea Seed



© Ethiopian commodity exchange

### Standard reference

The directive governing the standards on chickpea seeds is the **Ethiopian Standard for Chickpea Seed (ES-425)**, which was published in 2012.

What are the standard requirements?

- Chickpea seeds should be free from contamination, infestation or infected seeds with *ascochyta pisi* (leaf and pod spot); *mycosphaerella pinodes* (blight); *pseudomonas pisi* (leaf spot); and other seed-borne diseases and parasitic weed seeds.

- The land intended for chickpea seed production be prepared in a timely manner and with a clean, level seedbed. Seed fields for chickpea seed crops should be prevented from contamination and build-up of soil-borne diseases from similar plants grown in the previous seasons unless the seed crops grown during the last season was a certified seed of varietal purity.
- The chickpea seed lot and seed field should comply with the minimum number of years required for rotating field pea.

Table 3 below summarises some of the minimum standards.

**Table 3 Minimum requirements for chickpea seed certification**

Characteristics Seed	Breeder/ Pre-Basic A	Basic seed B	Certified seed				Commercial Emergency Class E	Method of test
			C1	C2	C3	C4		
Field standard								
Rotation (min, year)	2	2	1	1	1	1		
Isolation (min meters)	10	5	3	3	3	3		
Off types & other cultivar (max)	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.8		
Laboratory standard								
Pure seed (min %)	99	98	97	96	95	93		ES 472
Other crop seed(max%)	NS	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4		ES 473
Weed seed (max <sup>u/m</sup> )	NS	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4		ES 472
Infected /infested/ seeds (max %)	NS	0.05	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	ES 476

Inert matter (max%)	NS	1	1	2	2	2		ES 472
Germination (min %)	85	80	75	75	75	75	75	ES 474 ES 475
Verification of species and cultivar								ES 477
Moisture content (max %)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	ES 478

NS = Not specified; ES = Ethiopian standard

## Attestation required on certificate

The seeds are:

- Heat-treated using appropriate procedures or standards;
- Found to be free from seed borne or seed transmitted diseases and other pests
- Free from natural soil.

## Private standards

Buyers in European markets may have additional requirements that go beyond nationally set standards. For chickpeas they may demand exporters to implement the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). They will require, certification recognised by the Global Food Safety Initiatives (GFSI). However, buyers may have their own preference from equivalent standardisation such as the Global good agricultural practices (GLOBALG.A.P), FSSC 22000/ISO 2200 or BRC Global Standard, among others.

## PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS

# Requirements for Fresh-Cut Multi-Floral Rose



© International Trade Centre

## Standard reference

The Ethiopian standard for fresh cut flowers (referred to as ES-3389) was published in 2007 when the country witnessed a boom in greenhouse-grown floral products.

What are the standard requirements?

- The product should be free from, existence and extent of any damage caused by parasites of animal or vegetable origin, visible extraneous matter affecting the appearance, bruising, defects in growth and formation, size, shape, and strength of stems.
- Roses should be harvested carefully; reach an appropriate stage of growth; and preferably be treated with acceptable floral preservatives, which would allow them to open correctly and retain their freshness.
- Referred to as whole, fresh and typically formed, the freshly cut roses should be free from pests and diseases.
- The side shoots (axillary growth) should be allowed to a maximum length of one-third of the stem length.
- The development and condition of the flowers shall be such as to enable them to withstand handling and transport, ensuring

that they arrive in satisfactory condition at their destination.

- Class I flowers should be of superior quality and have the features of the species and the cultivar. Class II roses should be of good quality and have the characteristics of the species and the variety. Roses in the third class- that is the Extra Class- are cut multi-floral roses that do not qualify for inclusion in the higher grades but satisfy the minimum specified requirements, and any defects should not impair the keeping quality, appearance, or utility of the flowers.

## Attestation required on certificate

The certificate bears conformity on the plant material being free from diseases and pests; and plant parts are free from soil.

## Private standards

Buyers in European markets may have requirements that go beyond legislations. For cut flowers they may demand exporters to provide cold chain management protocols; and get a comprehensive B2B scheme (For example, MPS-Florimark) that combines environmental performance, social issues, Good Agricultural Practise and quality.

