

PROGRESS ALL THE WAY AS WE PASS EU MILESTONE

There is no doubt that we experienced a momentous moment in history when the European Community expanded its membership on May 1.

In its own way I believe that EurepGAP can play a significant part in continuing to define the necessary quality criteria for the thousands of farmers and growers which will benefit from accession, as they become aware of the reality of trading disciplines which will shape their development.

In many instances these countries are facing the same challenges, and posing the same questions over the necessity for a EurepGAP certification system as other producers world-wide.

There is natural apprehension at first, but once engaged in the process they find it to be practical. There is recognition that EurepGAP not only adds value and improves efficiency, but it also opens doors into important markets.

This newsletter provides continuing evidence that EurepGAP is becoming increasingly welcomed by growers.

Reports from Peru and Senegal reflect the gathering momentum of acceptance by not just large scale producers, but by smaller more fragmented industries which are equally eager to expand their market share with acceptable quality produce.

And while participation is an individual decision, it is also heartening to know that entire major fresh produce industries in France have taken the initiative to link with



Independent Chairman Nigel Garbutt (far right) visited Senegal to see EurepGAP's progress first hand. He is seen here with Pape I Ndiaye (ONAPES) left and Mounir Filfili (SAFINA). See report page 6

EurepGAP to establish compatible certification standards. Members will read that this is already very near to becoming a reality.

Additionally the fast pace of change is also reflected in legislation, and to this end we are publishing an article on the scenario faced by growers in meeting Community MRLs. This will bring some difficulties in the short to medium term in ensuring compliance, but in the longer run harmonisation will create benefits for the global produce industry.

So the message is that more and more suppliers - be they growers, packers or importers/exporters - recognise that the strength of

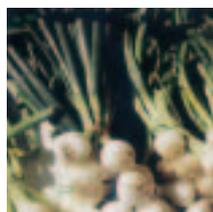
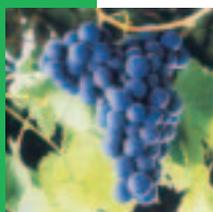
EurepGAP is not only to provide an accepted reference standard across the world, but create a greater transparency within the international market between buyer and seller.

NIGEL GARBUTT Independent Chairman

This issue contains more positive reports from the globe reflecting the acceptance of EurepGAP by major industry sectors.

These include Poland • France • New Zealand • Germany • Senegal • Peru.

Headway is also evident in the flower sector.





By: Irma Schönherr, Q-Point (The Netherlands) and Bozenna Palacha, Centrum HACCP (Poland).



Our checklist found many facilities were quite modern so with some adaptation it was possible to meet requirements.

POLAND READY TO MEET THE CHALLENGE

Poland is one of the largest vegetable producers in the EU with its protected crops in particular still expanding in the neighbourhood of large cities like Warsaw, Poznan, Kalisz and Krakow.

The total acreage of covered vegetables covers 6,300 ha of which about 40% is heated glasshouses and 60% mostly in unheated tunnels. Tomatoes are the most important crop (40%), followed by cucumbers (23%) and sweet peppers (19%).

The retail business in Poland is also growing. Large supermarkets like Ahold, Metro, and Tesco can be seen everywhere with the overall multiple share rising from 10% to 40% in the last decade.

Poland is one of the 10 countries that joined the EU from May 1st and all the new member states have to meet Western European food safety legislation and market requirements.

In October 2003 a unique EurepGAP implementation project for Polish tomato growers was begun with the contribution of three associate members of EurepGAP: Q-Point, AQS and Grodan.

Q-Point (a consultancy organisation in the Netherlands) was approached by Grodan (a substrate horticultural supplier) to propose a formula to achieve implementation and certification.

Other partners were quickly found including Centrum HACCP in support of the Polish farmers in Warsaw and AQS for certification. (AQS is an inspection body which carries out EurepGAP-audits under the umbrella of CB's).

Until now, EurepGAP has been relatively unknown among growers, but this is changing fast.

