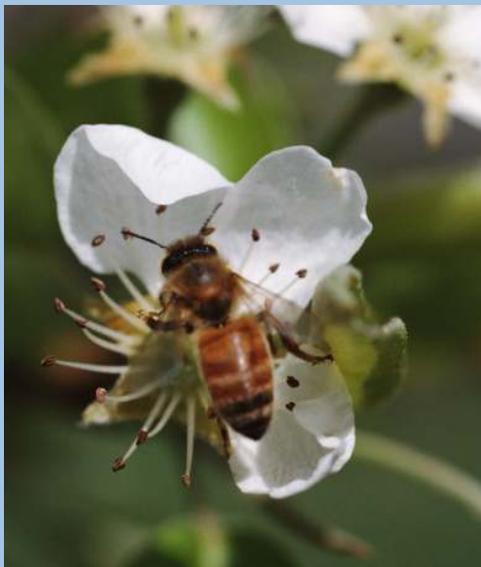


5 Standards and smallholders' integration into global food chains – recommendations and case studies

... to become and stay competitive in global markets!



5 Standards and smallholders' integration into global food chains – recommendations and case studies

Linking production systems with markets through increasingly complex producer-to-consumer supply chains is a challenge. Fast growing requirements for technical and management know-how to ensure compliance with high level standards throughout the food supply chain gives rise to the question of market access and competitiveness, in particular for small- and medium-scale farmers and processors in developing countries. Since earnings from agro-industrial exports considerably contribute to the economic and social development in many developing countries, there is an urgent need to support public and private stakeholders to gain and increase international competitiveness.

Global trading needs standardised products. Hence, legal and trade requirements for quality assurance systems and food control along the entire food chain, from seed and agricultural production, through food processing and the distribution system, up to the final consumers' table, are increasing considerably. Competing with imports in the domestic market and with global players in regional and international markets requires marketable products that are safe for human consumption and meet further market requirements (quality, nutritional value, taste, appearance and presentation, continuous and reliable supplies). Growers and processors in developing countries and transition economies hence need appropriate legal and institutional frameworks, competent control, auditing and consulting services as well as appropriate production, processing, handling, trading and marketing technologies and know-how.

The EU's regulations and bureaucratic procedures can be a difficult hurdle for companies wishing to enter the market. They require close attention by producers and exporters in third countries. Complex safety standards, not normally discriminatory but sometimes zealously applied, complicate access to the market. Suppliers are well advised to do their homework thoroughly and make sure they know precisely, which standards apply to their products and that they obtain timely testing and certification. The European Union's attempts to harmonise the various product safety requirements of its Member States have complicated the issue, since during the transition period, common and national requirements, both of which must be met, sometimes duplicate the hassle.

As set out in the present reference book, European buyers usually require additional performance or quality marks, which are not necessarily legally required, but become a de facto market access condition. Both, EU requirements and private industry standards for quality or performance mark will, in many cases, require export products to be tested, certified, and perhaps also modified to ensure compliance.

In a bid to avoid problems of food safety and food quality and – at the same time – to ensure continuity and reliability of supplies, retailers are furthermore eager to improve the management of backward linkages. "The requirements of large buyers (not only retailers but also processors) for quality, reliability of delivery and product differentiation have raised the level of competence required of producers and the level of coordination in value chains."⁸²⁾ Backward integration of

⁸²⁾ Humphrey (2005), page 1

production and supply stages facilitates the implementation of standards. Even though retailers in general are not interested to fully integrate the supply side, they increasingly depend on fewer, larger, more sophisticated and dedicated suppliers and establish long-term business partnerships based on mutual trust, reliability and loyalty.

The consequent pressure on fresh/raw material producers, processors, forwarding companies as well as control institutions goes beyond boundaries and implies high requirements on quality assurance systems. At the same time, multiple supermarkets may provide opportunities for small-scale producers when building on smallholders' competitive advantages to give access to more stable, higher value and higher priced markets. Furthermore, farmers may benefit from reduced input requirements (fertilisers, pesticides) thanks to improved farming practices whereas workers may benefit from healthier work conditions (pesticide application) and minimum wages. Also, spillover effects to the domestic market may result in improved food safety and quality for local consumers.

As a consequence, farmers, processors, forwarders and exporters, legislative and control bodies, accreditation, certification and advisory bodies need to develop and implement institutional capacities, guidelines and knowledge transfer systems aimed at assuring food quality and safety along food supply chains, whether they target the domestic or international markets.

Against this background, stakeholders in developing countries and transition economies urgently have to approximate legislative provisions, institutional capacities and business operations to international standards, as for example:

- Governments have to strengthen their voice in international fora, such as Codex Alimentarius Commission and the World Trade Organization.
- Food laws have to be harmonised with international standards and legislative mandates for food safety and consumer protection have to be streamlined.
- Risk-based food safety schemes have to be set up in accordance to international standards (science-based risk assessment, risk management and risk communication).
- Public and/or private certification bodies and laboratories have to be upgraded and accredited according to international standards to facilitate operators' access to competent services.
- Food business operators have to put in place, implement and maintain a permanent procedure developed in accordance with HACCP principles and traceability obligations.

