PRODUCT REPORT

Sesame Seeds (Sesamum Seeds)

HS Code 1207.40 | Export market guide: Pakistan to Canada | September 2026

Key facts at a glance

Indicator	Value	Source
Canada's imports of sesame seeds, 2025	USD 23.56 million (−12.0% vs 2024)	Trade Data Online
Canada's imports from Pakistan, 2025	USD 1.41 million (5.97% share)	Trade Data Online
Pakistan's rank among Canada's suppliers	#2 in 2025 (after India); #3 in Jan–Jul 2026	Trade Data Online
Largest supplier to Canada	India: USD 17.13 million, 72.7% share (2025)	Trade Data Online
Pakistan's world exports of sesame, FY2025-26	USD 266.6 million / 269,200 tonnes	TIPP
Pakistan's exports to Canada, FY2025-26	USD 1.3 million / 634 tonnes	TIPP
Canadian import duty (MFN and GPT)	Free (0%)	CBSA Customs Tariff 2026
Main border requirement	Canadian importer must hold a Safe Food for Canadians (SFC) licence	CFIA AIRS
Quebec labelling (Bill 96)	All product text in French; descriptive words in trademarks must also be in French since 1 June 2025	Charter of the French Language / OQLF
Main food-safety risk flagged by CFIA	Salmonella (41 recalls of sesame products, 2017–2024)	CFIA notice, April 2025
Major Canadian importers (2024)	34 companies account for 80% of imports	Canadian Importers Database

Trade values from Trade Data Online and TIPP are in US dollars. Canadian Importers Database values and retail prices are in Canadian dollars. Pakistan's data follows its fiscal year (July–June); Canada's data follows the calendar year.

1. Introduction

HS 1207.40 covers "Sesamum seeds, whether or not broken". This includes whole, hulled (dehulled) and broken sesame seeds, both white and black, that have not been further processed. In Canada's 2026 Customs Tariff, the full tariff item is 1207.40.00 (unit of measure: kilograms).

Products outside this code, which exporters should classify separately:

- Sesame oil: Chapter 15 (HS 1515.50).
- Sesame paste (tahini) and halva: Chapters 20 and 17.
- Roasted or seasoned sesame snacks: prepared foods in Chapters 19–21, depending on the product.
- Sesame seed for sowing: the same HS code, but CFIA treats it as "seed" (planting) rather than "grain" (food), and different import rules apply.

Canada does not grow sesame commercially, so all of its demand is met by imports. Sesame is used in bakery products (bagels, buns and breads), tahini and hummus, Asian, Middle Eastern and South Asian cooking, snack bars, and the spice and seasoning trade. Canada's large South Asian, Middle Eastern and East Asian communities, concentrated in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia, add steady demand through ethnic grocery channels.

Pakistan is an established sesame exporter. Production is concentrated in Punjab, and white sesame is the main export type. According to the Ministry of National Food Security & Research, the area under sesame rose 30% from 199.89 thousand hectares in 2021-22 to 259.92 thousand hectares in 2022-23, and production rose from 128.30 to 152.30 thousand tonnes. TDAP reports that annual production now exceeds 300,000 tonnes. The crop is sown in summer and harvested in autumn. TIPP monthly data shows that export shipments peak in September and October (for example USD 152.3 million and USD 117.2 million in those months of FY2023-24).

References

[1] CBSA, Customs Tariff 2026, Chapter 12 (tariff item 1207.40.00): https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/trade-commerce/tariff-tarif/2026/html/00/ch12-eng.html

[2] CFIA, Automated Import Reference System (AIRS), HS 120740 "Sesamum sp. (Sesame), grain" vs "seed": https://airs-sari.inspection.gc.ca/airs_external/english/decisions-eng.aspx

[3] Ministry of National Food Security & Research, "Crops Area & Production (District Wise) 2022-23": https://mnfsr.gov.pk/SiteImage/Downloads/Crops%20Area%20AND%20Production%20by%202022-23.pdf

[4] TDAP, Sesame Seed Sector brochure, 3rd International Food & Agriculture Exhibition 2025: https://agro.tdap.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Seasame-Seed-Brochure-center.pdf

[5] TIPP, Export Trade Data (monthly export series, PCT 1207.4000, FY2023-24): https://tipp.gov.pk/index.php?r=site/display&id=305

2. Pakistan's Exports (Production)

The Trade Information Portal of Pakistan (TIPP) reports exports of PCT 1207.4000 "Sesamum Seeds" by fiscal year. The table shows Pakistan's exports to the world, to its largest markets and to Canada.

Pakistan's exports of sesame seeds (PCT 1207.4000), USD million

To	FY2021-22 (benchmark)	FY2022-23	FY2023-24	FY2024-25	FY2025-26	Change FY22–FY26
World	177.1	132.8	388.6	370.9	266.6	+50.5%
China	127.9	90.3	281.8	262.9	144.2	+12.7%
Korea (South)	6.0	2.5	12.4	11.4	24.0	+300%
United States	3.2	4.0	8.5	7.2	13.1	+309%
Netherlands	2.1	7.6	8.2	8.4	8.0	+281%
Canada	0.0	0.10	1.1	1.4	1.3	new market

Volumes: world exports were 125,800 t (FY22), 83,100 t (FY23), 222,800 t (FY24), 315,000 t (FY25) and 269,200 t (FY26). Exports to Canada were 36.6 t (FY23), 358 t (FY24), 573 t (FY25) and 634 t (FY26). No exports to Canada were recorded in FY22.

