

 PRACTICAL STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

THE EXPORTER BLUEPRINT

How to Start Exporting Non-Oil Products from Nigeria

Built for Aspiring Exporters, Agro-Processors & MSMEs. Master product sourcing, documentation, buyer acquisition, and international compliance.



What is Exportation & The 3-Phase Journey

Exportation is the process of selling goods or services produced in one country to buyers in another nation. For Nigeria, non-oil exporting unlocks foreign exchange (USD/EUR/GBP), expands market reach beyond domestic demand, and builds resilient global revenues.

1 Phase 1: PREPARE

Register business entity, select niche commodity, establish farm-gate sourcing, and verify quality specs.

2 Phase 2: CONNECT

Prospect global buyers, perform due diligence, issue accurate landed quotes, and negotiate contracts.

3 Phase 3: EXECUTE

Secure payment terms, process export permits, execute freight shipment, and repatriate FX proceeds.

Understanding the 4 Main Types of Exporting

1. Direct Exporting

Selling directly to the foreign buyer or importer without intermediaries.

Higher profit margins | Full control over pricing & buyer relationships.

2. Indirect Exporting

Selling through domestic export agents, brokers, or local buying hubs.

Low financial risk | Ideal for beginners to build capital and experience.

3. Commercial / Merchant Exporting

Buying commodities locally from farmers, aggregating, and exporting under your brand.

Requires liquidity | Capitalizes on local price spreads and arbitrage.

4. Service & Digital Exporting

Exporting intangible services, software, creative work, or remote consulting.

Zero customs freight | Instant FX settlement via digital channels.

Product Sourcing Hubs & Sourcing Golden Rules



Nigeria Agricultural Sourcing Regions

Northern Region: Sesame seeds, Ginger, Hibiscus, Chilli pepper, Garlic, Soybeans.

South-West Region: Cocoa beans, Cashew nuts, Timber (processed), Palm oil.

North-Central Region: Yam flour, Shea nuts, Sesame, Cashew.

South-South & East: Cassava derivative, Rubber, Spices, Palm kernel cake.

1. Partner with Farmer Cooperatives

Bypass informal middlemen to secure lower farm-gate prices and authentic origin trace.

2. Buy During Peak Harvest Season

Lock in optimal supply volumes when prices are lowest and moisture levels are manageable.

3. Enforce Strict Farm-Gate Sorting

Inspect moisture, foreign matter, and nut count BEFORE transporting to warehouse.

HIGH-DEMAND COMMODITIES

Most Highly Sought-After Nigerian Products



Cocoa Beans

High global demand for confectionary & chocolate industry in Europe & US.



Dried Split Ginger

Renowned for high oil content & pungency in pharmaceutical & food markets.



Hibiscus Flowers

Used in teas and beverages across Mexico, Germany, USA, and Latvia.



Raw Cashew Nuts

Major export to processing factories in Vietnam, India, and UAE.



Sesame Seeds

High oil content seeds prized in Asian & Middle Eastern processing plants.



Processed Foods

Yam flour, garri, dried fish packaged for Nigerian diaspora in UK/USA.

Contraband & Prohibited Export Goods

1. Unprocessed Rough Logs & Timber

Raw, un-sawn wood export is strictly banned to protect domestic forest cover and promote local wood processing.

2. Raw Hides & Skins (Wet-Blue)

Untreated raw animal skins cannot be exported to protect the domestic leather manufacturing industry.

3. Maize & Restricted Grains

Export of staple food grains like maize is restricted during food security alerts unless special waivers are granted.

4. Antiquities & Illegal Scrap

Cultural artifacts, historical relics, and stolen scrap metal are completely prohibited and carry criminal prosecution.

Verify Export Readiness Before Pitching Buyers

Business & Corporate Setup

- ✓ **Registered CAC Entity:** Limited Liability Company (Ltd) preferred for international contracts.
- ✓ **FX Domiciliary Account:** Corporate bank account configured to receive foreign currencies.
- ✓ **Digital Footprint:** Professional corporate email, product spec sheet, and verified website.