Hence, there certainly is an urgent need for action in countries aspiring to keep and increase market shares in local, regional or international markets. Only when they join forces, the private and public sectors will be capable of facing increasing retailer and industry consolidation and negotiation power, tougher legislative provisions, introduction of new private labels linked to private standards, increasing pressure of discount systems and the ever changing consumer dynamics such as life-styles and food-related habits. Stricter legislation and enforcement and further power shifts in the food supply chain will challenge producers, processors and exporters to find adequate solutions to ever more demanding market access requirements and to elaborate on innovative approaches towards market consolidation and expansion.

To satisfy the requirements of the legislator, of customers along the food supply chain and finally of the end consumer, suppliers have to adapt to ever faster developments in the fields of

- food safety and quality
- marketability of goods as well as
- reliability and continuity of supplies

To avoid that mandatory and voluntary private industry standards become a major threat to trade for growers and processors in developing countries, first steps have been taken in many countries to approximate food legislation, to improve control, accreditation and certification schemes, to establish appropriate quality management systems, and to build long-term business partnerships along supply chains. Measures that are currently implemented in selected countries and might serve as examples are described below.

5.1 Legal and normative framework conditions

In many countries, either legal and institutional frameworks are outdated and not adapted to conditions under liberalised trade regimes, or mandates of different institutions are overlapping and responsibilities are not clearly specified. Also, human and financial capacities of the organisations mandated with standards development, updating of legal information and enforcement are often deficient.

Aspiring to establish a conducive framework for sub-sector development and competitiveness in the domestic and export markets alongside protection of public health and consumers' interests, governments have to approximate their legal and normative framework. Possible fields of action are:

- Establish a public-private dialogue to facilitate the exchange of information on required changes and adaptation of international standards to national conditions.
- Set up National Notification Authorities and Enquiry Points responsible to communicate changes in existing legislation and new laws before they enter into force (WTO obligations).
- Approximate national food laws according to the requirements of primary target markets (mainly the EU).
- Elaborate/implement national norms together with the private sector or recognise national private initiatives to be benchmarked against international standards (e.g. GFSI, EUREPGAP).
- Create awareness on and promote a national policy of consumer protection (legal framework) and integrate consumer associations into the public-private dialogue.
- Participate continuously and actively in international fora on food quality and safety issues in order to defend national interests (WTO, Codex Alimentarius, etc.).

In this context, the following case studies are meant to highlight points of entry and lessons learnt in the field of harmonisation of legal and normative frameworks of countries aspiring to catch up with international standards.

Pesticide Dealer Certification Scheme in Egypt – improving retailers' knowledge on Crop Protection Products (CPP) safety

Type of initiative	Development and implementation of a mandatory horizontal standard for pesticide dealers as a joint public-private sector initiative.
Standard	Ministerial decree No 3059 stipulating that, among others, all pesticide shops have to be staffed with a technical manager graduated from an agricultural college, trained in a certified course, tested and certified in order to acquire the trading/storage license or have the license extended.
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiators: CropLife Egypt (CLE) 'Agrochemical Retailers Re-qualification (ARR)' project and Egyptian Seed and Pesticide Traders Association (ESPTA) • Public partners: Ministry of Agriculture (MoA, policy body, license owner), Central Pesticides Laboratory (testing body) as well as Agricultural Pesticides Committee and Central Pesticides Laboratory (certification bodies) • Development partners: Development Alternatives International (DAI) and BMZ/GTZ
Rationale	<p>Many pesticide dealers in Egypt are not qualified to handle, sell, transport and store pesticides safely and to give qualified information on appropriate use to customers (in particular small farmers). This leads to the use of improper pesticides, unsafe handling, mixing, and application of pesticides as well as improper disposal of unused products or discarded containers. Although, there is so far no public evidence on health crises related to Egypt's exports, the potential economic, agricultural and environmental consequences for the country are significant.</p> <p>Following first training cycles for pesticide dealers (2001/2002), CLE proposed a scheme to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) to re-qualify agrochemical dealers in Egypt (mid 2003).</p>
Objectives	<p>The objectives of the project are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ensure that retailers possess adequate knowledge of Crop Protection Products (CPP) safety in line with MoA recommendations • to support the principles of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and environmental protection • to guarantee that CPPs are transported, handled, and stored correctly • to establish a certification and licensing scheme for pesticide retailers throughout Egypt
Tasks	<p>Phase 1: training programme for pesticide dealers in Egypt Phase 2: development of a pesticide dealer certification scheme with the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoA issues a legal framework for a pesticide dealer certification scheme • MoA commits itself to the enforcement of the scheme • CLE prepares manuals to be recognised by the MoA • CropLife Africa Middle East trains certified trainers to be recognised by the MoA • MoA approves the service providers associations • service providers conduct trainings with certified trainers • MoA audits the training, tests and licenses the trainees <p>Technical managers of pesticide shops have to re-new the certificate every 3 years. A precondition for re-newing the license is the participation in the training course followed by a test organised by MoA's Central Pesticides Laboratory.</p> <p>As of September 2006, a total of 3000 dealers have been certified and licensed.</p>
Emerging issues	It is expected that the delivery of the basic courses for dealers will be completed by mid-2007. Meanwhile, CLE has prepared an advanced course which has been submitted to the authorities for approval. CLE hopes to start the advanced course in the first quarter of 2007.
Further readings	<p>CropLife Egypt: Website http://www.croplifeafrica.org/index.php?action=content.display&mid=4&cid=36&mp=36 CropLife Egypt: Pesticide Dealer Training, Certification and Licensing Schemes http://www.ipmcenters.org/IPMSymposiumV/sessions/8-4.pdf</p>

