

AGRIBUSINESS SERIES

Export Handbooks

THE EUROPEAN UNION MARKET:

Guide to identify the primary official requirements to import
fresh and processed agricultural products

Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade,
Agribusiness and Food Safety

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This document was prepared by the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety, with headquarters in Miami, FL, and supported by the Directorate for Agribusiness Development of IICA. The primary author is Daniel Rodríguez Sáenz, Agribusiness Specialist for IICA, who counted with the support of Eugenie Gamboa, bachelor in Business Administration with emphasis in International Trade an intern at the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness, and Food Safety. Mr. Quentin B. Kubicek, Agricultural Health & Food Safety Specialist for IICA assisted in editing the English version.

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The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and through the activities of its Area for Agribusiness Development helps our member countries identify and take advantage of market opportunities, and helps in strengthening public and private institutions for the development and promotion of agribusinesses.

In January 2004, and thanks to the efforts of this Strategic Area, IICA put into motion the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness, and Food Safety, with headquarters in Miami, FL, USA.

This initiative was created as a response to the mandate of providing technical cooperation to strengthen the entrepreneurial capacities of the small and medium size agro-entrepreneurs in IICA member countries. It was also created to provide cooperation in the identification of market opportunities and with the aim to provide useful information to facilitate the decision making process to enhance trade.

The activities conducted until this day, by the Directorate for Agribusiness Development and the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness, and Food Safety, have permitted to identify a set of specific needs common to all the medium and small size agro-entrepreneurs in the Americas. The most important topics identified, are analyzed and presented under the general title of **Agribusiness Series**. The objective of this Series is to contribute to enhance the competitive position of these agro-entrepreneurs. The section **"Export Handbooks"** contains a series of documents focused to provide instruments to facilitate the decision making process to successfully access the international markets.

This document entitled "The European Union Market: Guide to identify the primary official requirements to import fresh and processed agricultural products", contains general information about each one of these requirements and facilitates the access to the official information generated by the European Union. As such, this is an informative document, that does not intend to present an exhaustive analysis of all the points included in the current legislature, but rather be a guide document to allow the access to more detailed information for all agro-exporters, and at the same time,

allow them to know, in a very expedite fashion, all the requirements that could affect the success of their companies when exporting to the European Union.

The document was prepared based on information that is presented over the web by different official institutions. We would like to warn the reader and users of this guide that all official requirements could suffer constant modifications, therefore it is recommended to visit the official sources before any definitive action be taken.

To facilitate the access to the official information presented in this document, the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness, and Food Safety, by way of its information system www.infoagro.net/agronegocios, put to the service of all the readers an electronic search system to help them to identify and access the specific requirements for the products that you want to export. Additional to the information regarding the European Union market, visiting this system you can find information regarding requirements for the USA and Canada.

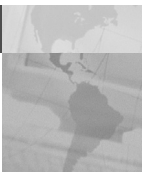
This document has been prepared by Mr. Daniel Rodriguez Saenz, Agribusiness Specialist assigned to the Directorate for Agribusiness Development, who counted with the help and support of Ms. Eugenie Gamboa, intern at the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness, and Food Safety.

We trust that this guide will become an instrument of permanent consultation for the small and medium agro-entrepreneurs. We also hope to contribute to the strengthening of their competitiveness and to the improvement of their livelihood conditions.

Sincerely,

Miguel Garcia Winder

*Director for Agribusiness Development
Interamerican Program for the Promotion of Trade,
Agribusiness and Food Safety
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INTRODUCTION

The importation of food into the European Union is subject to the fulfillment of diverse laws and regulations destined to protect human, animal and plant health, as well as to guarantee that certain minimum requirements of quality and food safety are met.

This guide tries to present in a concise and comprehensive manner the primary requirements imposed by the European Union legislation for the importation of fresh fruits and vegetables; processed agricultural products; and facilitate the fulfillment of such requirements by small and medium sized agro-entrepreneurs of the Americas. Similarly, it intends to support the effort of those public institutions and private agricultural organizations whose primary function includes export promotion.

To reach this objective, the guide has been structured as follows:

The first section makes reference to the general requirements for the importation of food products into the European Union. The information presents key elements of the agrifood legislation and the fundamental requirements that are needed to maintain the correct hygiene of food products.

The second section presents the requirements that fresh product must meet before they enter the European Union market. This information will identify the primary guidelines for plant protection, the maximum pesticide residues that are permissible in food and the current marketing norms for fruits and vegetables.