Product & Compliance Setup

- ✓ **Technical Product Spec:** Clear moisture content, purity %, and grade levels defined.
- ✓ **Lab Test Analysis:** Independent laboratory reports proving product safety standards.
- ✓ **Export Packaging:** Moisture-proof jute/PP bags meeting international transit regulations.

Build Total Landed Costing Before Quoting

1

Product Base Cost (Farm-Gate)

Raw commodity purchase price + local transport from farm to processing warehouse.

2

Export Processing & Compliance Costs

Sorting, grading, export packaging, lab testing, NEPC fees, terminal handling, & forwarding charges.

3

Logistics & Insurance Costs

International ocean/air freight rates, Leadway Pota marine cargo insurance, and destination clearing.

Freight Channels & Delivery Documents

Air Freight

Best For: High-value perishables, urgent samples.

Speed: 1 – 5 days delivery time.

Document: Airway Bill (AWB).

Sea Freight

Best For: Bulk agricultural commodities (20ft/40ft FCL).

Speed: 20 – 45 days ocean transit.

Document: Bill of Lading (B/L).

Essential Shipping Papers

Commercial Invoice: Itemized billing details.

Packing List: Weights, box counts & dimensions.

Certificate of Origin: Issued by Chamber of Commerce.

Essential Export Agencies & Certifications

1. NEPC (Nigerian Export Promotion Council)

Primary government agency for exporter registration, export incentives, capacity building, and market access support.

2. Nigeria Single Window Portal

Integrated government portal for processing **Form NXP** (electronic export declaration) mandatory for foreign remittance.

3. NAQS (Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine)

Inspects agro-products and issues mandatory **Phytosanitary Certificates** certifying freedom from pests & diseases.

4. Leadway Pota / Marine Insurance

Provides specialized export marine cargo insurance protecting shipments against sea damage, total loss, or transit delays.

FINANCIAL SECURITY

Export Payment Terms & Contract Anatomy

Advance Payment (T/T)

100% upfront cash payment before shipping. Safest for exporter, highest risk for buyer.

Deposit + Balance (30/70)

30% deposit to procure goods, 70% balance paid against copy of Bill of Lading (B/L).

Letter of Credit (L/C)

Irrevocable bank payment guarantee released upon presenting compliant shipping docs.

Non-Negotiable Contract Elements

• Product Specs & Moisture Caps | • Quantity & Tolerance (+/- 5%) | • Price per Metric Ton | • Incoterms (FOB / CIF) | • Agreed Payment Terms | • Inspection Agency (SGS / Bureau Veritas) | • Arbitration Venue

How to Find Global Buyers & Avoid Scams

Buyer Prospecting Channels

B2B Platforms: Alibaba, Tridge, TradeKey, Kompass.

LinkedIn Outreach: Target procurement heads at foreign food processors.

International Trade Fairs: Anuga, Gulfood, SIAL, NEPC Trade Missions.

Embassies & Chambers: Request verified importer directories.

Buyer Verification & Red Flags

Check Corporate Domain: Beware of buyers using free email (@yahoo, @gmail).

Verify Registry: Confirm registration on destination trade registries.

Refusal of Video Call: Scammers avoid showing corporate premises or warehouses.

Rush to Pay: Promising high prices without requesting lab specs is a red flag.

RISK MITIGATION

9 Critical Mistakes First-Time Exporters Must Avoid

1. Poor Costing

Forgetting hidden port demurrage, terminal fees, and freight rate spikes.

2. Unreliable Suppliers

Being let down by local farm suppliers mid-contract.

3. Ignoring Specifications

Shipping goods exceeding target moisture content limits.

4. Blind Trust

Failing to perform proper due diligence on unverified foreign buyers.

5. Weak Contracts

Lacking clear arbitration clauses or exact Incoterms defined.

6. Substandard Packaging

Goods spoiling or absorbing moisture in container transit.

7. Unrealistic Timelines

Promising air-freight speeds for sea-freight shipments.

8. Unsecured Shipping

Releasing original B/L documents before securing payment.

9. Missing Certificates

Goods getting rejected or seized at destination customs.

 **FREE EXPORT CONSULTATION**

Book a **FREE** Consultation to Start Your Export Journey

Get **FREE** expert guidance and consultation on commodity sourcing, export documentation, and buyer connections.



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