> **Insight:** Pakistan's sesame exports are heavily concentrated on China, which took between 54% and 73% of export value each year. That share fell to 54% in FY2025-26 as world exports declined 31% from their FY2023-24 peak, while Korea, the USA, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan all grew. Canada is a small but fast-growing market: shipments rose from zero in FY2021-22 to 634 tonnes in FY2025-26. The average value of exports to Canada (about USD 2.05–3.07 per kg) is roughly double the world average (USD 0.99–1.74 per kg). This suggests Canadian buyers are purchasing cleaned or hulled, higher-grade sesame, a premium niche worth developing.

References

[1] Trade Information Portal of Pakistan (TIPP), Export Trade Data dashboard, PCT 1207.4000, filtered by fiscal year and country; data accessed 29 September 2026: https://tipp.gov.pk/index.php?r=site/display&id=305

[2] TDAP, Sesame Seed Sector brochure 2025 (FY2024-25 exports USD 372.45 million; China USD 262.89 million): https://agro.tdap.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Seasame-Seed-Brochure-center.pdf

3. Canada's Imports (Consumption)

Canada's imports of sesame seeds (HS 120740), USD

From	2020 (5-year benchmark)	2022	2023	2024	2025	Change 2020–25
World	21,537,386	25,414,591	26,972,291	26,764,667	23,555,512	+9.4%
India	14,097,986	15,882,784	18,874,013	19,208,701	17,131,935	+21.5%
Pakistan	116,367	682	497,688	1,211,288	1,406,578	+1,109%
Nigeria	3,565,380	4,248,360	3,249,605	3,081,311	1,260,637	−64.6%
Paraguay	43,216	216,583	10,870	444,718	1,034,850	+2,295%
Guatemala	711,686	1,044,847	913,111	743,997	698,980	−1.8%
China	395,780	508,980	422,091	453,672	529,327	+33.7%

2025 values are the sum of the 12 monthly values in Trade Data Online, because the annual 2025 column had not yet been filled in when the data was accessed.

Insight: Canada's sesame imports grew 24% from 2020 to a peak of about USD 27 million in 2023–2024, then eased 12% in 2025. Imports for January–July 2026 are down another 19.4% on the same period of 2025. India supplies almost three-quarters of the market. Pakistan is the clear success story: from almost nothing in 2022 (USD 682), it became Canada's second-largest supplier in 2025 with USD 1.41 million and a 6.0% share, overtaking Nigeria. It held third place in January–July 2026 with USD 788,409 (7.2% share, down 8.4% while the market fell 19.4%).

Where demand is: imports by province, 2024 (USD)

Province	2021	2022	2023	2024	Share 2024
Ontario	10,982,950	14,670,063	17,332,316	14,417,374	53.9%
Quebec	5,131,697	7,127,297	6,846,967	8,709,006	32.5%
British Columbia	2,982,247	3,115,484	2,600,103	3,417,039	12.8%
Alberta	246,952	279,781	106,544	174,469	0.7%
Manitoba	135,703	173,222	36,675	43,685	0.2%

Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia take 99% of imports. Pakistani exporters should focus their marketing on Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area, Montréal and Vancouver.

References

[1] Trade Data Online (ISED / Statistics Canada), Canadian imports, HS 120740, all countries (detailed), latest 10 years, USD; accessed 28 September 2026: https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/tdo/runRpt.html?grouped=GROUPED&searchType=KS_CS&areaCodes=&naArea=9999&countryList=DET&toFromCountry=CDN&reportType=TI&timePeriod=10%7CComplete+Years&currency=US&productType=HS6&hSelectedCodes=%7C120740&lang=eng

[2] Trade Data Online, HS 120740, latest 24 months (monthly), used to total calendar 2025: https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/tdo/runRpt.html?grouped=GROUPED&searchType=KS_CS&areaCodes=&naArea=9999&countryList=DET&toFromCountry=CDN&reportType=TI&timePeriod=24%7CMonthly+Trends&currency=US&productType=HS6&hSelectedCodes=%7C120740&lang=eng

[3] Trade Data Online, HS 120740, year to date (Jan–Jul 2026 vs 2025): https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/tdo/runRpt.html?grouped=GROUPED&searchType=KS_CS&areaCodes=&naArea=9999&countryList=TOP&toFromCountry=CDN&reportType=TI&timePeriod=2%7CYear+To+Date&currency=US&productType=HS6&hSelectedCodes=%7C120740&lang=eng

[4] Trade Data Online, HS 120740, distribution by province: https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/tdo/runRpt.html?grouped=GROUPED&searchType=KS_CS&areaCodes=&naArea=9998&countryList=ALL&toFromCountry=CDN&reportType=TI&timePeriod=5%7CComplete+Years&currency=US&productType=HS6&hSelectedCodes=%7C120740&lang=eng

4. Import Market Analysis

Supplier shares of Canada's sesame imports (%)

Supplier	2020	2022	2023	2024	2025
India	65.5	62.5	70.0	71.8	72.7
Pakistan	0.5	0.0	1.8	4.5	6.0
Nigeria	16.6	16.7	12.0	11.5	5.4
Paraguay	0.2	0.9	0.0	1.7	4.4
Guatemala	3.3	4.1	3.4	2.8	3.0
China	1.8	2.0	1.6	1.7	2.2