The third section is dedicated to the requirements that must be met by processed agricultural food products. In this section there are references with regard to labeling and materials, such as additives and contaminants, that are in contact with food.

Finally, the fourth section contains other elements that play an important role in the identification of possibilities to access the European Union market. Specifically the reader will find information on organic products, new food products and food ingredients, wood packaging, denominations of origin, and the Expanding Exports Helpdesk.



I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Within the frame of the European Union (EU) legislation, there are a series of regulations of general character which apply to all food products regardless if they are fresh or processed.

In this section, the key elements of the EU legislation with respect to the importation of food products are presented in a general manner. Additionally, directive CE 43/1993, which intends to improve the hygiene of the food sector and to guarantee the protection of public health and food safety within the European Community (EC), is presented.

FOOD LEGISLATION

- The food legislation of the EU defines the following general principles:
- It is not permissible to market a product if it is dangerous, this is, if it represents a health risk or is not fit for human or animal consumption.
- Within all stages of the agrifood chain, business operators must be sure that all food and feed products comply with the requirements established in the respective legislation.
- Traceability of all food, feed, or animals that are destined to human consumption, and any substance that is added to food, needs to be established for all stages of production, transformation, and distribution.
- If an operator suspects that a feed or food that has been imported, produced, transformed, manufactured or distributed represents a

danger for human or animal health, he/she must immediately take the necessary actions to withdraw it from the market and notify the competent authorities and users.

For more information on the main requirements from the EU authority on food safety, you can access:

<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/f80501.htm>

FOOD HYGIENE

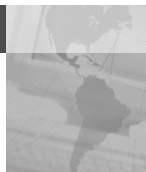
As of January 2006, Directive EC No 852/2004, which is a revision of the Directive EC No 43/1993, is in effect. This regulation makes an emphasis in the definition of those objectives that must be reached at the level of the EC in food safety matters, leaving to all economic agents for the sector the responsibility of adopting safety measurements to guarantee food safety. This regulation applies to companies within the food sector but not at primary production, nor to the domestic preparation of food destined to private consumption.

This new regulation reinforces that all economic agents within the food sector must guarantee that all the stages on the process in which they are responsible, from primary production to the sale and distribution to the final consumer, are conducted hygienically according to the HACCP principles.

Additionally, and in conformity with EC No 178/2002, it is established that the economic agents of the food sector must apply systems and procedures conducive to assure the trajectory of ingredients and food, and, in some cases, of animals used for their production. It also defines that imported food products into the community must meet the hygiene norms of the community or other equivalent norms or measures.

For more information you can access:

<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/f84001.htm>



II. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF FRESH PRODUCTS

Before exporting, producers/exporters of fresh products must be sure that their product complies with the corresponding legislation of the EU. In this section important points related to plant protection are indicated. Particularly, information related to the maximum permissible limits of pesticide residues present in food and information regarding the marketing regulations according to the type of product are also presented.

PLANT PROTECTION

Directive EC 29/2000 defines protection measurements against the introduction to the EU, of harmful organisms for plants or plant products, originating in other member countries of the EC or from other countries outside the EC. According to this directive the following concepts are defined:

- **Plants:** living plants and living plants thereof, including seeds, fruits, vegetables, tubers, corms, bulbs, cut flowers, branches with foliage, cut trees retaining foliage, and plant tissue cultures;
- **Plant Products:** those products of plant origin, unprocessed or having undergone simple preparation, in so far as these are not plants;
- **Harmful Organisms:** pests of plants or plant products that belong to the animal or plant kingdom, or which are viruses, mycoplasmas, or other pathogens

In the directive annexes the harmful organisms whose introduction is prohibited into the EC is presented. Insects, mites, nematodes, bacteria, fungi, viruses, plants and plant products are specifically indicated.

In the internet address http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lif.html you can access this directive, to do so you must indicate the correct number (29) and the year (2000).

MAXIMUM LIMITS FOR PESTICIDE RESIDUES IN FOOD OR FEED

Thousands of maximum residue levels (MRL) for pesticide/commodity combinations have been established at the Community level. Where no Community MRL has been established, each Member State has the prerogative to define the maximum limits if they consider that these products present a risk for their populations.

In the following electronic address you can find the maximum permissible limits of a pesticide residue classified according to the pesticide type, crop group, or commodity:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/protection/pesticides/index_en.htm

MARKETING REGULATIONS

Marketing standards are norms that serve as legal instruments and that define a common criterion for the classification of fruits and vegetables with different commercial classes in the EU. These standards have been prepared by taking into consideration the physical characteristics of the products.