Integrated Programme for Quality Improvement⁸³⁾ (PIAQ) in Morocco – simplifying food safety control and promoting industry's self-responsibility

Type of initiative	Development and implementation of a mandatory horizontal standard for the vegetable canning industry as a joint public-private sector initiative.
Standard	PIAQ Standard (national recognition since 25 January 2006)
Stakeholders	Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Trade, state bodies (export quality control, laboratories), business federations (agro-industry, canning) and consumer associations ⁸⁴⁾ supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the GTZ and DLG Agriservice GmbH as implementing organisations.
Objective	Strengthening the competitiveness of the Moroccan agro-industrial sector on domestic and export markets. The standard will contribute to: (i) simplifying (even reducing) state control of final produce, (ii) improving food safety and hence (iii) strengthening consumers' confidence in food safety and quality of Moroccan produce and improving the confidence between state control services and processing companies.
Principles	Simplifying food safety control and promoting the industry's self-responsibility based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISO 9000 and • HACCP principles
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of a reference manual to harmonise the approach towards hygiene and quality management in the agro-processing industry • submission of the PIAQ manual to the national competent authorities for recognition as national reference (national recognition achieved on 25 January 2006) • analysis and selection of pilot companies according to criteria such as company performance and export potential • implementation of trainings/advice to introduce PIAQ (18 to 24 months programme according to capacities, human resources and commitment of the management) • assistance to the public administration to elaborate a harmonised, streamlined and thus more efficient safety and quality control and advisory system for foodstuffs • elaboration of guidelines for company audits carried out by agents of different administrative entities • coaching of agents carrying out audits in companies implementing PIAQ or equal quality management systems in conformity with PIAQ requirements • development of a concept for the replication of the quality management system throughout the fruit and vegetable processing sub-sector in conformity with PIAQ requirements
Benefits	The benefits are derived from the interest of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthening the competitiveness of the Moroccan processing industry in the domestic and export markets in the light of trade liberalisation (especially the EU MEDA agreement) • reducing risks for public health, strengthening consumer protection and improving consumers' confidence into foodstuffs of Moroccan provenance
Emerging issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a PIAQ handbook to be finalised by mid 2007 • Training on specific analysis techniques for canned vegetables
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⁸³⁾ Programme Intégré d'Amélioration de la Qualité

⁸⁴⁾ DPVCTRF (Direction de la Protection des Végétaux, des Contrôles Techniques et de la Répression des Fraudes), EACCE (Etablissement Autonome de Contrôle et de la Coordination des Exportations), LOARC (Laboratoire Officiel d'Analyses et de Recherches Chimiques), DCI (Direction du Commerce Intérieur), FENAGRI (Fédération Nationale de l'Agroalimentaire), FICOPAM (Fédération des Industries de la Conserve des Produits Agricoles du Maroc), Associations for Consumer Protection

WTO Notification Authorities and Enquiry Points – early warning system for the national legislator and the food industry

Type of initiative	Initiative of the Government of Cambodia to ensure implementation of the WTO's concept of transparency, which aims at achieving a greater degree of clarity, predictability and information about trade policies, rules and regulations of WTO members.
Services	National Notification Bodies and Enquiry Points servicing public and private stakeholders as information and knowledge centre on WTO related issues according to the obligations under the WTO TBT (Technical Barriers to Trade) and WTO SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary) Agreements.
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Cambodia: Ministry of Commerce (WTO/SPS Notification Authority and Enquiry Point) and Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy/Department of Industrial Standards of Cambodia (ISC) (WTO/TBT Notification Authority and Enquiry Point) • Development partner: BMZ/GTZ
Rationale	<p>Cambodia will implement the WTO TBT and SPS Agreements as from January 2007 and January 2008 respectively. WTO rules oblige members to establish National Notification Authorities and Enquiry Points. In many countries, problems in running Notification Bodies and Enquiry Points lies in the complex coordination needs and the analytical tasks that such bodies have to perform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coordination of notification processes is difficult due to dispersed responsibilities for standard setting within different Ministries and government bodies in combination with unclear delineation of responsibilities and overlapping mandates. • The staff's skills are often not adequate to quickly assess incoming notifications and enquiries, to translate abstract content into practical recommendations and instructions, to disseminate relevant information in time and to address relevant stakeholders (lack of analytical and communication skills as well as practical experiences). • The equipment, mainly Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is often outdated or even non-existent and hampers the quick processing of notifications and enquiries and communication of responses.
Objectives	<p>To strengthen capacities of the National Notification Bodies and Entry Points with regard to fulfilling their role as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early warning system responsible for screening incoming notifications based on their relevance for policy, administration and industry • facilitators of a national consultation process that enables the industry to prepare for necessary adjustments as well as enables public and private stakeholders to comment on WTO-notifications and to ask for modifications, for longer transition periods or for technical assistance as need arises • notifying body in accordance with the transparency provisions of the WTO Agreements on SPS and TBT • junction between national regulative bodies, national private sector actors and international organisations like the WTO and offices of other WTO members
Tasks	<p>The purpose of the BMZ/GTZ technical assistance programme is to assist National Notification Authorities and Enquiry Points to operationalise their services. The capacity building programme aims at assisting to set up systems for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notifying own SPS and TBT measures to other WTO members • procuring, on a regular basis, full texts of measures notified by their trading partners • evaluating notifications according to target group needs (government, industry, etc.) • evaluating effects of notified measures in a national dialogue with relevant actors • commenting on measures the country disagrees with • bringing trade concerns to the attention of the SPS or TBT Committees of the WTO • entering into strategic alliances with other WTO members • collecting, processing and disseminating information about other relevant issues such as private standards (e. g. EurepGAP, IFS, BRC etc.)
Contact	GTZ, Doris Guenther doris.guenther@gtz.de

