

## **Food exporters fret over registration in China**

India's food product exporters supplying to China are worried as they rush to register with Chinese customs and allow their supply chain for inspection, a mandatory requirement that kicks in from January next year. They fear that China's new requirement for dairy products and processed foods, among other food products, may set a precedent for other countries.

While there is no cost of registration as of now and it is being done through the embassy, it is a non-tariff barrier and shows that China wants to discourage imports.

China has mandated that all exporting units and overseas food manufacturers, processors and storage facilities will have to get registered with its customs authorities before December 31.

Exporters will be held accountable for the safety of the food products they produce and handle, and food importers will have to establish a system for review of their suppliers, including overseas exporters and production facilities. So far, 400 exporters have applied for registration. Chinese customs authorities will issue a registration number to the approved units, which will be renewed later. It is a non-tariff barrier and a worrying development as other countries may take a cue from China and impose similar barriers.

China imported seafood worth \$939.17 million in 2020-21. It remained the second largest market for India, and frozen shrimp was the major item of exports.

As per the new rule, overseas manufacturers of meat products, aquatic products, dairy products (including infant formula), health food, food for special medical purposes and beverages, among others, need to be registered.

Source: The Economic Times