Council regulation EC No 2200/96 establishes the marketing regulations for fruits and vegetables within the EU. The entire text for this normative can be found at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lif.html, to gain access you must indicate the number (2200) and the year (1996).

With the intention to facilitating the identification of the current marketing regulations, we present a list of the main fruit and vegetable products, together with the directive that governs them.

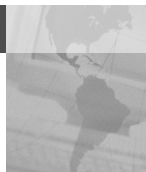


TABLE 1. Main vegetable products that have marketing regulations and their respective normative.

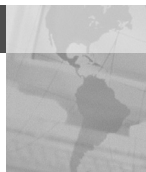
Product	Normative
Garlic	CE/2288/1997
Artichoke	CE/1466/2003
Eggplant	CE/1135/2001
Zucchini	CE/1757/2003
Onions and Endive	CE/2213/1983
Mushrooms	CE/1863/2004
Cauliflower	CE/1135/2001
Asparagus	CE/2377/1999
Beans	CE/0912/2001
Green beans	CE/2561/1999
Lettuces and radicchios	CE/1543/2001
Mini-vegetables	CE/1135/2001
Peppers	CE/1455/1999
Sweet peppers	CE/2147/2002
Leek	CE/2396/2001
Cabbage, Brussels Sprouts, Spinach and Celery	CE/1135/2001
Tomatoes	CE/790/2000
Carrots	CE/730/1999

Source: Rodriguez, D. IICA, 2005.

TABLE 2. Main fruit products that have marketing regulations and their respective normative.

Producto	Reglamento
Avocado	CE/0831/1997
Amendment to avocados	CE/0387/2005
Apricot	CE/0851/2000
Hazelnuts in shell	CE/1284/2002
Cherries	CE/0214/2004
Plums	CE/1168/1999
Prunes	CE/0379/2005
Citrus	CE/1799/2004
Strawberries	CE/0843/2002
Kiwis	CE/1673/2004
Apples	CE/0085/2004
Peaches and nectarines	CE/1861/2004
Nuts in shell	CE/0175/2001
Pears	CE/0086/2004
Watermelons	CE/1862/2004
Table grapes	CE/2789/1999
Amendment to Table Grapes	CE/2137/2002

Source: Rodriguez, D. IICA, 2005.





III. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF PROCESSED PRODUCTS

All food products that are marketed in the EU must comply with all health and safety requirements that are established by the Member States. This section helps exporters of processed products to identify the primary requirements established in the legislation; aspects related to food labeling and the control of materials that enter in contact with food products (additives and contaminants) are highlighted.

LABELING

Directive EC/13/2000 defines the label requirements established by the EU Member States. This directive demands a general labeling for all products. Additionally, the EU has established specific regulations depending on the type of product or for specific products.

In the next paragraphs a summary of the general labeling requirements is presented, followed by information regarding health claims, labeling for nutritive properties, and a list of the type of product that must comply with special regulations, with their respective internet addresses where more information for each one of them can be found. Finally, we present information for specific products for which particular labeling norms have been defined.

General Labeling. The information in the label should be presented in a language that can be understood by the consumer. From a practical point of view this is in the language of the Member State in which the product is going to be sold. The legislation includes the possibility to include multiple languages in order to allow the product to be marketed in different countries. With regards to the measurement units, the use of the

international metric system is obligatory. The aspects that need to be considered in the general labeling are the following:

- Commercial name
- Complete ingredient list, listed in descending order according to the quantity that is present in the product.
- The quantity of certain ingredients or the ingredients categories
- Net quantity (weight or volume)
- Expiration date
- Name of manufacturer, packager, or distributor
- Use and storage instructions
- Lot identification or number
- Country of origin

It is recommended to review the Directive 2000/13/CE of the European Parliament and Council of March 20th, 2000 relative to the legislation of each Member State for labeling, presentation and publicity of food products. Directive 2000/13/EC provides details for each one of the elements required for general labeling.

Health claims. All claims that assign certain properties to the food relative to the prevention or treatment of diseases are expressively prohibited in the current EU labeling norm. Due to this obligation, several of the Member States have implemented their own legislation. This has forced the EU to reconsider this topic and is currently working on new rules that will permit the use of certain health claims.

