LCBO

Open Listing Product Calls and Supporting Requirements FAQ

General ---------- 2

Product eligibility ---------- 3

Product listings & submissions ---------- 4

Warehousing & fulfillment ---------- 6

Purchase orders & payments ---------- 8

Other ---------- 9

The Open Listings process enables more eligible products to be made available for purchase by wholesale customers across Ontario through LCBO wholesale catalogues.

This FAQ is intended for suppliers and authorized agents interested in making products available through the Open Listing process. It provides information on product eligibility, wholesale catalogue participation, product registration, product calls, pricing, fulfillment options, warehousing, purchase orders, and payment processes. Requirements and responsibilities may vary depending on product type, supplier location, wholesale customer group, and fulfillment model.

General

Q. How can suppliers make their product available to wholesale customers in Ontario?

Eligible products can be made available to eligible wholesale customers through several pathways, including:

- products listed in LCBO retail and subsequently opted into wholesale catalogue by suppliers through the New Item Submission System;
- Wholesale-specific product calls through the Open Listing Process.

Products must be registered with LCBO and included in the applicable wholesale catalogue before they can be ordered by wholesale customers.

Who may submit products through the Open Listings Process?

Domestic suppliers and authorized agents representing imported products may submit eligible products through the applicable Product Call.

Information on having products listed in an LCBO wholesale catalogue for retailers and other businesses in Ontario can be found at Wholesale Listings | Doing Business with LCBO.

Q. Why are there multiple wholesale catalogues?

Wholesale customers have different catalogues since not all products are eligible for sale through all channels. For instance, spirits are not eligible to be sold in grocery or convenience stores and there are further ABV related restrictions on wine, beer, cider and Ready-to-drink products. Please see LCBO Wholesale Supply and Delivery Procedures Manual on Doing Business with LCBO for further details.

Q. How are products supplied to wholesale customers through the Open Listings process?

Orders are fulfilled and delivered through the Supplying Source Program. Depending on the supplier location, fulfillment may be completed by an authorized third-party logistics provider (3PL) or by the supplier acting as its own supplying source. Domestic suppliers may choose either option, while authorized agents must work with an LCBO-authorized 3PL.

Imported products represented by authorized agents must participate in the Warehousing for Open Listings Program, under which products are warehoused at an LCBO-authorized warehouse prior to sale to wholesale customers.

Wholesale customer orders are fulfilled through the applicable supplying source and delivered directly to the wholesale customer's licensed location or authorized distribution centre through a drop-shipping model.

For further information on the Supplying Source Program, please visit Dropshipping & Supplying Sources | Doing Business with LCBO

Product eligibility

Q. Which products are ineligible for the Open Listings process?

Products must meet all eligibility requirements for the applicable wholesale customer group. Private label products are not eligible. The LCBO also reserves the right to decline any products that are identifiably the same as SKUs currently listed and continuously available through the LCBO but in a different format or packaging configuration.

Q. Are products currently listed or supplied by the LCBO eligible for the Open Listings process?

No. If a product is already listed at the LCBO and available to eligible wholesale customers, these products will continue to be supplied by the LCBO to eligible wholesale customers.

If a supplier chooses to delist an existing item from LCBO retail to move to wholesale exclusive, they will need to meet the program requirements and re-submit through the applicable New Item Submission System (NISS) call.

If an import or out of province domestic product is available in LCBO retail, then it must remain LCBO supplied to service LCBO retail stores and any wholesale customer the supplier opts in to make the product available.

Q. Are LCBO retail-listed products automatically available to all wholesale customers?

No. Products listed through an LCBO retail product call are not automatically available to all wholesale customers. During the application process, suppliers select the wholesale customer groups that can purchase the product. Product availability is subject to customer-specific eligibility requirements under Ontario regulations. As a result, some products may be available to certain wholesale customer groups but not others. For example, grocery and convenience stores cannot sell spirits and are subject to alcohol-by-volume (ABV) limits for beer, wine, cider, and ready-to-drink products.

Q. Are Sake and Liqueurs at or below 17% Alcohol by Volume considered eligible products for wholesale catalogues?

Product eligibility for wholesale catalogues depends on the products a wholesale customer is permitted to sell under its licence or authorization type.