There has been continuous progress, and besides tomato growers, other producers have subsequently joined the project, representing apples, pears, lettuce, blueberries and field crops like cabbage, Brussels sprouts and Chinese cabbage.

The EurepGAP benchmark has been adapted and translated to Polish conditions, and a special growers' manual with recording forms is now available.

Polish advisors have been trained in EurepGAP procedures in the Netherlands by Q-Point, and additionally the official documents (CPCC and General Regulations) have been translated by the Centrum HACCP.

At each farm/greenhouse initial audits followed the new version of the EurepGAP Checklist (Jan 04).

It found that many facilities are quite modern, so with some adaptations it will be possible to meet requirements such as those defined in Chapter 10 dealing with produce handling.

Overall, growers have a positive attitude regarding the implementation of EurepGAP, as part of the investment in their future to gain improved access to other markets while remaining competitive.

Previously Polish farmers had little experience of recording fertilisers and crop protection products, so the introduction of this system had to start from scratch.

However, the bottlenecks that appeared during the initial audits are also being overcome.

These included risk analysis during harvest, cleaning schedules, accident and emergency instructions, verification of pesticide application equipment and recording maintenance of equipment.

The control points to be met during the initial audits have been discussed at a special growers' seminar, resulting in the agreement that after the initial audit they will be visited twice more by a consultant from Centrum HACCP, prior to the final audit to be carried out by AQS in June 2004.

Official Polish translations of the EurepGAP documents will appear on the EurepGAP website soon (www.eurep.org).

For more information on EurepGAP in Poland:

haccp@palacha.pl or schonherr@q-point-bv.nl

For marketing figures a study "Country Survey Poland" conducted by PPO in the Netherlands (van Paassen and Van Velzen, 2004) was used as a source.

Luv'ya

FINDS A PERFECT MATCH

EurepGAP is recognised as fostering assurance from farm to fork, but do good agricultural practices and the production of high quality fruit go together?

Depends on how you look at it.

"Quality definitely begins in the orchard for us," says Ken Tippler, Managing Director of Luv'ya Fruit, a New Zealand-based apple shipper and the first in Nelson - a substantial production area - to gain EurepGAP certification.

"But there are many components along the way that figure in our definition of quality," he adds.

"In the strictest sense, EurepGAP was meant to revolve around food safety and sustainable environmental and social practices.

"For Luv'ya fruit however, producing a high quality apple cannot exclude these practices. EurepGAP simply fits in with our operating philosophy".

"Any misstep from the time the apple is grown to the time it reaches the consumer can make a difference at the end of the chain," says Tippler.

He explains by example.

"If we don't look after our soil and water management, that makes a difference.

"If we don't look after our staff, we won't have them back next season and miss the experience they bring to us.

"Further, it is important for us to know that our use of tools to provide a better apple eating experience to the consumer, such as the new product SmartFresh which enhances the quality of storage, fits in with the principles of EurepGAP, in that it is a food safe product."

Tippler adds more and more customers are requesting EurepGAP certification, which makes it an organised and necessary part of doing business today.

"At the end of day though," says Tippler, "it's the right thing to do and a perfect match for Luv'ya fruit on the journey toward continuous and sustainable agriculture."

FRENCH PILOT SCHEME RIGHT ON COURSE



The pilot working group representing some of the most significant fresh produce sectors in France is already well on the way to steering a course which will integrate French quality control and inspection mechanisms with EurepGAP's internationally acknowledged benchmarking criteria.

Initiated by the Section Nationale Pomme, Prince de Bretagne and the CNIPT (Comité National Interprofessionnel de la Pomme de Terre) these are joined by AGPM (Association Générale des Producteurs de Maïs - sweet corn section) and ARVALIS Institut du végétal.

The group originally created last October, met in Paris in early March with the EurepGAP representatives.