# Certification process in Ethiopia

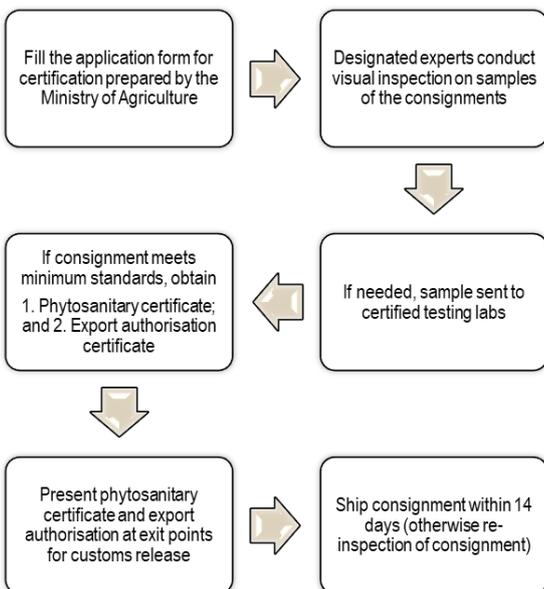
The following process is followed when an exporter seeks to obtain a phytosanitary certificate. Figure 1 shows a general process; while in Figure 2, a detailed process flow is presented using green coffee as an example.

An example of established phytosanitary practices for green coffee bean

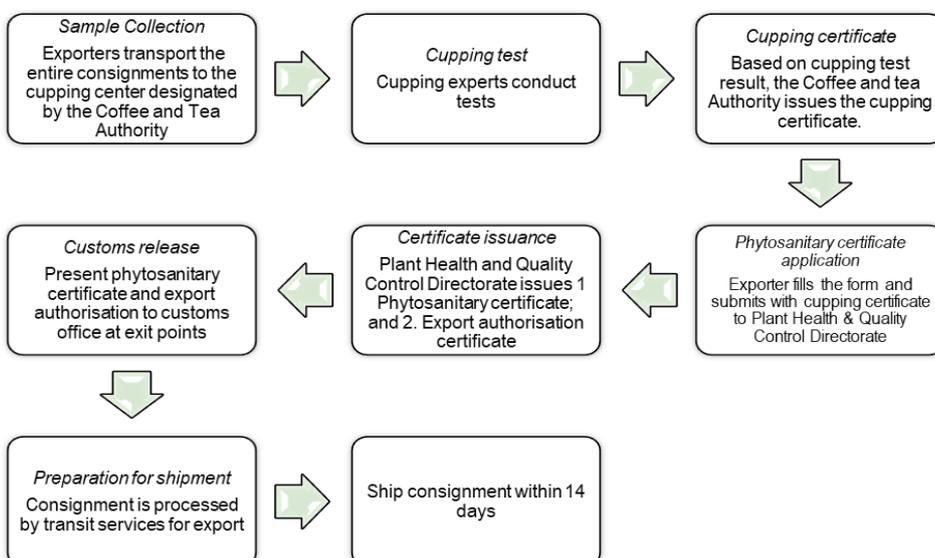
Phytosanitary inspection, assessment and certification practiced for coffee bean as a leading export product can elaborate the established best practices. The phytosanitary inspection, assessment and certification of coffee bean ready for export involves different steps as presented in Figure 2 below.

## General certification processes

**Figure 1 General certification process**



**Figure 2 Green coffee certification process**



## Fees for inspection and certificates

The fees payable in relation to phytosanitary certification include inspection, assessment, laboratory test (as deemed necessary), overseeing treatments/fumigation when necessary and final issuance of certification for the overall services include laboratory testing and

certifications. Laboratory testing are between \$50 to \$100. The Ministry of Agriculture, which issues phytosanitary certificate, charges from ETB10 to ETB 30.

Any expense associated with testing, inspection, conveyance or disposal are borne by the exporter. The following table presents the fees per certificate.

No	Fee basis per certificate	Service charge (Birr)
1.	If amount is less than one quintal	ETB 10 per certificate
2.	If amount is 1 to 10 quintals per certificate or entry permit	ETB 20 per certificate
3.	If amount is above 10 quintals up to 2000 quintals	In addition to No.2 above, ETB 0.5 per every 10 quintals
4.	If import transit through Ethiopia	ETB 5 per certificate
5.	If export item requires active growth inspection while at the field, field inspection fee	ETB 20 per day
6.	If export item requires active treatment, supervision fee	ETB 15 per hour
7.	If export consignment is decided to be disposed, supervision fee	ETB 15 per hour

Note: Ethiopian Birr to Euro is 0.028; and Birr to USD is 0.031 as at 23.03.2020