Sake is permitted as an eligible product for wholesale customers and must meet eligibility requirements and minimum pricing rules. Liqueurs are not eligible for grocery and convenience stores but may be eligible for other wholesale customers including LCBO Convenience Outlets (LCO), Duty Free and hospitality licensees.

Q. Can a product participate in both a Vintages Release and Open Listings process?

A product cannot participate in both programs simultaneously. Products offered through a Vintages release become eligible for the Open Listings only after all inventory allocated to the Vintages release has been depleted. As sell-through timelines vary by product, the timing for Wholesale eligibility will also vary. Please note that the Vintages brand is exclusive to the LCBO.

Suppliers wishing to pursue the Open Listings process for a product that is under consideration for a Vintages Release must first withdraw the product from the Vintages submission process.

Product listings & submissions

Q. What is the difference between a retail listing and a wholesale listing?

A retail listing makes a product available for sale through LCBO retail channels. Wholesale listing makes a product available for ordering by eligible wholesale customers through the applicable wholesale catalogue.

Q. When do open product calls close for Open Listings process?

Product calls are open for one-year periods and renewed annually. Submissions are reviewed on a rolling basis. Suppliers that have received the necessary warehousing approvals, where applicable, and have been approved as a supplying source may submit products through the New Item Submission System (NISS) at any time while a product call is open.

Q. What factors affect the time required to bring a new product listing to market through the Open Listings process?

Timelines vary based on several factors, including the completion of onboarding and product set-up activities, the accuracy and timeliness of information provided by the supplier or authorized agent, inventory forecasting, and issuance of a purchase order. Once a purchase order is issued, product availability will also depend on supplier readiness, production schedules, shipping lead times, and the country of origin. Products with longer transportation lead times (out of country) may require additional time before becoming available for purchase.

Q. Can suppliers choose which catalogue(s) a product is submitted to (e.g., Hospitality, LCBO Convenience Outlets, etc.)?

Suppliers can select customer group specific catalogues in which they would like to make their product available. However, as a condition of participation in the Supplying Source Program and in accordance with Ontario regulations, products cannot be exclusive to a single wholesale customer within a customer group.

Q. Are Expanded Product Details Form (EPDF) submissions required for all legacy products?

An EPDF is not required for active (i.e. currently listed) legacy products that are being added to a wholesale catalogue. Additional product information for all newly approved product submissions is temporarily being collected via online form (separate from NISS). This additional information will support QA regulatory reporting and enhance local product classifications, as well as capture suppliers' wholesale pricing estimation.

Q. How can suppliers track the status of their submissions?

The New Item Submission System (NISS) provides status updates as submissions progress through the various stages of product onboarding and set-up. Suppliers will be notified through NISS when the status of their submission changes. For questions regarding the status of a submission, please contact wholesalecatalouge@lcbo.com

Q. Can suppliers get a list of contact details for LCBO Convenience Outlets (LCOs) if interested in listing in their product catalogue?

Suppliers interested in product opportunities with LCBO Convenience Outlets (LCOs) can contact wholesalecatalogue@lcbo.com for information and support. An LCO Directory (excluding contact details) can also be found on Doing Business with LCBO.

Q. Under what circumstances could a product be removed from a catalogue?

The LCBO may remove a product from a wholesale catalogue where it no longer meets catalogue requirements or where continued listing is not appropriate. This may include:

- Failure to meet minimum sales targets.
- Evidence of product exclusivity arrangements or preferential treatment of particular wholesale customers.
- Failure to provide consistent supply to meet wholesale customer demand.
- Government direction requiring removal of the product.
- Failure to maintain product quality, or failure of the product or its packaging to comply with applicable laws.
- Failure to comply with LCBO Product Packaging Standards and Chemical Guidelines.
- Failure to comply with applicable liquor laws.
- Failure to comply with AGCO Advertising Guidelines.
- Failure to comply with LCBO requirements, including the Supplier Code of Conduct, Purchase Order Terms and Conditions, Service Level Agreement, or Wholesale Supply and Delivery Procedures Manual.

For more information, please see the LCBO Wholesale Supply and Delivery Procedures Manual on Doing Business with LCBO.

Warehousing & fulfillment

Q. What is the approval process for warehousing?

The LCBO reviews all third-party logistics (3PL) applications to ensure they meet eligibility requirements. The review process may include site visits.