- **India (72.7%)** dominates with large volumes of hulled and natural sesame, long-standing ties with Canadian spice, bakery and ethnic-food importers, and a well-developed processing and export certification system.
- **Nigeria** was the second-largest supplier until 2024, but its exports to Canada fell 59% in 2025. This opened space that Pakistan and Paraguay moved into.
- **Latin American suppliers** (Paraguay, Guatemala, Bolivia) have shorter shipping times to Canada and are growing, especially Paraguay (up from USD 0.44 million to USD 1.03 million in 2025).
- **No tariff advantage:** Canada charges no duty on sesame from any origin, so suppliers compete on price, quality, food-safety record and reliability rather than on tariff preferences.
- **Market concentration:** the Canadian Importers Database shows that the top 3 importers account for 51% of import value, and 34 importers account for 80%. Winning even one or two large buyers can change Pakistan's share significantly.

> **Insight:** Pakistan now has the second-largest share, and its imports have grown faster than those from India, Nigeria or Guatemala. The realistic opportunity is to take share from India and Nigeria with the same Canadian importers who already buy sesame, by offering competitive prices on white hulled and natural sesame backed by strong Salmonella controls.

References

[1] Trade Data Online, HS 120740 (shares calculated from import values): https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/tdo/runRpt.html?grouped=GROUPED&searchType=KS_CS&areaCodes=&naArea=9999&countryList=DET&toFromCountry=CDN&reportType=TI&timePeriod=10%7CComplete+Years&currency=US&productType=HS6&hSelectedCodes=%7C120740&lang=eng

[2] Canadian Importers Database, HS 120740, market concentration (2024): https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/cid-bdic/productReport.html?hsCode=120740&lang=eng

[3] CBSA, Customs Tariff 2026, Chapter 12: https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/trade-commerce/tariff-tarif/2026/html/00/ch12-eng.html

5. Quality, Packaging and Labelling Requirements

This section uses official government sources only (Government of Canada, Government of Québec and Government of Pakistan).

5.1 Quality requirements

Requirement	What it means for Pakistani exporters	Authority / legal basis
Food must be safe and not adulterated	Sesame must be free of harmful levels of pathogens, contaminants and filth. Imported food must meet the same standards as food made in Canada.	Food and Drugs Act; Food and Drug Regulations

Requirement	What it means for Pakistani exporters	Authority / legal basis
Salmonella control	CFIA names Salmonella as the key hazard in sesame. Importers must show that their foreign supplier controls it, for example through good agricultural practices, potable water for washing and hulling, controlled soaking times, a validated heat (roasting or steam) treatment, and hygiene to prevent recontamination.	SFCR; CFIA Notice to importers (7 April 2025)
Certificates of analysis	CFIA advises importers to choose suppliers who provide certificates of analysis from an accredited laboratory (for example ISO 17025) showing the product is free of Salmonella, based on regular sampling.	CFIA Notice to importers (2025)
Pesticide residues	Residues must not exceed Health Canada maximum residue limits (MRLs). Where no specific MRL exists for sesame, a general limit of 0.1 ppm applies.	Pest Control Products Act; Health Canada MRL database
Ethylene oxide	Ethylene oxide is no longer a permitted food additive in Canada. Its use as a fumigant is regulated only under the Pest Control Products Act, with MRLs set for ethylene oxide and ethylene chlorohydrin.	Health Canada, NOM/ADM-0107
Chemical contaminants	Must comply with Health Canada's List of Contaminants and Other Adulterating Substances in Foods.	Food and Drug Regulations

5.2 Packaging requirements

- Under the SFCR preventive-control requirements, packaging must protect the food from contamination and damage during transport and storage, and packaging materials must be suitable for food.
- Wood packaging (pallets, crates) from Pakistan must carry the ISPM No. 15 mark. The importer must attest to this when declaring the shipment, as stated in CFIA's AIRS requirements.
- Each lot must be traceable. The importer must keep records showing who supplied the food and to whom it was sent, so bags and cartons should carry lot codes.

5.3 Labelling requirements (retail prepackaged sesame)

Label element	Requirement
Common name	For example "Sesame seeds / Graines de sésame", "Hulled sesame seeds", on the principal display panel, at least 1.6 mm high.
Net quantity	In metric units (g or kg) on the principal display panel, with bilingual symbols.
Allergen declaration	Sesame is a priority allergen in Canada. For a single-ingredient package of sesame seeds, where the common name serves as the ingredient list, a "Contains: Sesame / Contient : Sésame" statement is required. The English and French versions each begin on a separate line (packages under 100 cm^2 may use one line).
Cross-contamination statement	If the product may be cross-contaminated with other priority allergens (for example mustard, peanuts or tree nuts), a precautionary "May contain..." statement appears after the "Contains" statement.
Name and place of business	For imported food, either the foreign manufacturer's name and address; or "Imported by / Importé par" or "Imported for / Importé pour" followed by the Canadian company; or the Canadian company together with the country of origin (for example "Product of Pakistan").
Bilingual labelling	Mandatory information must appear in English and French.
Date marking	A "best before / meilleur avant" date is required only if durable life is 90 days or less. Most dry sesame exceeds this, but many buyers ask for it.
Nutrition Facts table	Required on retail prepackaged foods unless an exemption applies.

