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 requiremets

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 tospovirus (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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EC specific standards</th>
<th>EC General marketing standard</th>
<th>No UN/ECE standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apples</strong></td>
<td>Annonas</td>
<td>Figues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citrus fruit</strong></td>
<td>Apricots</td>
<td>Garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kiwifruit</strong></td>
<td>Artichokes</td>
<td>Hazelnuts in shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lettuces/ endives</strong></td>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>Headed cabbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peaches/ nectarines</strong></td>
<td>Aubergines</td>
<td>Leeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pears</strong></td>
<td>Avocados</td>
<td>Mangoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strawberries</strong></td>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>Melons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sweet peppers</strong></td>
<td>Bilberries/blueberries</td>
<td>Onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table grapes</strong></td>
<td>Broccolis</td>
<td>Peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tomatoes</strong></td>
<td>Brussels sprouts</td>
<td>Pineapples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carrots</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cauliflower</strong></td>
<td>Radishes</td>
<td>Currants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ceps</strong></td>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>Gooseberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cherries</strong></td>
<td>Rhubarb</td>
<td>Etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese cabbage</strong></td>
<td>Ribbed celery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chestnuts</strong></td>
<td>Scorzonera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citrus fruits (limes etc)</strong></td>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ourgettes</strong></td>
<td>Truffels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cucumbers</strong></td>
<td>Walnuts in shell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultivated mushrooms</strong></td>
<td>Water melons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fennel</strong></td>
<td>Witloof Chicory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Labelling (legal requirements in EC)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boxes and open packages</th>
<th>Pre-packages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific standard</strong></td>
<td>General standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal basis</td>
<td>EC (nr)1580/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respective trade standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which product?</td>
<td>Yes, if not visible from the outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and adress of producer/packer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country of origin</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net weight</td>
<td>Not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best before date</td>
<td>Not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage recommendation</td>
<td>Not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size, type and other commercial specifications</td>
<td>According to respective standard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 e.g. 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 sellers 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