Its objectives were clear cut:

- Adapt the EurepGAP protocol to fit the French situation and draw up a French interpretation manual which will be used as a reference for the inspection by certification bodies,
- Find connections between EurepGAP and the existing joint approaches (AFNOR standard NFV25-111, PFI Charter, Qualiprince, Cereals charter) to achieve their benchmarking.
- Exchange information with EurepGAP and its European retailing members about the work progress,
- Inform public authorities and other French bodies,
- Initiate training in France (and in French), for auditors, quality controllers, and others to homogenise auditing practices and get them known.

The working group took as its base lines the requirement to take account of French laws and regulations and the industries need to avoid duplication.

The result will be a valued contribution towards the recognition of the need for quality products, which meet European retail requirements, and which could be expressed as part of EurepGAP.

This working base can also be shared with any other Protocol which might be required for compliance by the participants.

The first task of this group was to

authenticate the French translation of the EurepGAP Protocol, mainly in order to make it easier to understand and to avoid as much as possible interpretation ambiguities, notably for auditors.

The working group has submitted these results to the EurepGAP representatives, using the logic which would adapt and fit the required documentation to the typology of businesses.

It also proposed collective and educational documentation for producers or businesses which would adapt control points to specific products.

The encouraging results to date is that most of the interpretations proposed have been approved by the EurepGAP representatives, although some will require the opinion of the EurepGAP Technical Committee.

This interpretation allows the industries to carry on their benchmarking so as to standardize audits as quickly as possible to avoid the multiplication of costs for all concerned.

Already there is clear evidence that the outcome is corresponding exactly to everyone's expectations.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1-2 June

Train the Trainer Workshop in German – Cologne, Germany

8-9 June

EurepGAP Asia 2004 Conference – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

22 June

Steering Committee Meeting Fresh Produce – Dusseldorf, Germany

for more events check www.eurep.org <<http://www.eurep.org>>

If you are interested in holding a bona-fide EurepGAP event or attending an official training course on Good Agricultural Practices please contact Miss Nuray Üstün, mail to uestuen@foodplus.org

BENCHMARKING

WHY HAVE IT AND HOW DOES IT WORK

Why do we need benchmarking?

The answer is simple. Growers and farmers do not need a multiplication of standards and audits, rather one system that will meet the needs of all customers, globally.

There are very many customer, industry and regulatory auditing systems that producers are required to implement and to be assessed against.

They all address certain requirements identified for the particular geographical location and marketplace.

They also reflect the local needs and cultures and often have a brand image attached to them.

What is benchmarking?

The process of benchmarking is an important one, with the objective to enable a valid and like-for-like comparison of different standards and systems which exist in countries worldwide.

This creates an important transparency between buyer and seller and gives reassurance that equivalent standards are being maintained, wherever the product may be produced.

This is a key to the success of the EurepGAP framework.

During the process of benchmarking an applicant scheme is compared to the EurepGAP protocols and associated General Regulations, and is declared to be equivalent or otherwise.

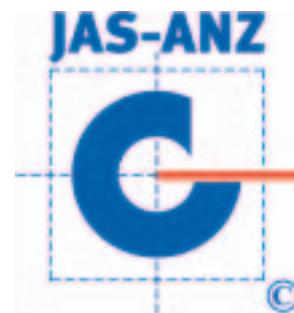
Through benchmarking producers can continue to be certified within their locally provided systems, and be accepted as suppliers to EurepGAP retailer members if their system is found to be equivalent.

Where schemes are not equivalent, scheme owners have the opportunity to adapt an existing scheme to accommodate certain requirements of the customers.

But equivalence is not just about the assessment standards having the same types of requirements in them; it is also about how the certification scheme is managed.

Therefore through the benchmarking process the rules used by the scheme owners are also reviewed and compared to the appropriate EurepGAP General Regulations.

Critical issues such as auditor



competencies, audit frequencies, nonconformity classifications and sanctioning rules are reviewed to ensure that there are equivalent processes to support the standards, as these have an effect on the overall outcome of the assessment.

How does benchmarking work?

The Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) has been contracted by EurepGAP to provide independently assessed benchmarking services globally.

The benchmarking process is documented in the EurepGAP Benchmarking procedure.

This procedure can be downloaded from the EurepGAP website at www.eurep.org.

Applicants are required to enter into contracts with both EurepGAP and JAS-ANZ that outline the responsibilities, costs and process of benchmarking.

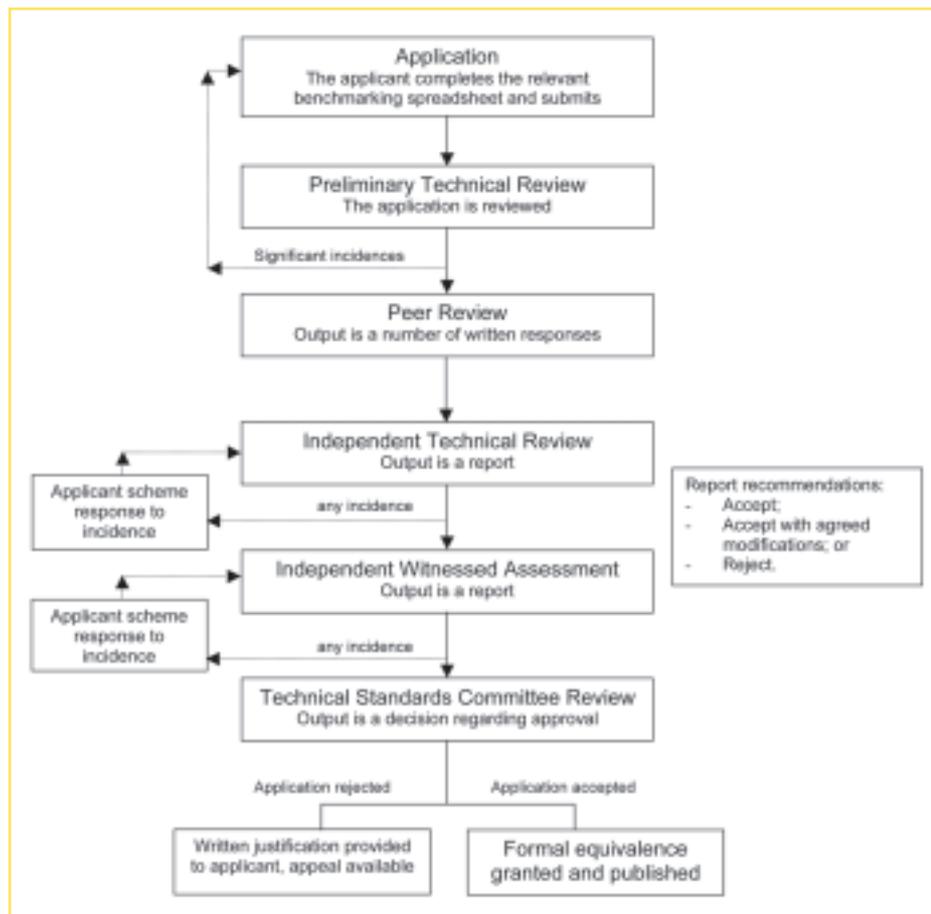
These documents can be downloaded from the JAS-ANZ website at www.jas-anz.com.au.

Applications then progress through a preliminary review, peer review and technical review before approval of the standard can be confirmed.

In addition, an on-site audit carried out by an accredited certification body will need to be observed by benchmarking auditors to ensure that the outcomes achieved by the benchmarked scheme are the same as an audit undertaken against the EurepGAP protocol requirements. This process is referred to as "witnessing". It is depicted left in diagrammatic form.

If JAS-ANZ staff were to undertake all benchmarking activities the costs of travel would be prohibitive.

Therefore, JAS-ANZ utilises the services of contract auditors internationally to undertake witnessing and benchmarking activities.





Kylie Sheehan, manager business and programme development

JAS-ANZ has wide experience in the Agri-Food sector, and is a member of the International Accreditation Forum and is signed up to the Multi Lateral Agreement.

