

General requirements for exports of fresh fruits and vegetables to the EC

■ *Dr Agr Kristina Mattsson*

Anapa, Russian Federation, 4-7 October, 2010

Two groups of EC requirements

Legal EC requirements

1. Phytosanitary
2. Food safety
 - a. pesticide residues
 - b. microorganisms
 - c. traceability
3. Quality standards
4. Labelling

Traders additional requirements

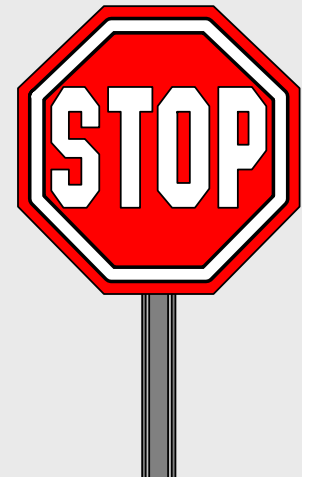
5. Communication
6. Certification
 - a. Of production
 - b. Of packing facility
7. Traceability
8. Varieties
9. Pesticide levels
10. Quality
11. Maintaining a cool chain

Legal EC requirements

Legal requirements

1. Phytosanitary
2. Food safety
 - a. pesticide residues
 - b. microorganisms
 - c. traceability
3. Quality standards
4. Labelling

If any one of these requirements is not met at the point of entry into the EC, products will not be allowed to enter the EC market.



1. EC Phytosanitary requirements

Absence of quarantine pests

- Insects, mites and nematodes f.ex.
 - Fruit flies (non-european)
 - Bemisia
 - Liriomiza sativae (leaf minor)
 - Thrips palmi
 - Pine wood nematode (in wood pallets)
- Bacteria
- Fungi f.ex.
 - Monilinia
 - Alternaria
- Viruses f.ex.
 - Tomato spotted wilt tospo virus (all sorts of products)

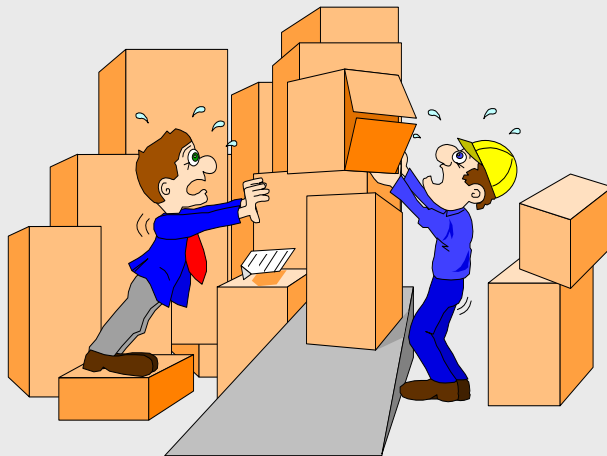
EC Phytosanitary requirements

Regulated by Council directive
2000/29/EG

- Some rules are the same in all EC
- National differences exist due to protected zones
- Some pest species may be prohibited in connection to specific plant species.
- Pests have different dignity

Control of phytosanitary requirements in the EC

- Controls are made at the point of entry into the Community, or
- For a closed consignment, on arrival at destination country in connection to customs clearance



If a quarantine pest is found at EC import stage

- Highest dignity pest
 - Consignment may not enter EC territory
 - Destroy products on customs territory, or
 - Return to sender
- Lower dignity pest
 - Consignment may enter EC territory after destruction of pest
 - Consignment is treated in order to eliminate pest

2. Food safety in the EC

- General rule - products must be safe to consume

4. Quality standards

- Elaborated by UN/ECE for voluntary use

UN/ECE standards			No UN/ECE standards
EC specific standards	EC General marketing standard		All other species of fruit and vegetables such as:
Apples	Annonas	Figs	Salsify
Citrus fruit	Apricots	Garlic	Turnip rooted chevriil
Kiwifruit	Artichokes	Hazelnuts in shell	Parsnips
Lettuces/ endives	Asparagus	Headed cabbage	Parsley
Peaches/ nectarines	Aubergines	Leeks	Chard
Pears	Avocados	Mangoes	Turnips
Strawberries	Beans	Melons	Swedes
Sweet peppers	Bilberries/blueberries	Onions	Beetroot
Table grapes	Broccolis	Peas	Celeriac
Tomatoes	Brussels sprouts	Pineapples	Pak Choi
	Carrots	Plums	Black berries
	Cauliflower	Radishes	Currants
	Ceps	Raspberries	Gooseberries
	Cherries	Rhubarb	Etc.
	Chinese cabbage	Ribbed celery	
	Chestnuts	Scorzonera	
	Citrus fruits (limes etc)	Spinach	
	Ourgettes	Truffels	
	Cucumbers	Walnuts in shell	
	Cultivated mushrooms	Water melons	
	Fennel	Witloof Chicory	

