



Graduated enforcement of the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations* as of [January 15, 2019](#)

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has a mandate to enforce Canada's food legislation. While food safety remains our highest priority, we recognize that the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations* (SFCR) introduced a number of new requirements for food businesses as of [January 15, 2019](#).

How is CFIA enforcing the regulations?

CFIA's enforcement approach balances the need to protect Canada's food safety system while supporting food businesses in complying with the regulations.

Since the regulations came into force on [January 15, 2019](#), inspectors have been informing food businesses where they can find the information to help them comply with the regulations. CFIA has [interactive tools and sector-specific timelines](#) and other [plain-language resources](#) to help businesses determine which requirements apply to them and how to comply with them.

Enforcement actions, where applicable, are proportionate to the food safety risk and the seriousness of the non-compliance. Factors such as potential or actual harm, compliance history and intent are also taken into consideration.

Is CFIA taking enforcement action against businesses if they don't have a licence?

As of [January 15, 2019](#), businesses in the following sectors that import, export or prepare food for interprovincial trade were required to have a Safe Food for Canadians (SFC) licence: meat, fish, dairy products, eggs, processed egg products, fresh fruits or vegetables, processed fruit or vegetable products, honey and maple products.

For [all other foods](#), an SFC licence is not required until [July 15, 2020](#).

The Agency is taking a graduated enforcement approach with businesses that currently require an SFC licence and do not have one, taking appropriate enforcement action as needed.



What does this mean for shipments of imported food at the border?

As of [January 15, 2020](#), importers who currently require an SFC licence and do not have one may experience delays or refusal of entry of their shipment at the border, and may be subject to other enforcement actions.

A valid SFC licence has to be declared exactly as it was issued by the CFIA. All of the numbers and letters must be entered correctly on the import declaration.

Businesses must obtain their SFC licence before presenting their shipment at the border. They will not be able to obtain an SFC licence at the border.

Please note that an SFC licence application normally takes up to 15 business days to process but can take longer if a pre-licence inspection is required.