5.2 Institutional set-up

At the institutional level, it is necessary, for example, to facilitate the emergence and strengthening of effective and efficient advisory services on mandatory and voluntary standards, training, coaching and extension services to implement standards along the entire food supply and marketing chain and to prepare food operators for certification. Furthermore, internationally recognised accreditation and certification services need to be established.

As a precondition for accessing international markets, in particular markets requiring sophisticated food safety and quality standards, control and service institutions and organisations in export countries also have to comply with international standards. Possible fields of action are:

- promoting an EFSA-recognised Competent Organisation at the national level for pre-export control (the public sector)
- facilitating capacity building and accreditation of certification and laboratory services according to international standards (the public or private sector)
- setting up national accredited certification body/bodies to issue conformity labels for national norms recognised in the EU or other international markets (the public or private sector)
- building capacities of Business Development Service (BDS) providers (including business associations) in the field of food safety and quality as well as export promotion and marketing (mainly the private sector)
- establishing a system of voluntary Codes of Practice as well as food safety and quality control within business associations enabling them to assist their members to meet legal obligations (the private sector)

The following case studies highlight points of entry and lessons learnt in the field of harmonisation of legal and normative frameworks of countries aspiring to catch up with international standards.

Cost-effective Certification According to International Standards – the case of AfriCert Kenya

Type of initiative	Initiated by the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) and GTZ to create a regional certification body that is independent, reliable and economically sustainable.
Service	AfriCert provides <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • farmers (small, medium, large) with certification services for EurepGAP, BRC and Utz Kapeh Green Coffee Standard (organic certification in preparation) • other clients with inspection services and/or technical advice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. g. UNCTAD's Consultative Taskforce on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries (CTF), the Pesticide Initiative Programme (PIP), Fairtrade Labelling Organization International (FLO), Starbucks
Stakeholders	GTZ, and ICIPE as initiators. Joint venture capital provided by Rockefeller Foundation.
Rationale	Before the founding of AfriCert, European certifiers provided certification services in East Africa. Prohibitive costs, including airfares, accommodation costs, daily fees ranging from EUR 400 to 800, resulted in the exclusion of small-scale producers from certification and hence from access to foreign markets.
Objective	AfriCert offers growers in Kenya and in the region affordable certification (EurepGAP, organic and other) in line with internationally recognised standards.
Tasks	The project was initiated in 2001 to create a certification body for organic products in East Africa. Following a feasibility study showing that organic certification alone would not

sustain a private certification body, it was agreed to also embark on EurepGAP certification. Training and advice for AfriCert management and agents was offered in the following fields:

- development of the quality management documentation as required for accreditation
- training in auditing, inspections, systematic quality documentation and monitoring
- preparation for EurepGAP accreditation – scope fruit and vegetables (ISO 65 accreditation 2004)
- facilitation of membership in the EurepGAP Certification Body Committee (2005)
- advice on business management

As a lesson learnt, granting sufficient seed money to support the certification body up to a stage of economic viability where local investors become interested to buy in shares would have been necessary.

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AfriCert's seal of approval confirms that producers subscribe to Good Agricultural Practices, namely, resource conservation, safe use of pesticides, good post-harvest protection, hygiene, and occupational health and safety. • Certification costs reduced. • In-country expertise built on standards and ways of complying with standards. • Advocacy opportunities opened through membership of Africert e. g. in working parties organised by standard owners giving a voice to Kenyan views and perspectives.
Emerging issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organic accreditation is under preparation • skills (marketing, service provision, financial management) have to be built to manage the body as an economically sustainable private service provider • strategic alliances with shareholders, e. g. in Tanzania, Uganda, would facilitate market development across borders
Further readings	Guenther, Doris and Heike Hoeffler (2005) http://www2.gtz.de/dokumente/bib/05-8513.pdf
Contact	GTZ, Doris Guenther doris.guenther@gtz.de

Reform of Food Inspection Services and Food Chain Laboratories – MEDA twinning projects in Jordan