4. Labelling (legal requirements in EC)

- Directive 2000/13/EC of the European parliament and of the Council
- Regulation 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Labelling of a box

Labelling of a box

General EC labelling requirements

- Labelling must be legible, visible and indelible
- Labelling must be in a language that can be understood by the consumer in the country where products are sold
- Labelling must not in any way mislead the consumer

Labelling requirements of fruit and vegetables in the EC

	Boxes and open packages		Pre-packages
	Specific standard	General standard	
Legal basis	EC (nr)1580/2007		EC/2000/13
	Respective trade standard	annex 1	
Which product?	Yes, if not visible from the outside	Not required	Yes
Name and adress of producer/ packer	Yes	Not required	Yes - but can be replaced by seller (if EC company)
Country of origin	Yes	Yes	Yes
Net weight	Not required	Not required	Yes
Best before date	Not required	Not required	Yes
Storage recommendation	Not required	Not required	Yes
Size, type and other commercial specifications	According to respective standard	Not required	Yes, according to the standard

Pre-packages (EC definition)

- A pre-package is a closed package whose content cannot be changed without opening the package
 - Trays covered with a plastic film
 - Closed nets (with fruits or nuts)
 - Punnets enclosed in nets or a plastic film
 - Bags (with f.ex. nuts)

A prepackage with table grapes

The package is closed, the content cannot be changed without opening the package, and hence it should be marked with all information required by the standard.

Not a pre-package

Because it's open

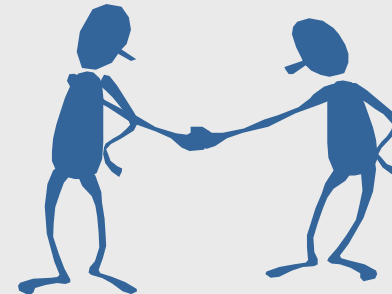
A box with marked pre-packages

Trade requirements

Traders additional requirements

5. Communication
6. Certification
 - a. Of production
 - b. Of packing facility
7. Traceability
8. Varieties
9. Pesticide levels
10. Quality
11. Maintaining a cool chain

Traders additional requirements have to be met in order to secure a business deal, and in order to continue to sell to the same buyer.



5. Communication

There must be a contact person who speaks English (or for trade with France or southern Europe - French)

6. Certification

- Certification is a process where the producer or operator shows that he has a procedure which makes sure that he can identify what may go wrong and has routines to eliminate this risk.
- Certification should comprise all steps in production, sorting and packing to ensure that the product meets all legal and trade requirements.

Certification is required...

- Of production –
 - generally Global Gap
- Of packhouse –
 - HACCP or,
 - BRC or
 - IFS or
 - ISO 22000

As sorting usually takes place in a packhouse, certifying conformity with UN/ECE standards is normally part of packhouse certification.

7. Specific traceability requirements

- Grower's diary must be kept for each section with records of
 - All plant herbicides and pesticides used
 - Dosage
 - Other factors that may influence product quality
- Each box (and consumer package) must be traceable back to
 - the grower and
 - the specific section and
 - the records of treatment and other relevant information.

8. Varieties

- Traders may have specific preferences concerning varieties
- Well known varieties tend to be wanted

9. Pesticide levels

- Some traders may apply lower limits for acceptable residue levels of pesticides and herbicides than the limits set in legislation.

10. Quality requirements

- Some traders may have stricter quality requirements than those required by legislation or trade standards

11. Requirements on cool chain

- Application of rapid cooling after harvest and maintaining low temperatures until delivery is an important basis for maintaining quality and food safety.
- Traders often have specific cool chain requirements.

General remarks on trader requirements

- The trader (buyer's) requirements are often stricter than legislation
- The trader can have as strict requirements as he wishes – the seller's choice is to find another buyer.
- If on delivery products do not meet specifications on quality they are corrected or destroyed at the seller's expense.
- If residue levels are exceeded the delivering company will have difficulties coming back on the market.

Recommendation

Exports should not commence until there are reliable systems assuring that

- Food safety
- Traceability
- Quality

requirements (legal and trade requirements) are fully met and that there is no risk of failure.

Thank you for your attention