Labelling requirements differ for food that is not sold at retail, such as bulk sesame shipped to a Canadian processor, packer or bakery. The importer, who is legally responsible for compliance, should confirm the exact requirements using the CFIA Industry Labelling Tool, and the exporter should agree label content with the importer before shipping.

5.4 Quebec: French-language rules (Charter of the French Language, as amended by Bill 96)

Quebec is Canada's second-largest market for sesame (32.5% of imports in 2024). On top of the federal bilingual rules, products sold in Quebec must follow the Charter of the French Language. Bill 96 (Act respecting French, the official and common language of Québec, S.Q. 2022, c. 14) amended the Charter, and new product-labelling rules under the Regulation respecting the language of commerce and business took effect on 1 June 2025.

Rule	What it means for sesame labels	Legal basis
Everything on the product must be in French	Every inscription on the product, its container or wrapping, and any document supplied with it must be in French. This covers not just the mandatory federal information but all other text, such as marketing claims ("premium", "roasted", "hulled", "natural", "non-GMO"), serving suggestions, storage tips and recipes.	Charter s. 51
French must not be less prominent	Another language may appear, but it must not be given greater prominence than the French or be available on more favourable terms. Since Bill 96, the OQLF explains this as meaning the other language must not be more visible than the French, and the consumer must not have to make any extra effort to get the information in French.	Charter s. 51 (amended 2022, c. 14, s. 42); OQLF guidance
Trademarks: descriptive words must be in French (in force 1 June 2025)	A registered trademark may stay in another language only if no French version is registered with the Canadian Intellectual Property Office. Any generic or descriptive words inside the trademark (for example "Sesame Seeds", "Hulled", "Roasted", "Organic") must also appear in French on the product or on a medium permanently attached to it. The product name itself (for example a brand such as "Golden Harvest") may stay in English.	Charter s. 51.1; Regulation C-11, r. 9, s. 7.1
If a French version of the trademark is registered	It must be used on products sold in Quebec.	Charter s. 51.1; OQLF guidance
Transition period (until 1 June 2027)	Products with trademarks whose descriptive words are not in French may still be sold until 1 June 2027 if they were made before 1 June 2025 and no French version of the trademark had been filed by 26 June 2024. New packaging printed for export to Canada now should already comply.	OQLF, Marques de commerce sur les produits
Exceptions useful to exporters	Inscriptions may be only in another language on: containers used in international transport (shipping bags or cartons); original wrapping of products from outside Quebec that will be incorporated into a finished product or used in processing and are not offered for retail sale in Quebec. The name of a firm established only outside Quebec may stay in its original language.	Regulation C-11, r. 9, ss. 3(2), 3(4), 7(1)
Displays count as advertising	Shelf displays and point-of-sale material are treated as commercial advertising, where French must be clearly predominant.	OQLF guidance
Enforcement	The Office québécois de la langue française (OQLF) handles complaints and works with businesses to bring products into compliance. The Charter provides penal fines, which are doubled for a second offence and tripled for later offences.	Charter ss. 205–207

Insight: For retail packs going to Quebec, design one fully bilingual label in which the French is at least as large and visible as the English, and translate every descriptive word, including words inside the brand or logo (for

example "Sesame Seeds / Graines de sésame", "Hulled / Décortiquées", "Roasted / Grillées"). Bulk bags for processors in Quebec (not for retail sale) and outer shipping containers can stay in English only.

References

[1] CFIA, Notice to importers: Review your food safety controls for tahini, halva and sesame seeds (2025-04-07): https://inspection.canada.ca/en/importing-food-plants-animals/food-imports/notices-industry/2025-04-07

[2] CFIA, List of ingredients and allergens on food labels: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/labelling/industry/list-ingredients-and-allergens

[3] CFIA, Food labelling requirements checklist: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/labelling/industry/requirements-checklist

[4] CFIA, Country of origin on food labels: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/labelling/industry/country-origin

[5] CFIA, Name and principal place of business: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/labelling/industry/name-and-principal-place-business

[6] CFIA, Bilingual labelling: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/labelling/industry/bilingual-food-labelling

[7] CFIA, Food labelling for industry (Industry Labelling Tool): https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/labelling/industry

[8] Health Canada, Sesame: a priority food allergen: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/reports-publications/food-safety/sesame-priority-food-allergen.html

[9] Health Canada, Maximum residue limits for pesticides: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/pesticides-pest-management/public/protecting-your-health-environment/pesticides-food/maximum-residue-limits-pesticides.html

[10] Health Canada, Maximum residue limits search: https://pest-control.canada.ca/pesticide-registry/en/mrl-search.html

[11] Health Canada, Notice of Modification to remove ethylene oxide (NOM/ADM-0107): https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/public-involvement-partnerships/modification-list-remove-ethylene-oxide.html

[12] Health Canada, List of Contaminants and Other Adulterating Substances in Foods: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-safety/chemical-contaminants/contaminants-adulterating-substances-foods.html

[13] CFIA, AIRS, HS 120740 grain from Pakistan, human consumption (Requirement 54191; wood packaging ISPM 15): https://airs-sari.inspection.gc.ca/airs_external/english/decisions-eng.aspx

[14] Government of Québec (LégisQuébec), Charter of the French Language, C-11, ss. 51, 51.1, 205–207: https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/c-11

[15] Government of Québec (LégisQuébec), Regulation respecting the language of commerce and business, C-11, r. 9, ss. 3, 5, 7, 7.1: https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cr/C-11,%20r.%209

[16] Office québécois de la langue française, Marques de commerce sur les produits (rules in force since 1 June 2025; transition to 1 June 2027): https://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/francisation/entreprises/marque-commerce-produits.html

[17] Office québécois de la langue française, Loi sur la langue officielle et commune du Québec, le français (Bill 96) – legislative changes: https://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/charte/changementslegislatifs/

6. Technical and Safety Standards

This section uses official government sources only (Government of Canada, Government of Québec and Government of Pakistan).