Type of initiative	Two twinning ⁸⁵⁾ projects based on the Jordan-EU Association Agreement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Reform of the Jordan Veterinary and Phytosanitary Inspection Services' • 'Reform of Food Inspection Services and Food Chain Laboratories'
Service	Food inspection, veterinary and phytosanitary services meeting EU and international standards
Stakeholders	Government of Jordan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jordanian Ministry of Agriculture • Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA)/Food Control Directorate Development partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Commission as development partner • Northern Ireland Public Sector Enterprises as implementing agency • Danish Veterinary and Food Administration in cooperation with Food and Veterinary Service, Latvia as implementing agencies
Objective and Outputs	The objective of the programme is to improve the Jordanian Government's capacity to comply with obligations of the MEDA association agreement, those of the WTO membership and those of regional trade cooperation agreements signed with other Mediterranean countries.

⁸⁵⁾ Twinning denotes an EU instrument for sharing know-how and experience and for long-term cooperation between administrations of the EU Member States and MEDA countries. The objective is to assist partner countries in their development of efficient administrative structures (institution building, i. e. development/ strengthening of ministries, administrations, regulatory authorities) as well as in the full transposition, implementation and enforcement of the *acquis communautaire*.

	<p>The following results are expected from the project 'Reform of Food Inspection Services and Food Chain Laboratories':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JFDA Food Control Directorate reorganised • food inspection system restructured, tasks and responsibilities defined • food inspection manual developed • IT management plan developed • border inspection points implement effective risk-based system inspection • food chain laboratories upgraded to EU standards • laboratory equipment upgraded/modernised • managers and technicians trained in quality control and food inspection
Tasks	<p>The programme facilitates the approximation of the legislative and regulatory framework to international best-practices, and enhances the efficiency of administrations involved in implementing the association agreement.</p> <p>The project 'Reform of Food Inspection Services and Food Chain Laboratories' (EUR 1.9 million) aims at eliminating trade barriers related to the domestic food industry, import and export of food between Jordan and the EU by assisting the Jordanian partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approximate the food legislation • upgrade food safety systems • upgrade food control and border inspection procedures and laboratory methods
Further readings	Jordan Food and Drug Administration – Website http://www.jfda.jo/
Contact	Jack Haslam twinproj@wanadoo.jo Flemming Boisen Flemming.Boisen@jfda.jo

National Food Reference Laboratory (NFRL) in Turkey – meeting EU accession requirements for official food controls

Type of initiative	Pre-accession Financial Assistance of the European Commission for Turkey (24 months programme; budget EUR 6.4 million; programme starting in September 2006).
Stakeholders	<p>Government of Turkey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) at central and decentralised levels • National Food Reference Laboratory <p>Development partner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Commission
Services	<p>A National Food Reference Laboratory (NFRL) fulfils arbitrating functions for provincial food control laboratories being responsible for quality analysis of import and export food products. Since analysis criteria and methods have to be consistent across the country and with EU procedures, a central reference facility has to exercise quality control over all the provincial laboratories.</p> <p>Furthermore, the NFRL has got the mandate to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fulfil the referee function in case of disputes • ensure that proficiency testing takes place both at the national and international levels • guarantee that the testing results obtained are credible and satisfactory • develop and validate methods and organise comparative tests • coordinate activities of the provincial control laboratories • testify the origin of both imported materials and materials in transit in Turkey • provide scientific and technical assistance to the competent authority for the implementation of coordinated control plans, training etc.
Objective and Project purpose	<p>Objective: Strengthening legal and organisational structures of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) at the central and decentralised levels and improving co-operation with the private sector to ensure food safety and increase effective implementation and enforcement of the food control system in Turkey.</p> <p>Project purpose: Meeting EU accession requirements for official food control and developing a sustainable laboratory strategy for effective implementation and enforcement of the food control system</p>

through establishing a National Food Reference Laboratory and strengthening the institution's capacities.

Tasks	<p>The programme includes a twinning component, financial assistance for the construction of a national food reference laboratory, technical assistance for supervision of works, supply of laboratory equipment and establishment of Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS), as well as technical assistance for training of NFRL staff. In more detail, the programme aims at supporting the Turkish partner institutions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• establish adequate physical and technical infrastructure for the NFRL• adapt management and implementation structures and procedures• prepare the newly formed NFRL for accreditation• upgrade the quality of analysis, measurement and control to meet international standards• organise proficiency testing for all provincial food control laboratories by NFRL• implement the Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS) in all regional food control laboratories
Further readings	<p>European Commission – Enlargement – Project Fiche: Establishment of National Food Reference Laboratory http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/fiche_projet/document/PF%202005%2003.04%20Nat%20Food%20Ref%20Lab.pdf</p>
Contact	<p>Nermin Kahraman delegation-turkey@cec.eu.int</p>

5.3 Networking and food chain integration

All operators along food supply chains – regardless whether they have local, national, regional or global scope – will benefit from a joint approach towards food safety and quality. Improved networking will be essential for positioning a given supply chain's product in highly competitive markets and ensuring consumer protection in already highly globalised food markets.