In addition it meets the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 61:1996, General Requirements for the assessment and accreditation of Certification Bodies, and as such is uniquely placed to ensure impartiality and independence in the processing of schemes for assessment of equivalence against EurepGAP.

This requires auditors to be trained in the benchmarking requirements and their role in the process.

To date seven auditors have been provided with training on benchmarking assessments. JAS-ANZ calls upon our International Accreditation Forum (IAF) partners to provide auditors for witnessing that meet the requirements for witness auditors.

A key part of the benchmarking process is to ensure the impartiality and independence of the benchmarking auditors.

JAS-ANZ has strong conflict of interest requirements in audit team selection processes and these are utilised in the selection of our witness auditors for benchmarking.

To ensure impartiality in assessment JAS-ANZ assures that benchmarking auditors and other technical personnel involved in the benchmarking process, have not, or are not, involved with the applicant scheme.

The integrity of the system is paramount to ensuring its success and to retain the confidence of all participants worldwide.

NEWS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

LINKING-UP STANDARDS ALONG THE SUPPLY CHAIN

IFS (International Food Standard) and EurepGAP have agreed to link up their two databases, reports Dr. Kristian Moeller, Secretary EurepGAP and Managing Director FoodPLUS GmbH.

Both organisations developed an interface, which allows users of both databases to see the certification status and registration numbers of the associated/linked food chain partners.

Example: A citrus packhouse can grant access to his retail customer the information that all his farms supplying him with EurepGAP produce have a valid EurepGAP certificate.

Hereby it does not matter, via which database, the IFS or the EurepGAP, the retail customer requests that information.

In addition, to avoid duplicating audits, there is a EurepGAP add-on module to the IFS checklist that covers all specific



EurepGAP Chapter 10 (produce handling) control points which are not part of the IFS audit.

That add-on list can be used by a qualified IFS auditor and reported back to the supplying farm to avoid double audits on the packhouse.

BREAKTHROUGH IN THE GERMAN MARKET

Further to the report in our last newsletter that German based Metro Group required EurepGAP certification in 2004, Edeka and Globus have decided to ask their growers.

"Globus has a strong quality policy for fruit and vegetables, and has close contacts to the supplier base. "EurepGAP has been the best option for us and also in the light of our suppliers to meet the requirements of global sourcing," said Horst Lang of Globus.

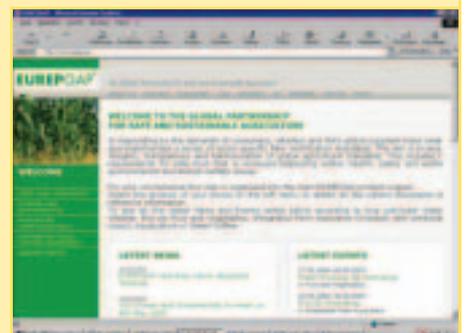
"As a new member of EurepGAP we have asked our suppliers of fruit and vegetables to comply with the EurepGAP system by the end of 2004." Also the German retailer EDEKA has contacted their suppliers world-wide and asked them to provide them with a EurepGAP or EurepGAP benchmarked certificate in the course of 2004.



NEW WEBSITE-SAME ADDRESS

Click onto the new eurep.org website which has been designed for easier navigation and the latest information:

- Organised news and events at glance
- Member extranet with more information
- A chance to review other standards
- On-line review of standard (to come)
- FAQs in other languages (to come)
- Useful links
- More Product Scopes
- Website in different languages (to come)



SENEGAL PROVIDES THE BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESSFUL CO-OPERATION

Situated at the western tip of Africa, Senegal has a small but rapidly growing horticultural export sector.

Main European markets consist of green beans (5,600 tonnes), cherry tomatoes (3,400 tonnes), exotic vegetables (500 tonnes) and mangoes (3,000 tonnes).

