

Complete Export Checklist: Fresh Produce from India to Gulf Countries

1. Business Setup & Registrations

- Obtain IEC (Import Export Code) from DGFT — your unique 10-digit trade identity (free, online in 1-2 days)
- Register with APEDA for agricultural exports — mandatory for phytosanitary certification
- Get FSSAI license/compliance — ensures food safety standards buyers trust
- Open a current bank account with AD code for international payments

2. Sourcing & Quality Preparation

- Source from reliable farms/clusters (e.g., Maharashtra/Tamil Nadu for bananas) — visit or use verified agents
- Conduct quality checks: uniform size, maturity stage, no blemishes — Gulf buyers demand premium grade
- Pre-cooling to 13-14°C immediately after harvest — extends shelf life up to 30+ days
- Grade and sort: Class 1 (export quality) vs Class 2

3. Packaging & Cold Chain

- Use ventilated corrugated boxes or reefer-ready crates — prevents moisture buildup

- Pack in 13-18 kg boxes with proper cushioning — standard for Gulf supermarkets
- Maintain cold chain throughout: pre-cool → refrigerated truck → reefer container
- Label boxes with variety, origin, pack date, and handling instructions

4. Testing & Certifications

- Lab test for pesticide residues (MRL compliance) — UAE has strict limits
- Obtain Phytosanitary Certificate from Plant Quarantine — proves pest-free
- Health Certificate from authorized agency — confirms food safety
- Certificate of Origin for duty benefits under India-UAE CEPA

5. Documentation & Shipping

- Prepare Commercial Invoice, Packing List, Bill of Lading
- Book reefer container (temperature 13-14°C, humidity 85-90%) — sea route 7-12 days to Jebel Ali
- Purchase marine insurance — covers transit risks
- File Shipping Bill with customs — get Let Export Order

6. Arrival & Clearance in Gulf

- Coordinate with buyer/importer for UAE customs clearance
- Provide all docs digitally in advance — speeds up release
- Track container in real-time — intervene if temperature deviates
- Final delivery to buyer warehouse — maintain cold chain till end

Overwhelmed by the process?

We handle everything — from sourcing to delivery — so you focus on growing your business.

Email: info@globallinklogistics.com | WhatsApp: +91 XXXXX XXXXX

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