Improved communication and coordination among stakeholders in the food chain, including informal or even formal up-stream and down-stream integration is a must for meeting mandatory and voluntary market requirements and successfully competing in international markets. There is a need to develop supply chain relations that enable stakeholders both in the export countries and the EU markets to satisfy the demand for quality, safe and marketable products. Action has to be taken to facilitate communication and information exchange along the food supply chain and transfer know how and appropriate technology to public and private stakeholders at the supply side of the food chain.

Further reasons for improved integration of stakeholders in the food supply chain come from recently promulgated EU obligations:

- By stipulating the principle of primary responsibility of the food and feed operators for food safety, EU Food Law obliges the import, wholesale and retail trade to better integrate backward linkages up to third country suppliers in order to assure safe food from farm to fork.
- The obligation to establish traceability systems also promotes integrated approaches throughout the food supply chain from raw material production and processing in export countries up to the retail trade in the target markets.

Aspiring to successfully compete with and substitute import products in the domestic market, open new markets and maintain market shares in export markets, third country producers, processors and exporters have to take appropriate measures to ensure compliance with their customers' requirements. Possible fields of action are:

- Improve the communication and coordination of public and private stakeholders (business associations, legislators, administration, control authorities, research & education, business service providers, etc.) at national, regional and international levels.
- Improve the communication and coordination along the entire food supply chain between growers, processors, traders and/or exporters in third countries and with the customers in the target markets.
- Identify cluster potentials and promote clusters⁸⁶⁾ integrating growers, processors, exporters, research and education, business development and export promotion services, administration, control authorities, etc.
- Identify chain-specific good practices, develop codes of conducts and establish certification schemes to enable the industry/supply chain to effectively cope with the shift of liability for food safety to the private sector while public interventions focus on auditing food businesses.

Common Code for the Coffee Community (4C)
– a joint Code of Practice of coffee chain operators and the civil society

Type of initiative	Development and implementation of a voluntary vertical standard as a private sector initiative.
Standard	Common Code for the Coffee Community (4C)
Stakeholders	The 4C is a multi-stakeholder initiative of coffee producers, coffee traders and processors as well as trade unions and non-governmental organisations supported by international donor organisations. Main partners from the start-up are the BMZ/GTZ and the European Coffee Federation (ECF). Further assistance is granted by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs.
Objective	The 4C initiative aims at promoting the production, processing and trading of green coffee in a socially responsible and environmentally friendly way. The long-term objectives are higher efficiency, cost reduction, quality improvement and increased profitability along the entire coffee supply and marketing chain.
Principles	<p>The 4C Code is a non-competitive but complementary initiative to existing standards. The criteria and principles of 4C draw on existing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national legislation in the coffee producing countries • UN conventions and declarations • good agricultural and management practices <p>Specific regional and national characteristics, different production systems and different types of green coffee are reflected in specified indicators that define the factual compliance with the 4C requirements. Indicators that are not applicable to smallholder production are not taken into account when the smallholders' compliance to the 4C criteria is verified.</p>
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 4C Steering Committee as the supreme authority guides the initiative. • The 4C Management Unit coordinates activities, maintains communication, plans and manages resources, guarantees transparent and participatory processes. • The 4C Expert Working Groups are set up by the Steering Committee on specific issues. • The 4C Support Platform unites representatives of 4C member groups, researchers and other partners to share available and develop new concepts to assist coffee farmers.
Code of Conduct	The Code of Conduct is the basic element of the 4C initiative. The 4C Code of Conduct comprises a set of practices, which are used to guide the operators in the coffee supply and

⁸⁶⁾ In an economic context, clusters denote networks of companies that are often competitors who follow common interests in given regions as well as service institutions working closely with these companies. The companies (producers of identical or complementary products, suppliers of preliminary products and providers of engineering services, etc.) are connected to each other via production, process, and market-oriented exchange relations and closely cooperate with relevant service providers (banks, insurance companies, chambers, associations, local/regional development institutions, research institutions, etc.).

marketing chain on the way towards a more sustainable production, post-harvest processing and trading of coffee. The 4C Code of Conduct comprises 30 social, environmental and economic principles.

Benefits	<p>Being market-driven, the 4C initiative benefits all operators in the green coffee supply and marketing chain from the producer up to the final consumer. Benefits are derived from the service offer of the initiative, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide access to GAP and good management practices, especially for small producers • establish a global learning network for the exchange of coffee expertise and knowledge • improve producers' ability of self-organisation • increase the transparency and traceability along the coffee supply chain • provide a basis for further activities towards sustainable coffee production
Emerging issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing 4C as an independent membership Association in 2006 including producers, trade & industry and civil society • pilot-testing the Code in the field as bases for the development of specific indicators • consolidating the approach of process verification (and not product certification) • designing a software system, which will allow parties to register, track and trace 4C compliant coffee along the supply chain and to publish audit reports • organising consultation workshops worldwide with stakeholders in this sector • cooperating with other initiatives, such as SAI (Social Accountability International), SCP (Sustainable Coffee Partnership), ICO (International Coffee Organization), etc. • further decentralising to encourage existing initiatives in producer regions
Further readings	<p>Common Code for the Coffee Community: Website http://www.sustainable-coffee.net/index.html</p>