Aspect	Requirement	Authority / reference
Legal framework	Safe Food for Canadians Act and Regulations (SFCA/SFCR), plus the Food and Drugs Act and Regulations.	CFIA, Health Canada
Import licence	The Canadian importer must hold a Safe Food for Canadians (SFC) licence covering the import of this food. It must be obtained before the shipment reaches the border and cannot be obtained at the border.	SFCR; CFIA AIRS Requirement 54191
Preventive Control Plan (PCP)	The importer must have written preventive controls identifying Salmonella as a hazard in sesame, and must verify that the foreign supplier produces under controls giving at least the same level of protection as the SFCR.	SFCR Part 4; CFIA importer PCP guide
Supplier verification	CFIA advises choosing suppliers that: are listed by their competent authority as eligible exporters; use HACCP-based,	CFIA Notice to importers (2025)

Aspect	Requirement	Authority / reference
	internationally recognized food-safety programs; can show their product meets Canadian requirements; provide certificates of analysis; and sign a formal supply agreement.	
Traceability and recall	The importer must keep traceability records one step forward and one step back, investigate complaints, and notify CFIA and start a recall if Salmonella is found.	SFCR Part 5
Plant health	For sesame "grain" for human consumption from Pakistan, AIRS lists no CFIA phytosanitary certificate; the documentary requirement is the SFC licence. Sesame "seed" for planting is regulated differently.	CFIA AIRS
Customs accounting	The importer needs a CBSA business number and import-export account and must use the CARM Client Portal to account for and pay duties and taxes.	CBSA

References

[1] Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SOR/2018-108): https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2018-108/index.html

[2] Safe Food for Canadians Act (S.C. 2012, c. 24): https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/S-1.1/index.html

[3] Food and Drugs Act (R.S.C. 1985, c. F-27): https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/F-27/index.html

[4] Food and Drug Regulations (C.R.C., c. 870): https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._870/index.html

[5] CFIA, Automated Import Reference System: HS 120740 / Pakistan / human consumption: https://airs-sari.inspection.gc.ca/airs_external/english/decisions-eng.aspx

[6] CFIA, Guide for food importers: prepare your preventive control plan: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-safety-industry/preventive-control-plans/importers

[7] CFIA, Key requirements of the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-safety-industry/key-requirements

[8] CFIA, Importing food to Canada: a step-by-step guide: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/importing-food-plants-animals/food-imports/step-step-guide

[9] CFIA, Notice to importers on tahini, halva and sesame seeds (2025): https://inspection.canada.ca/en/importing-food-plants-animals/food-imports/notices-industry/2025-04-07

[10] TIPP, Phytosanitary Certificate for Plant and Plant Products [Export]: https://tipp.gov.pk/index.php?r=searchProcedure/view1&id=132

[11] CBSA, CARM: Assess and pay duties and taxes on imported commercial goods: https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/services/carm-gcra/menu-eng.html

7. Import Tariff

Tariff item	Description	MFN	GPT (applies to Pakistan)	FTA partners (e.g. CUSMA, CPTPP, CETA)
1207.40.00	Sesamum seeds	Free	Free	Free

Sesame seeds enter Canada duty-free from every origin, including Pakistan. No certificate of origin is needed to claim a preference, because the MFN rate is already zero. The importer should confirm any sales-tax (GST/HST) treatment at import with CBSA.

> **Insight:** Tariffs are not a barrier. Competition happens entirely on price, quality, food safety and logistics.

References

[1] CBSA, Customs Tariff 2026, Chapter 12, tariff item 1207.40.00: https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/trade-commerce/tariff-tarif/2026/html/00/ch12-eng.html

[2] CBSA, Import commercial goods into Canada: https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/import/?D=A

8. Non-Tariff Barriers

- **Salmonella risk and recalls:** there were 41 recalls of sesame products in Canada between 2017 and 2024, and CFIA issued a specific notice in 2025. Importers are now more selective and ask for evidence of heat treatment and Salmonella testing. A single contaminated lot can lead to a recall and damage the reputation of the whole origin.
- **Importer liability and SFC licensing:** only a licensed Canadian importer can bring sesame in for sale. Pakistani exporters must work through licensed importers, who carry legal responsibility and therefore run supplier-approval checks (audits, documents, test results).
- **Pesticide MRLs:** Canada's default 0.1 ppm limit, where no specific MRL exists, is stricter than many markets' limits. Residues of pesticides used in the growing region can cause rejection if they are above Canadian limits.
- **Allergen and bilingual labelling:** retail packs must carry the "Contains: Sesame" statement and full English/French labelling. Mistakes lead to relabelling or recalls.
- **Quebec French-language rules (Bill 96):** labels for products sold in Quebec must have all text in French, with French at least as prominent as any other language. Since 1 June 2025, descriptive words inside trademarks must also be translated. Non-compliant packaging may have to be relabelled or withdrawn from sale in Quebec, the market for about one-third of Canada's sesame imports.
- **Buyer requirements beyond the law:** many Canadian buyers ask for GFSI-recognized certification (for example BRCGS or FSSC 22000), organic certification recognized under the Canada Organic Regime, and tight product specifications (purity, colour, moisture and foreign matter).
- **Logistics:** Karachi to Toronto or Montréal typically involves transhipment and long transit times, while Latin American suppliers have shorter routes.