Q. Why does the LCBO require eligibility criteria for authorized third-party logistics providers (3PLs)?

The eligibility criteria for 3PLs was established in alignment with other warehousing authorizations issued by the LCBO and are intended to ensure that facilities meet a standard in inventory management, warehousing, order fulfilment and shipping.

Q. Where can suppliers find a list of approved 3PLs?

A list of LCBO approved 3PLs is available on Doing Business with LCBO at Warehousing | Doing Business with LCBO.

Q. What are the customs and warehousing requirements for imported products?

Imported products must be cleared through the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and its Assessment and Revenue Management (CARM) system upon arrival in Canada.

To participate in the Warehousing for Open Listings Program, a third-party logistics provider (3PL) or warehouse must hold:

- an Excise Warehouse Licence issued by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA); or
- for imported beer, a Customs Bonded Warehouse Licence issued by the CBSA;
- Warehouses participating in the program must meet these licensing requirements to be authorized.

Q. Can products listed through the Open Listings process be distributed through the LCBO distribution network?

No. Products listed through the Open Listings process are fulfilled and delivered to LCBO's wholesale customers through an authorized third-party logistics provider (3PL). Domestic suppliers may also choose to act as their own supplying source and fulfill orders through a drop-shipping model.

Q. Who is responsible for entering into a Supplying Source Service Level Agreement (SLA)?

The party responsible for fulfilling and delivering orders to wholesale customers must enter into the applicable Service Level Agreement (SLA). For more information, please visit Dropshipping & Supplying Sources | Doing Business with LCBO

Q. Where can suppliers and authorized agents find more information about transportation, warehousing, inventory transfers, and other program procedures under the Warehouse for Open Listings Procedure?

Detailed operational requirements and request processes are set out in the LCBO Warehousing for Open Listings Procedures Manual at Warehousing | Doing Business with LCBO

This includes transportation orders, transportation costs, delivery requirements, inventory transfers, product destruction, returns to supplier, and record-keeping obligations.

Q. Can products listed through the Open Listings process be used for province-to-province transfers?

The Open Listings process is intended to support the listing of eligible products on LCBO wholesale catalogues for purchase by eligible retailers and hospitality licensees in Ontario. The quantity of the Purchase Order (PO) should reflect the interest and demand for the products to be sold in Ontario. Product quantities are not intended to support demand in other provinces.

Purchase orders & payments

Q. Does LCBO guarantee sales or distribution once a product is listed?

No. Listing makes a product available for purchase through the wholesale catalogue. Suppliers and agents remain responsible for building commercial relationships and generating demand with wholesale customers.

Q. How are order quantities determined for products?

The LCBO encourages authorized agents to solicit wholesale customers for interest and demand to inform the order quantity forecast for the products they represent. While the LCBO may review proposed order quantities for reasonableness, the authorized agent or domestic supplier assumes ownership of the inventory once it is received at the authorized warehouse.

Q. When is a Purchase Order (PO) issued and when is the supplier /agent paid?

POs are issued after all product set-up activities have been completed, including execution of the required Supplying Source Service Level Agreement (SLA, product approval, vendor set-up, article databasing, Quality Assurance labelling reviews, inventory forecasting and issuance of a Notice to Purchase (NTP).

Suppliers or authorized agents are paid when the product is sold and shipped to a wholesale customer, based on the shipment details recorded in the LCBO Gateway System. Payment is made in accordance with the applicable payment terms, similar to the current drop-shipping model (e.g., Net 30 terms).

For additional information on payment terms, please see the LCBO Wholesale Supply and Delivery Procedures Manual on Doing Business with LCBO.

Other

Q. Are grocery stores and LCBO Convenience Outlets (LCOs) able to order products from outside of the LCBO's online ordering system?

All grocery stores, convenience stores and LCOs must place their orders through the LCBO via the online ordering system (wholesale.lcbo.com) or EDI.

There are three exceptions:

- The Beer Store (TBS) program, through which eligible hospitality licensees and convenience stores may purchase eligible products from TBS on behalf of the LCBO, either online through the Beer for Business platform or in person at authorized TBS retail locations.
- Hospitality licensees can purchase product in LCBO retail stores and from agents through LCBO Specialty Services consignment program.
- The Direct Delivery Program, through which LCBO-authorized Ontario manufacturers may facilitate sales directly with LCOs, Duty Free operators and hospitality licensees and report those sales to the LCBO. For more information, please visit Direct Delivery Program | Doing Business with LCBO.