Integrated Quality Assurance for fresh fruit and vegetables from farm to fork – 4fresh strategy of the German Association of Fresh Produce Trade

Type of initiative	Private sector initiative of the DFHV (Deutscher Fruchthandelsverband – German Association of Fresh Produce Trade) to support quality assurance based on an information management system integrating all supply and marketing stages from the country of origin up to the consumer.
Service	Integrated approach combining process standards at production, processing, logistics and retail levels, residue monitoring and on-line data management.
Stakeholders	DFHV (Deutscher Fruchthandelsverband – German Association of Fresh Produce Trade) in cooperation with producers, retailers and laboratory service providers
Objective	Define, support and coordinate relevant systems and platforms for quality assurance from farm to fork in an international benchmark.
Structure	<p>Main elements of a multi-stage quality assurance system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st pillar: EurepGAP as process standard for the production stage • 2nd pillar: IFS or BRC as process standards for the logistics/retail stages • 3rd pillar: systematic monitoring of residues to verify process certification • 4th pillar: information management communicating relevant data on quality and for traceability
Core elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Untersuchungsring' (test ring system): Systematic residue monitoring is carried out by DFHV's 'Untersuchungsring', which is an industry-wide control system of the German fruit and vegetable wholesale and export sub-sector. The scheme's primary purpose is to test compliance with strict maximum residue levels as stipulated by law (residues of pesticides, additives and contaminants). The test pool also registers labelling errors and other offences against the food law. The test results allow systematic documentation of residues and thus assist supply chain operators to recognise problems and take appropriate action at an early stage. • On-line data management in the test ring system: Managing quality and traceability from farm to fork needs systematic and timely information management; the information data flow complements the flow of goods

across all stages of the food chain. As of January 2005, DFHV's online platform facilitates fast communication between participating companies and laboratories.

Benefits	Reliable testing and fast communication on residue levels allow quick actions to be taken if residue contents exceed legal maximum levels or customers' specifications. The efficiency of the system is of special importance for the fresh fruit and vegetable trade since the high perishability of the products require quick decisions on rejection once problems are detected.
Emerging issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of third country supply chain participants: The DFHV aims at integrating the production stage in third countries into the 4fresh scheme. Having harmonised the scheme with EurepGAP will ensure food operators' compliance with the EU provisions for traceability. In case of residue problems, the system will facilitate tracing back to the source of the problem, detecting the source of the problem and finding a solution in realtime. In such a way, the risk of income losses can be reduced for producers as well as for the succeeding stages in the supply chain. • Common Laboratory Standard for the Analysis of Residues: In cooperation with the private trade and state bodies (food control), Freshfel Europe, the EU federation of the fruit and vegetable trade, developed a 'Common Laboratory Standard for the Analysis of Residues'. In the common interest of the European trade and the producers and exporters in third countries, it is envisaged to move residue control from the importing country to the country of origin by supporting self-control at the production and export stages. Detecting problems at an early stage in the supply chain will minimise income losses in case problems occur.
Further readings	<p>4fresh – Website http://www.4fresh.org/ 4fresh – Integrated Quality Assurance in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector http://www.freshcongress.com/budapest/pdfs/boysen.pdf</p>

5.4 Technology Transfer, Information and Knowledge Management

Since safe and good quality products are the result of adequate processes and control at all stages of the food chain rather than corrective action taken late in the process, primary responsibility for food safety and food quality lies with those who produce, process and trade food. The change in approaches from controlling the final product to process-oriented quality assurance systems throughout all supply and marketing stages, proves to be beneficial for all operators.

Given that compliance with standards incurs costs (investments in physical assets like pesticide stores, grading sheds, equipment such as protective clothes for pesticide application and into technical know how and managerial capacities), clear economic benefits have to be identified and viability of the introduction of standards be evaluated prior to promoting certification to any type of standard – especially for small scale producers.

Since small-scale farmers usually face serious problems to respond to certification needs, in particular with regard to managerial and technical skills and investments (infrastructure and equipment), smallholders have to look for economies of scale that could facilitate certification.

Possible solutions are:

- integration of smallholders into an embedded service system, in which the downstream partner (e.g. large outgrower scheme, processor, exporter) facilitates certification or
- joint certification as farmer group/cooperative with a common Internal Control System (ICS) and joint investments into capacity building, equipment and infrastructure.

Growers (especially smallholders), processors and traders will require support for building capacities and transferring appropriate technologies to achieve compliance with standards. Know how (training, advice) and technology transfer, among others, will be necessary to implement Good Practices (GAP, GMP, GHP, GDP), to set up Quality Management Systems according to the self-control approach and to introduce traceability systems. In many cases, these measures will have to be accompanied by support to improving productivity, post-harvest handling, processing and marketing in view of building food chains that can compete in the domestic as well as in international markets.

The following case studies highlight points of entry and lessons learnt in the field of supporting food chain operators to achieve compliance to international standards.