References

[1] CFIA, Notice to importers: tahini, halva and sesame seeds (2025): https://inspection.canada.ca/en/importing-food-plants-animals/food-imports/notices-industry/2025-04-07

[2] Health Canada, Recalls and safety alerts: sesame seed products recalled due to Salmonella (example): https://recalls-rappels.canada.ca/en/alert-recall/certain-sesame-seed-containing-products-recalled-due-salmonella

[3] CFIA, Salmonella and generic E. coli in tahini and sesame seeds (targeted survey): https://inspection.canada.ca/food-safety-for-industry/food-chemistry-and-microbiology/food-safety-testing-bulletin-and-reports/salmonella-and-generic-e-coli-in-tahini-and-sesame/eng/1430919620350/1430919620865

[4] Health Canada, Maximum residue limits for pesticides: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/pesticides-pest-management/public/protecting-your-health-environment/pesticides-food/maximum-residue-limits-pesticides.html

[5] CFIA, AIRS (SFC licence requirement): https://airs-sari.inspection.gc.ca/airs_external/english/decisions-eng.aspx

[6] Office québécois de la langue française, Marques de commerce sur les produits: https://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/francisation/entreprises/marque-commerce-produits.html

9. Distribution Channels

Imported sesame reaches Canadian users through five main channels. The company examples below are taken from the Canadian Importers Database list of major importers of HS 120740.

Channel	Role	Examples of major importers (CID, 2024)
Bulk ingredient distributors and natural-food packers	Import containers, clean or sort, and repack for retail and foodservice, including private label	Dan-D Foods (Richmond, BC); Sunco Foods (Burnaby, BC); Snow Cap Enterprises (Burnaby, BC); Quality Natural Foods Canada (Woodbridge, ON); Ingredients Plus Distribution (Port Coquitlam, BC); PureSource (Anjou,

Channel	Role	Examples of major importers (CID, 2024)
		QC)
Flour millers and bakery suppliers	Supply sesame to industrial and in-store bakeries (buns, bagels, breads)	Farinart (Saint-Liboire, QC); Distribution Farinex (Boisbriand, QC); Port Royal Mills (Aurora, ON); Bay State Milling; Tristar Bakers (Toronto); Bagos Bun Bakery (Brampton, ON)
Spice and seasoning companies	Branded retail spices, seasoning blends and foodservice	Clubhouse Division (London, ON); Altius Spices and Seasonings (Baie-D'Urfé, QC)
Ethnic and specialty importers	South Asian, Middle Eastern and East Asian grocery supply; often buy from India and Pakistan	Shah Trading Company (Saint-Laurent, QC); Tootsi Impex (Montréal); Richmond Foods (Toronto); North American Impex (Toronto); MM Freedom Trading (Mississauga); All Gold Imports (Markham)
Retail chains	Direct import for private label and store brands	Loblaws Inc. (Brampton, ON); T&T Supermarket (Richmond, BC)

For a new Pakistani supplier, the most practical entry route is through bulk ingredient distributors and ethnic or specialty importers. They buy by the container, already import from South Asia, and can then supply bakeries, retailers and foodservice. Supplying large retailers directly usually requires GFSI certification and retail-ready bilingual packaging.

References

[1] Canadian Importers Database, HS 120740, major Canadian importers (2024): https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/cid-bdic/productReport.html?hsCode=120740&lang=eng

10. Pricing

Level	Product / basis	Price	Source
Retail (mass market)	Great Value Sesame Seeds (Walmart Canada), small retail bag	CAD 2.27 (CAD 1.57 per 100 g, about CAD 15.70/kg)	walmart.ca
Retail (ethnic grocery)	Sesame Seeds White, 200 g (Singal's, Indian grocery)	CAD 3.99 regular (CAD 1.99 on sale), about CAD 10–20/kg	singals.ca
Bulk (food service / small business)	White sesame, bulk 2.5 kg / 5 kg / 25 kg (A Spice Affair)	From CAD 73.99	aspiceaffair.com
Export (FOB Pakistan), all markets	Average unit value of Pakistan's sesame exports, FY2025-26	USD 0.99/kg (FY2023-24: USD 1.74/kg)	TIPP
Export (FOB Pakistan), to Canada	Average unit value of Pakistan's exports to Canada	USD 2.05/kg (FY26); USD 2.45/kg (FY25); USD 3.07/kg (FY24)	TIPP

Retail prices were checked on 29 September 2026 and change often. Export unit values are calculated from TIPP value and volume. The gap between export prices (about USD 1–3 per kg) and Canadian retail prices (CAD 10–16 per kg) reflects freight, cleaning and hulling, repacking, distributor and retail margins. Hulled, sortex-cleaned and steam-sterilized sesame earns a clear premium over natural (unhulled) seed, and organic sesame earns a higher premium still.