Labeling for nutritive properties in food products. The Council Directive 90/496/EEC on nutrition labeling for foodstuffs, as amended by Commission Directive 2003/120/EC, defines “nutrition labeling” as any information appearing on labeling and relating to energy value and the following nutrients: protein, carbohydrate, fat, fiber, sodium, vitamins and minerals listed in the Annex of Council Directive 90/496/EEC. “Nutrition Claim” is defined as any representation and any advertising messages which states, suggests, or implies that a foodstuff has a particular nutrition property due to energy (caloric value) it provides; provides at a



reduced or increased rate or does not provide; and/or due to the nutrients it contains, contains in reduced or increased proportions or does not contain.

Council Directive 90/496/CEE defines the nutrition labeling rules. Certain nutritive properties are obligatory in the label and a declaration of these must be included. In these cases the information can be presented in two possible forms, known as groups. Group 1 includes the energy value and the quantities for protein, carbohydrates, and fat; while Group 2 includes Group 1 plus the quantities for sugars, saturated fat, fiber, and sodium. Additionally, on a voluntary basis, the following nutrients may be included in the label: starch, poly-alcohols, monounsaturates, polyunsaturates, cholesterol and any of the vitamins and mineral salts listed in the Directive Annex.

To know the proper way in which to calculate, declare, and present the energy value and the nutrient content, as well as to know how to calculate these variables for vitamins and those mineral salts that must be declared, it is convenient to study Directive 90/496/CEE, which can be found at the following electronic address: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lif.html indicating the number (496) and the year (1990).

Other labeling requirements. Besides the norms for general labeling requirements, health claims, and nutritional content, the EU has defined a series of additional requirements that apply to specific product types such as dietary supplements or specific products such as coffee.

To facilitate the access to these additional requirements, Table 3 contains these special requirements according to the type of product, as well as the electronic addresses to access the official information. Table 4 shows those products that have special labeling requirements and their respective law.

Table 3. Types of products that have special labeling requirements and the electronic address to access official information

Type de Product	Official EU Source of Information
Vitamins and Minerals additions	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/vitamins/index_en.htm
Natural Mineral Waters	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/water/index_en.htm
Dietetic Foods	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/nutritional/index_en.htm
Genetically modified Food and Feed	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biotechnology/gmfood/legisl_en.htm
Novel Foods	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biotechnology/novelfood/index_en.htm
Foods for Sport People	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/sport/index_en.htm
Food for Diabetics	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/diabetic/index_en.htm
Food for Weight Reduction	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/weight/index_en.htm
Food for Infants & Young Children	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/children/index_en.htm
Food for Special Medical Purposes	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/medical/index_en.htm
Food Supplements	http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/supplements/index_en.htm

Source: Rodriguez, D. IICA, 2005.

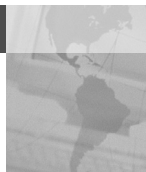


TABLE 4. Products that have special labeling requirements and their respective regulation

Product	Legislation
Sugar	CE 111/2001
Spirits	CE 1576/1989
Coffee	CE 004/1999
Caffeine and Quinine	CE 067/2002
Poultry	CE 1906/1990
Beef	CE 1825/2000
Chocolates	CE 036/2000
Fruits and Vegetables	CE 096/1996
Spreadable Fats	CE 2991/1994
Eggs	CE 1907/1990
Jellies and Marmalades	CE 013/2000
Fruit Juices	CE 112/2001
Honey	CE 013/2000
Fish Products	CE 2406/1996
Dairy	CE 1898/1997
Organic Products	CE 2092/1991
Wine	CE 753/2002

Source: Rodriguez, D. IICA, 2005.

To have access to the complete text of the legislation, you must access the following address: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lif.html entering the number and year.

MATERIALS THAT ENTER IN CONTACT WITH FOOD

The legislation EC No 1935/2004 of the European Parliament and Council establishes the general directives with regard to all materials and objects that enter in contact with food products. It has as basic principle that "any material or object destined to be in direct or indirect contact with food must

be inert in order to avoid the transfer of substances in quantities large enough to cause a threat to human health, or to produce an unacceptable modification in the composition of the food products or to cause an alteration in the organoleptic characteristics of the product”.

To guarantee the fulfillment of this principle, EC No 1935/2004 defines a series of authorized substances, purity specifications and specific migration limits from some components into the food or onto the surface of the food. Additionally, there are special legislations that cover groups of materials, articles and substances that are indicated in the General Legislation. For more information on this topic, we recommend to access the following electronic address:

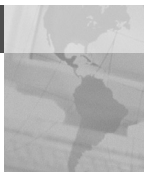
[http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/
foodcontact/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/foodcontact/index_en.htm)

FOOD ADDITIVES

Directive 89/107/CE defines all additives that can be used in food manufacturing. Food additives are defined as “any substance not normally consumed as a food in itself and not normally used as a characteristic ingredient of food whether or not it has nutritive value”. Food additives are added intentionally to food for a technological reason in the manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packaging, transport or storage. Food additives are expected to result in it or its by-products becoming directly or indirectly a food component.

