

HANKUK
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NEWSLETTER

Health Supplement Business in Vietnam

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https://hankuklawfirm.com/vi/

0942 339 063

info@hankuklawfirm.com

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NEWSLETTER

Market Attractiveness & Legal Barriers



Market Attractiveness

Dietary supplements are a highly promising and highly profitable market. However, the barrier to entry is not capital—it is legal compliance



Legal Barriers

Trading in dietary supplements is a “conditional business sector.” Failure to comply with legal requirements or operating without the necessary licenses can result in severe consequences, including confiscation of goods and fines of up to tens of millions of VND

Key Pillars of Legal Dietary Supplement Business



Pillar 1: Business Registration

Business Foundation



Pillar 2: Food Safety / GMP Certification

Infrastructure Assurance



Pillar 3: Product Declaration

Product Birth Certificate



Pillar 4: Advertising & Labeling

Public-Facing Interface

Note: If any one of these pillars is missing, your business "building" could collapse under cross-agency inspections

Business Registration Foundation

To get started, you must establish either a household business (individual business) or a company (e.g., a Limited Liability Company or Joint Stock Company). The business registration must accurately include the industry code(s) relevant to dietary supplements (TPCN):

- **Code 46**: Wholesale of Goods
- **Code 47:** Retail Trade

Note: If you already have a business license but have not registered these industry codes, you must complete the business registration amendment procedure before importing goods.



Food Safety Facility Standards (Food Safety)



Facilities & Infrastructure

- Designed according to a “one-way workflow,” from incoming raw materials to finished products.

- Walls, ceilings, and floors must be waterproof and free from cracks or mold.

- Regular health check-ups, including stool tests for cholera, dysentery, and typhoid when required.



Equipment

- Food-contact utensils must be free from harmful substance migration.

- Insect-proof screens; no rodenticides or pesticides allowed in production or storage areas.



Personnel

Owners and staff must receive food safety training and obtain certification

Regular health check-ups (including stool testing for cholera, dysentery, and typhoid when required).

Is a Food Safety Certificate Required?

Does your facility already hold any valid international or advanced certifications?
(e.g., GMP, HACCP, ISO 22000, IFS, BRC, or FSSC 22000)

Yes

EXEMPTION: Under Decree No. 15/2018/ND-CP, your facility is not required to obtain a Certificate of Food Safety Eligibility for domestic operations



No

MANDATORY: You must submit an application for a Certificate of Food Safety Eligibility to the competent authority (Ministry of Health / Food Safety Authority / Department of Industry and **Trade)**

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Food Safety Assessment Process

Step 1: Application Review

The authority reviews the application and requests corrections if needed. 60 days are allowed for amendments

Step 2: On-Site Inspection

A 3–5 person inspection team conducts an on-site assessment and issues a Pass, Fail, or Remedial Action Required decision. 60 days are allowed for corrective actions

Step 3: Certificate Issuance

Upon receiving a “Pass” assessment result, the competent authority officially issues the Food Safety Certificate.

Certificate Validity: 3 years



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Product Declaration

CERTIFIRD PRODUCT - MADE IN VIETNAM 100% ORIGINAL - PREMIUM QUALITY

Required Documents for Obtaining the Product Declaration Registration Certificate:

1. Certificate of Analysis (CoA): Issued by an ISO/IEC 17025-accredited laboratory and dated within the last 12 months



2. GMP Certification: Mandatory for dietary supplement manufacturers since July 1, 2019.

3. Scientific Evidence: Documentation supporting the claimed benefits of the ingredients. Daily intake must provide at least 15% of the stated dosage.

Decoding Labels & Legal Advertising



1. Mandatory Disclaimer:

“This product is not a medicine and is not intended to replace medication.”

2. Labels Must Be Transparent:

Product name, ingredients, quantity, intended users, warnings, manufacturing/expiry dates, country of origin, and product declaration number.

3. Never Use Misleading Medical Claims:

Avoid terms such as “treat,” “cure,” or “specialized treatment.” Use only terms like “supports” or “helps reduce the risk.”

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Dietary Supplement Advertising Approval Process

Unlike ordinary consumer goods, dietary supplement advertisements—including videos, articles, and images—cannot be freely published on social media or television without prior approval



Step 1:
Design advertising content that 100% matches the approved product declaration. No exaggerated claims.

Step 2:
Submit an application for "Confirmation of Advertising Content" to the competent regulatory authority.

Step 3:
Await content review and approval.

Step 4:
Launch the advertisement. Only the exact content approved and stamped by the authority may be published



The Reality of Online Business & “Hand-Carried” Goods

E-commerce platforms (Shopee, Lazada, Chiaki) enforce strict compliance requirements for dietary supplements.



Hand-Carried” Goods Are Risky: Even with a foreign supermarket receipt, hand-carried goods without a VAT invoice, Vietnamese supplementary label, or product declaration in Vietnam may be considered illicit or of unknown origin under Vietnamese law.

Requirements for E-Commerce Platforms: To legally sell on reputable e-commerce platforms, you must provide a valid product declaration certificate, import invoices/documents, and a compliant Vietnamese supplementary label.

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Penalty Framework Under Decrees 115 & 124



Penalty Range	Violations
20.000.000 - 30.000.000 VNĐ	Operating a food service business without a Food Safety Certificate (or with an expired certificate)
30.000.000 - 40.000.000 VNĐ	Manufacturing or trading food without a Food Safety Certificate.
40.000.000 - 60.000.000 VNĐ	Manufacturing dietary supplements without GMP certification, or distributing dietary supplements without completing the product declaration or obtaining GMP certification.

Remedial Measures: Mandatory recall of all non-compliant products, repurposing, recycling, or complete destruction of the affected batch.

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