References

[1] Walmart Canada, Great Value Sesame Seeds: https://www.walmart.ca/en/ip/Great-Value-Sesame-Seeds/10303377

[2] A Spice Affair, Sesame Seeds White Bulk: https://aspiceaffair.com/products/sesame-seeds-white-a-spice-affair-bulk

[3] TIPP, Export Trade Data, PCT 1207.4000 (values and quantities used to calculate unit values): https://tipp.gov.pk/index.php?r=site/display&id=305

11. Reasons for Pakistan's Low/High Share

Why Pakistan's share has grown

- Larger crop and better processing: sesame area and output expanded sharply (area +30% in 2022-23), and more exporters now hull and machine-clean seed to international specifications.
- Nigeria's decline: Nigeria's exports to Canada fell from USD 3.1 million (2024) to USD 1.3 million (2025), leaving room for other suppliers.
- Diaspora buyers: Canadian ethnic-food importers already buy rice, spices and pulses from Pakistan and can add sesame to mixed containers.
- Price competitiveness: Pakistan's average export price is among the lowest in the world market.

Why Pakistan's share is still small

- Focus on China: between 54% and 73% of Pakistan's sesame exports go to China, and many exporters are geared to bulk natural seed for crushing rather than the cleaned or hulled grades Canadian food companies want.
- India's incumbency: India holds 73% of the Canadian market through long-standing relationships, larger processing capacity and established brands in Canadian retail.
- Food-safety perception: Canadian importers need documented Salmonella and pesticide controls. Few Pakistani sesame processors yet offer steam sterilization, GFSI certification and routine accredited-lab results.
- Limited market presence: few Pakistani sesame firms exhibit at Canadian food shows or hold Canadian buyer relationships.
- Logistics: longer and costlier sea freight than Latin American origins.

References

[1] Trade Data Online, HS 120740 (Canadian imports by country): https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/tdo/runRpt.html?grouped=GROUPED&searchType=KS_CS&areaCodes=&naArea=9999&countryList=DET&toFromCountry=CDN&reportType=TI&timePeriod=10%7CComplete+Years&currency=US&productType=HS6&hSelectedCodes=%7C120740&lang=eng

[2] TIPP, Export Trade Data, PCT 1207.4000 (destination shares): https://tipp.gov.pk/index.php?r=site/display&id=305

[3] Ministry of National Food Security & Research, Crops Area & Production 2022-23: https://mnfsr.gov.pk/SiteImage/Downloads/Crops%20Area%20AND%20Production%20by%202022-23.pdf

[4] CFIA, Notice to importers on sesame (2025): https://inspection.canada.ca/en/importing-food-plants-animals/food-imports/notices-industry/2025-04-07

12. Recommendations

- **Target the importers who already buy from India.** 25 of the 34 major Canadian importers also import sesame from India, according to the Canadian Importers Database. Offer them a second, competitively priced South Asian origin to reduce their dependence on one supplier.
- **Lead with food safety.** Offer steam-sterilized or validated heat-treated sesame, certificates of analysis from an ISO 17025 accredited lab for each lot (Salmonella, E. coli, aflatoxin, pesticide residues), and full lot traceability. This directly answers CFIA's 2025 notice to importers.
- **Get certified.** A HACCP-based, GFSI-recognized scheme (BRCGS or FSSC 22000) makes supplier approval by Canadian importers and retailers much easier. Organic certification recognized under the Canada Organic Regime opens the premium natural-foods channel.
- **Move up the value chain.** Shift from natural seed to hulled, sortex-cleaned white sesame and roasted sesame. The unit value of exports to Canada is already about double the world average.

- **Check MRL compliance before shipping.** Test against Health Canada MRLs, where the 0.1 ppm default applies if there is no specific MRL, and avoid ethylene-oxide treatment.
- **Time shipments to the harvest.** Contract with Canadian buyers ahead of the September–December export season, and offer consolidated or LCL shipments for smaller ethnic importers.
- **Offer private-label retail packs.** Supply bilingual, CFIA-compliant packs (with "Contains: Sesame / Contient : Sésame") for ethnic grocery chains in Ontario, Quebec and BC. Design the labels to meet Quebec's Charter of the French Language as well (Section 5.4), so the same pack can be sold across Canada.

Trade shows (Canada)

Show	Dates	Location	Focus
SIAL Canada 2027	27–29 April 2027	Toronto, ON	Canada's largest food and beverage trade show for retail, foodservice and ingredients; international pavilions
Grocery & Specialty Food West 2027	20–21 April 2027	Vancouver, BC (Vancouver Convention Centre East)	Grocery retailers, distributors and specialty food suppliers in Western Canada
CHFA NOW Vancouver 2027	30 April – 2 May 2027	Vancouver, BC	Natural and organic products; health-food retailers
CHFA NOW Toronto 2027	24–26 September 2027	Toronto, ON (Exhibition Place)	Natural and organic products; health-food retailers and distributors
RC Show 2027 (Restaurants Canada)	Spring 2027 (check website for dates)	Mississauga, ON (The International Centre)	Foodservice and hospitality buyers, bakery and restaurant supply

References

[1] SIAL Canada 2027: https://www.sial-network.com/en/sial-exhibitions/sial-canada

[2] Grocery & Specialty Food West 2027: https://gsfshow.com/

[3] CHFA NOW (Toronto 2026/2027 and Vancouver 2027): https://www.chfanow.ca/toronto/

[4] Restaurants Canada, RC Show 2027: https://www.restaurantscanada.org/event/rc-show/

[5] Canadian Importers Database, importers of HS 120740 from India: https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/cid-bdic/exportingCountries.html?hsCode=120740&countryCode=519

[6] CFIA, Notice to importers on sesame (2025): https://inspection.canada.ca/en/importing-food-plants-animals/food-imports/notices-industry/2025-04-07

[7] Health Canada, Maximum residue limits search: https://pest-control.canada.ca/pesticide-registry/en/mrl-search.html

[8] Office québécois de la langue française, Marques de commerce sur les produits: https://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/francisation/entreprises/marque-commerce-produits.html

13. Pakistani Exporters

Canadian buyers looking for Pakistani sesame suppliers can use these official directories:

- Pakistan Exporters Directory (TDAP), search by HS code 1207.
- TDAP Agro & Food Division, sesame product page with sector presentations and GACC (China) registration guidance, a useful benchmark for food-safety registration.