This Directive also defines the categories of additives that can be used in the manufacturing or preparation of food products and the general criteria for their use. It also defines the labeling requirements for food additives that are sold to the final consumer.

The process to include a new additive to the list of additives approved by the EU is very slow; however, any Member State can permit the temporary domestic use of a new additive for a period of two years; before this period expires, the Member State should present to the Commission a request for



the admission of the additive that has been subjected to the national approval.

For more information about the permitted additives into the EU, it is recommended to visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/additives/index_en.htm

CONTAMINANTS

Contaminants are substances that have not been intentionally added to food and are present as a result of any of several production, manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packing, packaging, transport, storage stages or environmental contamination.

Since contamination, normally has a negative impact in the quality of food and can imply a threat to human health, the EU has taken measurements to minimize the possibility of contaminants being in food.

Council regulation EEC No 315/93 establishes the prohibition of the sale of products containing contaminants in unacceptable quantities with respect to public health, and particularly at a toxicological level. It requires that contaminants must be kept at the lowest reasonable level using correct practices during all the stages of production, transformation, preparation, treatment, conditioning, packaging, transportation, and storage. It also establishes a Community list of tolerance limits, analytical detection limits, reference sampling and analytical methods to be used.

For more information on this topic we recommend to access the following electronic address:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/contaminants/index_en.htm

IV. OTHER IMPORTANT ASPECTS THAT NEED TO BE CONSIDERED

This section presents other elements that offer possibilities for products from Latin-America and the Caribbean. Specifically the reader will find information related to the requirements for organic products, new food and ingredients, wood packaging, and denomination of origin. Additionally, a brief mention of the "Expanding Exports Helpdesk" is presented.

ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Council Regulation EEC 2092/1991 defines the requisites on organic production of agricultural products and indications. It applies to products that carry or will carry indications referring to organic production methods.

To the effects of this regulation, a product shall be considered organic if it carries indications referring to the organic production methods, where in the label, advertising, or commercial documents, the product or its ingredients are described in terms suggesting to the purchaser that the product or its ingredients have been obtained in accordance with the rules of production in articles 6 and 7 of EEC 2092/199. The following, Spanish, German, English, and French terms or their usual derivatives (such as bio, eco, etc.) or diminutives, alone or combined, shall be regarded as indications to the organic method of production:

- In Spanish: ecológico
- In German: biologisch
- In English: organic
- In French: biologique

Council Regulation EEC 1804/1999 is the complement to the abovementioned legislation and which includes animal production.



At the electronic address http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lif.html you can access the indicated regulation. You must indicate the number and the year that correspond to the desired regulation.

NOVEL FOOD AND NOVEL FOOD INGREDIENTS

Council Regulation EEC 258/97 establishes that those products or ingredients that have not been used significantly for human consumption within the EC must be authorized before they can be placed on the market. It also defines those categories of food and ingredients that are considered novel and the procedures that are required to request an import permit.

The established categories are:

- a) Foods and food ingredients containing or consisting of genetically modified organisms within the meaning of Directive 90/220/EEC;
- b) Foods and food ingredients produced from, but not containing, genetically modified organisms;
- c) Foods and food ingredients with a new or intentionally modified primary molecular structure;
- d) Foods and food ingredients consisting of or isolated from micro-organisms, fungi or algae;
- e) foods and food ingredients consisting of or isolated from plants and food ingredients isolated from animals, except for foods and food ingredients obtained by traditional propagating or breeding practices and having a history of safe food use;
- f) Foods and food ingredients to which has been applied a production process not currently used, where that process gives rise to significant changes in the composition or structure of the foods or food ingredients which affect their nutritional value, metabolism or level of undesirable substances.

Categories d and e deserve special attention, since it is in these categories where products considered as exotic or products with special properties that Latin-American and Caribbean countries may have interest in exporting to ethnic or nutraceutical markets can be included. Some examples of products with these characteristics that would require approval for their import under EEC 258/97 are noni juice, dehydrated noni and whole and crush salvia.