Recent technical improvements in production, cold chain and better access to regular sea-freight logistics, with 5-7 day container service to Antwerp, have allowed Senegalese exporters to diversify from the narrow airfreight market segment to the higher volumes shipped by sea.

Short-term future opportunities include melons, grapes, fresh herbs, asparagus and a number of other products including pre-packed vegetables.

The country's potential is being confirmed by the likes of Compagnie Fruitère currently setting up a significant production base in the Senegal River Valley in the northern region.

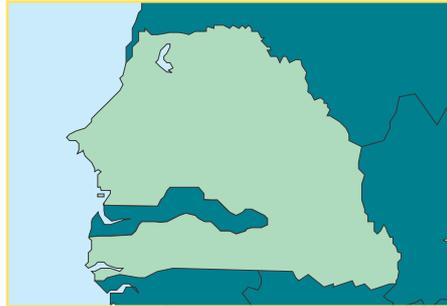
The sector is composed of several agroindustrial enterprises, a number of small and medium size producers/exporters and a significant number of smallholders.

The larger firms have the capacity to meet market requirements in terms of quality and food safety regulations.

"Recently, SAFINA Agroparc, Senegal's largest producer/exporter obtained EurepGAP certification and others will follow suit," says Martin Donarski (seen below) GEOMAR International, technical assistant with the World Bank financed Agricultural Exports Promotion Project (PPEA).

"However," he continues, "building-up the "quality capacity" allowing small and medium size producers (including smallholders) and exporters to remain in the supply chain, remains a major challenge."

The good news is that a number of



programmes are currently under way overseen by a national co-ordinating committee representing trade associations, service providers, government and institutional partners. There has also been other progress. Ceres Locustox Foundation operates the only ISO17025 certified laboratory in the region providing MRL testing services.

PPEA's "software" activities aim specifically at improving producers' quality implementation capacity.

A complete documentation reference guide was compiled on CD-Rom for the fresh produce sector (Le Référentiel Qualité Origine Sénégal).

A test-audit to a large extent based on EurepGAP criteria adopting point scoring to establish a base situation for each company - was conducted on a sample of 15 exporters.

It is linked to an action plan to significantly improve future scores over a 12 month period.

"Share-ware" type documentation and traceability material (as opposed to proprietary systems tied to companies who design them) have been developed for different stages of the production process.

Immediately applicable these are seen as the building blocks which can be integrated into a full documentation system or individual users.

Already template documentation for a simplified traceability system for the mango sector is operational and was successfully implemented by four exporters last year.

Recently, a portable training and registration farm tool, in the form of a yearly exercise book, was designed for use and registry of phytosanitary treatments on green beans.

It contains an up-to date list of the pesticides authorised by the EU, farm documentation, production and pesticide registers, as well as simple visual aids for dosage, application and pesticide storage.

Five participating producers successfully implemented this, and although only a pilot operation, one actually scored top points in the pesticide registry and documentation section during a EurepGAP pre-audit conducted by an accredited international audit firm under the PIP programme.

These initiatives, combined with the development and dissemination of other practical tools and reference materials (post-harvest guides, training posters and illustrated technical specification sheets) constitute an important step towards implementation of Good Agricultural Practices in Senegal.

Programmes active in Senegal include the EU's Pesticide Initiative (PIP) and the Fresh Produce Accreditation and Normalisation program for UMEOA (UNIDO), as well as the FAO sponsored Pesticide Residue Control assistance program (TCP).

Finally, the Senegalese Government through a World Bank financed Agricultural Exports Promotion Project (PPEA) is actively pursuing the implementation of practical "hardware" and "software" quality upgrading programmes under the "Origine Sénégal" initiative.

In terms of "hardware", the PPEA has targeted two post-harvest export infrastructures: a modern perishable centre at the Dakar airport (with pre-cooling and cold storage), and a strategically located four unit packing-station complex built to BRC standards with individual units rented to producers/exporters.