TIPP data shows Pakistani exporters shipped sesame to 56 countries in FY2025-26, so a large base of active exporters exists.

References

[1] Pakistan Exporters Directory (TDAP), search by HS code: https://pakistanexportersdirectory.gov.pk/searchbyhscode?product_code=1207

[2] TDAP, Pakistan Exporters Directory information page: https://tdap.gov.pk/pakistan-exporters-directory/

[3] TDAP, Sesame product page: https://tdap.gov.pk/sesame/

14. List of Canadian Importers

The table below lists major Canadian importers of sesame seeds (HS 120740). The complete list of importers can be obtained from the Canadian Importers Database at **https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/cid-bdic/productReport.html?hsCode=120740&lang=eng**.

Company	City, Province	Postal code	Phone	Website
ALTIUS SPICES AND SEASONINGS INC.	Baie-D'Urfé, Quebec	H9X 3S4	514-457-2200 *	altiusspice.com
BAY STATE MILLING COMPANY	Quincy, Massachusetts, USA	—	1-800-553-5687 *	baystatemilling.com
DAN-D FOODS HOLDINGS LTD.	Richmond, British Columbia	V7A 4V1	604-274-3263	dandpak.com
DISTRIBUTION FARINEX	Boisbriand, Quebec	J7H 1R5	450-437-7077	farinex.ca
FIELD FARMS MARKETING LTD.	Petrolia, Ontario	N0N 1R0	519-882-2976	fieldfarms.ca
INGREDIENTS PLUS DISTRIBUTION INC.	Port Coquitlam, British Columbia	V3B 0N9	604-468-7146	ingredientsplus.ca
JIVA MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTING INC.	Burnaby, British Columbia	V5J 5B9	604-254-9480	jivaorganics.ca
LA MAISON ORPHEE INC.	Québec, Quebec	G1P 4G4	418-681-3443	maisonorphee.com
LES ALIMENTS CELL INC. / CELL FOODS INC.	Pointe-Claire, Quebec	H9R 4Z2	514-428-8778	cellfoods.com
LOBLAWS INC.	Brampton, Ontario	L6Y 5S5	1-800-296-2332 *	loblaw.ca
NORTH AMERICAN IMPEX	Toronto, Ontario	M3J 2Z6	905-881-6887 †	naimpex.ca
PORT ROYAL MILLS LTD	Aurora, Ontario	L4G 3V6	905-713-1712	portroyalmills.com
QUALITY NATURAL FOODS CANADA INC.	Woodbridge, Ontario	L4H 0S9	416-261-8700 †	qualitynaturalfood.com
SHAH TRADING COMPANY LIMITED	Saint-Laurent, Quebec	H4S 1Y6	514-336-2462	shahtrading.com
SNOW CAP ENTERPRISES LTD.	Burnaby, British Columbia	V3N 5G4	604-515-3200	snowcap.com
TOOTSI IMPEX INC.	Montréal, Quebec	H3S 1P4	514-381-9790	tootsi.com
VIBRANT HEALTH PRODUCTS INC.	Abbotsford, British Columbia	V2T 6K3	1-888-863-4481 *	vibranthealthproducts.com

*Contact details checked on 29–30 September 2026. * Phone number taken from the company's own website, because YellowPages.ca had no matching listing. † YellowPages.ca lists this company at a different address from the CID (North American Impex: Richmond Hill, ON; Quality Natural Food Canada: Scarborough, ON), so confirm before contacting. Each website was checked on 30 September 2026 and opens to the company's own site. The CID itself gives company names and addresses only, not contact persons or import values; the importer is not necessarily the end user of the product.*

References

[1] Canadian Importers Database, HS 120740, major Canadian importers (all countries, 2024): https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/cid-bdic/productReport.html?hsCode=120740&lang=eng

[2] Canadian Importers Database, HS 120740, major importers by country of origin: https://ised-isde.canada.ca/app/ixb/cid-bdic/exportingCountries.html?hsCode=120740

[3] YellowPages.ca business search (phone numbers and websites), accessed 29–30 September 2026: https://www.yellowpages.ca/

[4] Company websites used where YellowPages.ca had no listing: Altius Spices & Seasonings (contact page): https://altiusspice.com/contact-us/

[5] Bay State Milling (contact page): https://baystatemilling.com/contact/

[6] Loblaw Companies Limited (legal / head office contact): https://www.loblaw.ca/en/legal/

[7] Vibrant Health Products (contact page): https://vibranthealthproducts.com/contact-us/

[8] Jiva Organics (company website; the website listed on YellowPages.ca no longer works): https://www.jivaorganics.ca/

**The TIC Wing may be contacted for additional guidance.*