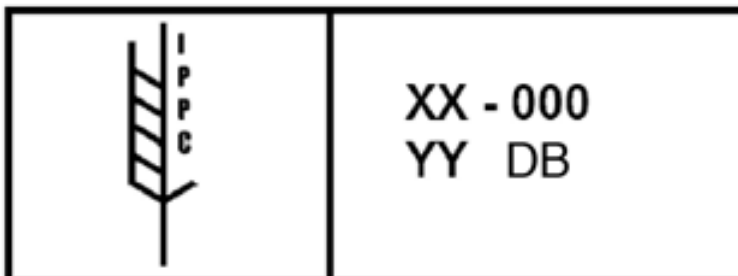
To obtain more information on this topic, it is recommended to visit the following electronic address:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/novelfood/index_en.htm

WOOD PACKAGING MATERIALS

Directives EEC 102/2004 and EEC 15/2005 that amend Directive EEC 29/2000 establish that wood packaging materials must be treated and marked according to the Food and Agriculture Organization's International Plant Protection Convention International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) 15 "Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade".

Under ISPM 15 treatment can be either by heat (HT) or by fumigation with methyl bromide (MB). Treated wood must be marked and this mark should include the ISO two letter country code, a code identifying the wood packaging producer, and a treatment code. Following is an example:



- The symbol at the left represents the symbol for the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)
- XX, represents the country code where the wood was treated
- 000, is the number assigned to the wood packaging producer by the National Organization for Plant Protection.
- YY represents the type of treatment used (Heat Treatment = HT, fumigation with Methyl Bromide = MB)
- DB indicates that the packaging material is produced with debarked wood

In the web page http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lif.html you can find access to the wood packaging directives. It must be remembered that you need to indicate the number and year.

DENOMINATIONS OF ORIGIN

Geographic indications/denominations are "indications that identify a particular good which posses a quality, reputation, or other characteristics that can be attributed to its geographical origin". As of February 2005, there were more than 650 food products with denomination of origin in the EU. Regulation EEC 2081/1992 defines the rules for the protection of geographic indications/denominations for agricultural and agrifood products in the EU.

To access the full regulations pertaining indications/denominations of origin you can visit the following electronic address: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lif.html .It must be remembered that you need to indicate the number and year.

EXPANDING EXPORTS HELPDESK

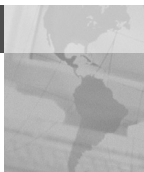
The Expanding Export Helpdesk is a free online instrument offered by the EC with the aim to help developing countries access the EU market.

This service offers information with regards to the following aspects:

- Preferential trade regimes
- Import requirements and internal taxes
- Customs documents
- Rules of origin
- Statistical trade data for the EU and its Member States
- Contacts with EU importers

To access this information, it is recommended to visit the following electronic address:

<http://export-help.cec.eu.int>



V. LIST OF REQUIREMENTS THAT NEED TO BE MET BY THE EXPORTERS ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF PRODUCT

To facilitate the identification and compliance with primary requirements to import food products into the EU, a list of the actions that need to be undertaken, according to the type of product, is presented.

EXPORTERS OF FRESH PRODUCTS

Exporters of fresh agricultural products must comply with the following norms:

1. Guarantee that the products comply with all the food safety requirements.
2. Apply systems and procedures that permit traceability.
3. Assure that the products meet all EU phytosanitary requirements.
4. Be sure that the products comply with the maximum permissible pesticide residue limits allowed in food.
5. Comply with marketing norms.
6. Be sure that all wood packaging complies with ISPM No. 15.
7. Identify the taxes that the product needs to pay at the time of importation.
8. Identify the existence of import quotas to the EU that could affect the importation of their product.

9. Register their trade mark, in case that there is interest in selling their product under their own brand.
10. Comply with the requirements for organic products if the products will be sold under this denomination.

EXPORTERS OF PROCESSED PRODUCTS

Exporters of processed products must comply with the following norms:

1. Guarantee levels of food safety by implementing HAACP procedures.
2. Apply systems and procedures that permit the traceability of ingredients and food products.
3. Comply with all labeling requirements.
4. Comply with the general directives regarding material and objects that may enter in contact with food.
5. Comply with the normative for food additives.
6. Comply with the normative for food contaminants.
7. Be sure that all wood packaging complies with ISPM No. 15.
8. Comply with the requirements for organic products if the products will be sold under this denomination.
9. Identify the taxes that the product needs to pay at the time of importation.
10. Identify the existence of import quotas to the EU that could affect the importation of their product.
11. Register their trade mark, in case that there is interest in selling their product under their own brand.