EurepGAP's independent Chairman Nigel Garbutt at the request of the World Bank, has visited Senegal since our last newsletter for a first hand evaluation and to share his views with the industry.

"Developing countries such as Senegal also urgently require a critical mass of qualified local trainers to assist producers /exporters in the preparation for future certification," he reports.

"The breakthrough is that the horticulture sector and its development partners have expressed interest in collaborating with EurepGAP to develop training capacities specifically aimed at small producers and exporters."

For more information on the Senegal program visit the web site www.iflexsenegal.org



PERU RECOGNISES EUREPGAP'S ADDED VALUE

Peruvian growers are strongly motivated to increase and expand their market share and are taking up the challenge to implement high quality produce standards to allow them to achieve their commercial goals.

By September 2003, more than two thousand hectares had been certified with EurepGAP and it is expected by the end of this year the figure will have more than doubled.

The rate of expansion by fruit and vegetable growers adapting to this norm is impressive, especially when it covers crops as diverse as asparagus, avocado, grapes, citrus and mangoes. Others such as white onions, artichokes and piquillo pepper will join the certified list in 2004.

Beyond the orchards and plantations the implementation of EurepGAP has also had an important impact within the Peruvian export sector changing perceptions since its first implementation in 2002.

Bruno Carlini, chairman of the Peruvian Producers' Association of Hass Avocados (PROHASS), explains: "In the beginning the general view was that the scheme would represent add on cost and exports would become more expensive, adding little to efficiency." But now he readily admits that producers have become not only more conscious of consumer requirements, but they have also improved the organisation on their farms which in

many cases has led to increased benefits.

A similar view is taken by another of Peru's major industries which already enjoys international recognition.

The Peruvian Asparagus and Vegetable Crops Institute (IPEH) has been working with the Inter-American Development Bank to co-ordinate the efficient implementation of EurepGAP among producer and packer members. Beatriz Tubino, general manager, lists the benefits to include creating a differential between farms which in the future will allow processing companies to buy certified products.

This disciplined approach has similarly led to better farming practice resulting in cost savings and making the best possible use of facilities.

In turn the image of the industry has improved through greater awareness of hygiene and general cleanliness. As a direct result workers enjoy better conditions and health care also benefitting from staff training which leads to opportunities for advancement.

Jose Chlimper from Sociedad Agricola Drokasa SA who has already certified asparagus and grapes and now in the process of certifying avocados says:

"EurepGAP should be recognised as the way to create both an advantage and an opportunity to add value rather than an unnecessary requirement to export."

Roberto Vargas from "Fundo el Rancho" who has recently certified citrus says:

"It has helped us to improve the farm's management by controlling and recording both machinery and labour activities. The training process has also allowed employees to understand the vision of modern production systems."

FLP IS NEW EUREPGAP MEMBER

The Flower Label Program (FLP-Germany) is one of the latest EurepGAP flower members.

"With this step we want to demonstrate our interest and our commitment to co-operate with EurepGAP," says Silke Peters, managing director, Flower Label Program e.v.

FLP certifies flower producers on the basis of the International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cut-Flowers (ICC), which is very well known for its high social and environmental standards.

As a multistakeholder initiative FLP brings together traders, producers, NGOs and trade unions. It therefore enjoys a high level of credibility - as consumer label as well as from business to business.

There are currently FLP-certified farms in Ecuador, Colombia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Requests from producers from several other Latin American and European countries are in the revision process.

"We support the initiative of EurepGAP regarding the harmonization of standards as this is also one of the objectives of FLP."

As a supplier FLP participates in the Technical Standards Committee.



"This is of great importance of us," she adds. "There are a lot of overlapping criteria in FLP- and EurepGAP standards."

"FLP therefore already offers combi-audits which will be conducted by Agar Control Germany (ACG).

The FLP-Board will furthermore link the FLP-standards with the EurepGAP-standards in order to optimize the certification process."

For more information please refer to: www.flower-label-program.org

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KNOW YOUR MRL'S

What is a Maximum Residue Level (MRL)?

