

India creates 44 tariff lines to map US mkt access

Finer trade tracking

New HSN codes

Items	New tariff line
Pecan nuts	0802 99 10
Shea nuts	1207 99 50
Cranberries, fresh	0810 40 10
Cranberries, dried	0813 40 30
Blueberries, fresh	0810 40 20
Blueberries, dried	0813 40 40

Source: Budget documents



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India has introduced 44 new tariff lines in the Union Budget for 2026-27 to more precisely track imports of items, including the ones for which it has granted meaningful market access to the United States under the trade agreement. These include pecan nuts as well as fresh and dried cranberries and blueberries.

“The First Schedule to the Customs Tariff Act, 1975, has also been amended to create new tariff items which will, inter-alia, help in better product identification; getting actual transaction data of precursor chemicals and help in their monitoring; facilitating, tracking exports and deciding policy measures for plant-based extract products,” the Budget documents said.

These changes will be effective from May 1, unless otherwise specified, it added.

Other items for which new eight-digit HSN (Harmonised System of Nomenclature) codes have been created include frozen krill, cranberry products, gibberellic acid, thymidine, battery separators, and refrigerated containers.

In an explainer issued by the research division of the Press Information Bureau, the government said the agreement strengthens consumer welfare by enabling calibrated access to select consumer-oriented imports that bridge demand gaps without placing stress on domestic farmers or producers.

“Limited and structured access ensures that imports supplement, rather than replace, domestic production, contributing to price stability and greater product variety for consumers. Key consumer-oriented product categories include tree nuts; fresh and processed fruits such as

berries; niche and high-quality oils; processed food products including yeast, margarine and abalone; wine and premium beverages; select pet food products; and frozen food items such as salmon, cod and Alaska pollock,” it added.

The explainer said that, in line with India’s approach in previous trade agreements, agricultural market access has been structured based on product sensitivity. “The offer is categorised into immediate duty elimination, phased elimination (up to 10 years), tariff reduction, margin of preference and tariff rate quota (TRQ) mechanisms. Certain highly sensitive items have been liberalised under TRQs, where limited quantities are allowed at reduced duties. Products in this category include in-shell almonds, walnuts, pistachios and lentils,” it said.

On February 2, US Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said the new deal would expand exports of American farm products to India’s large market, lifting prices and boosting rural incomes in the US. “In 2024, America’s agricultural trade deficit with India was \$1.3 billion. India’s growing population is an important market for American agricultural products, and today’s deal will go a long way towards reducing this deficit,” she said in a post on X.

The commerce department on Friday said the agreement reflects a calibrated and balanced approach that places farmers’ interests at the forefront. “Wheat, rice, millets, soyameal, corn, spices, potato and major fruits remain protected. Dairy and poultry sectors are not opened for market access. Improved export opportunities across key agri-products are expected to boost demand,” the department said in a post on X.