A Maximum Residue Level (MRL) for pesticide residues is the maximum concentration of a pesticide residue legally permitted in or on food and animal feed.

MRLs are set for specific pesticides on specific crops (i.e. for individual crop/pesticide combinations).

MRLs are primarily trading standards that have been set by responsible authorities to enable free trade around the globe and within the EU, taking into account what is achievable in terms of minimising residues by applying Good Agricultural Practice. It goes without saying that MRLs must always be within limits that are deemed safe for humans.

Establishing MRLs in Europe: A new proposal

MRL-setting in the EU is currently regulated by four different Directives. These allow all Member States to set their own, different MRLs at the national level — in addition to the MRLs that are set at the EU level. This has led to a lack of procedural alignment that is detrimental in many ways. It limits the farmer's crop protection options, impedes the free trade of crops, fruits, vegetables and other produce between Member States, and further threatens the prosperity of an already struggling agricultural sector.

The Commission has proposed to consolidate the existing MRL Directives into a single Regulation. MRLs for pesticides in Europe would be harmonised and set exclusively at the European level. With the removal of regulatory impediments to trade in agricultural produce, a truly level playing field will emerge — benefiting governments, farmers, food processors, food retailers, the crop protection industry and consumers alike.

The Commission's recent proposal to revise MRL-setting will introduce several significant changes. Member States will no longer set their own MRLs — they will be harmonised at the EU level. The

SPECIALY CONTRIBUTED BY ECPA, THE ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN CROP PROTECTION MANUFACTURERS

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) will work with the Member States to recommend MRLs to the Commission for decision-making. Where there is no EU MRL for particular combinations of crops and substances, a stringent precautionary approach will be applied.

ECPA welcomes a revised MRL-setting procedure

The revised MRL-setting procedure will offer farmers a wider array of options in crop protection, enabling them to select the products that are best suited to the problems besetting their crops. This hands the decision-making process back to farmers themselves, where it belongs. Harmonised MRLs at the EU level will also make it possible for farmers to sell their produce in a wider and more open marketplace, facilitate trade for the retail business and food processors and thereby ensure that all parties reap maximum benefit from their investment in their businesses.

The European crop protection industry is committed to working with the EU institutions and Member States to resolve the complex challenges posed by MRL-setting. In particular, ECPA welcomes the role that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) will play in the revised MRL-setting procedure. A dedicated team of experts within EFSA, responsible for providing impartial recommendations to the Commission, will accelerate and streamline the MRL-setting procedure while at the same time ensuring a high degree of protection for consumers.

What stage has the MRL proposal reached in the EU adoption procedure?

The European Parliament completed its 1st Reading during Plenary Session in Strasbourg on 20 April, and will come back to the dossier for its 2nd Reading in the last quarter of this year, after European elections which are scheduled for June.

Critical to the future success of the legislation will be the extent to which full MRL harmonisation in the EU is achieved, and the way in which consumer confidence can be assured by appropriate communication in the highly conservative way in which MRLs are set.

How ECPA is here ready to help

ECPA has compiled a list of web resources you can consult to find approved and registered crop protection products and MRLs by country.

Please visit:

<http://www.ecpa.be/library/reports/11054-website-links-registered-CPPs.doc>

In addition, you can contact the ECPA secretariat for help in getting any product-specific questions answered by our member companies. Contact Stuart Rutherford or Claudia Michel at: Tel: +322 663 1550 or E-mail: ecpa@ecpa.be.

Welcome to these New EurepGAP members

ARDO, Belgium
Board Bia - Irish Food Board
Findus, Sweden
Jon Parkin Consulting, UK
Laboratorios Agriquem, Spain
Monoprix, France
QAL - GmbH, Germany
SpanSoft Ltd., UK
Tridelta Development Ltd, Ireland
Yara International, Germany

Interested in enjoying the benefits of EurepGAP membership?

For more details please contact:
Miss Nuray Üstün, mail to uestuen@foodplus.org