Preparing Processors for Certification According to International Standards – BRC certification supports competitiveness of Macedonian companies

Type of initiative	Private company initiative aspiring for certification according to international standards supported by an international donor organisation.
Standard	British Retail Consortium (BRC) Global Technical Standard certified by EFSIS (European Food Safety Inspection Service), third party independent inspection and certification service.
Stakeholders	Private partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VITALIA (health food production, re-packaging and trading company) • and two further companies (one juice and one meat processor) Development partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land O'Lakes Inc./USAID (United States Agency for International Development) • Advanced Food Safety Ltd./UK as implementing agency
Objective	BRC certification guarantees safety of foodstuffs supplied to customers in view of ensuring sustained competitiveness in international markets.
Tasks	<p>Following trainings on HACCP (examined by the Royal Institute of Public Health), the three companies expressed their interest to go for BRC certification. Land O'Lakes contracted Advanced Food Safety Ltd./UK to assist the companies to prepare for certification. Since major obstacles were identified in the fields of service provision, acquisition of equipment (e.g. metal detectors, metal detectable pens, blue plasters were not available in the country) and lack of accredited certification bodies in the country, the project applied a four-fold approach:</p> <p>Supporting the processing company VITALIA to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and introduce GMP (incl. cleaning and maintenance procedures, pest control) • develop waste management, stock rotation and storage procedures • update processing records and documentation records • develop work instructions and job descriptions • train the work force in the new work instructions • train the HACCP teams in monitoring critical control points (CCPs) • implement the programme of internal audits on the traceability system • implement the pest control, HACCP (incl. review of CCPs) and calibration systems • implement the product recall systems, incidents and complaints management systems <p>Upgrade services of different service providers to meet BRC requirements, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pest control company • cleaning chemical supplier <p>Supporting the certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducting a pre-audit and full system review • booking the audits with EFSIS

Supporting the procurement of equipment by assisting the company to

- source equipment locally and in the UK
- purchase suitable equipment

Further readings

EFSIS Newsletter No. 14, page 3
<http://www.sai-global.com/AboutSaiGlobal/Newsletters/efsisnewsletter14.pdf>

Contact

Russell Parry, Director Advanced Food Safety Ltd./UK
<http://www.food-safety.co.uk/default.htm>

Smallholder Group Certification under EurepGAP Option 2 – Public-Private Partnership GTZ/EurepGAP Smallholder Manual

Type of initiative	Public-Private Partnership (PPP) project
Service	Development and pilot-testing of a GTZ/EurepGAP Smallholder Manual to assist small farmers to acquire EurepGAP certification under EurepGAP Option 2.
Stakeholders	The European Retailer Produce Working Group 'fruit and vegetables' (Eurep) as private partner approved the GTZ/EurepGAP Smallholder Manual, which was developed by BMZ/GTZ as public (development) partner.
Rationale	For many smallholders, taking part in a group certification is the only possibility to benefit from the lucrative export opportunities offered by the EU markets. Compared with individual certification under EurepGAP Option 1, a farmer group certification under EurepGAP Option 2 has some advantages, namely: auditing costs are shared among smallholders in the same group and it is easier for a farmer group to exchange information, jointly invest into infrastructure and bargain with customers.
Objective	Enabling small farmer groups in developing countries to acquire cost-effective EurepGAP certification as a prerequisite to integrate into supply chains and link them to export markets.
Tasks	<p>Establishing a group Quality Management System (QMS) allows certification of an entire group rather than of each group member. The GTZ/EurepGAP Smallholder Manual serves as a practical guidance on how to develop and implement such an ISO-type QMS and internal control procedures without extensive support. The Manual assists smallholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organise in groups (self-organisation) to enable them set up a documented Quality Management System (QMS) in accordance with the requirements under Option 2 • establish and document an Internal Control System (ICS) as the basis for a group certification <p>Technical assistance by GTZ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local adaptation of the ICS as described in the GTZ/EurepGAP Smallholder Manual • implementation of a series of pilot projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America and South East Europe between 2005 and 2007 • completion/improvement and final editing of the QMS manual to be made available as simple local public shareware ready for adoption by small-scale farmer/outgrower groups • collaboration with interested parties working with smallholder farmer groups • liaising with EurepGAP with a view to making the group certification option feasible for smallholder farmers <p>The generic handbook explains the EurepGAP scheme and details the certification process under Option 2. Its core part consists of the template of a quality manual including standard operating procedures and forms for a fictional farmer group. It also discusses critical aspects in group certification to avoid failure. Not to be understood as a "one-size-fits-all" solution, the manual can be taken by farmer groups as a starting point to create their own QMS. Farmer groups can make adjustments to the manual according to the situation of their group members and specific circumstances within their groups.</p>
Further readings	Guenther, Doris (2005): The EurepGAP Smallholder Manual – Building up an Internal Control System for Certification to EUREPGAP Option 2 in the Horticultural Sector http://www.eurep.org/documents/webdocs/E-book-Globalreport.pdf

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5.5 Further supporting initiatives

ATDN – Agriculture, Trade and Development Network

Initiative	In the run-up to the reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), representatives from Germany (BMZ) and the Netherlands (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) met in mid 2001 to discuss the impacts of this reform on developing countries. This meeting initiated an informal dialogue in this subject area, in which other EU Member States were invited to participate. Working contacts gradually evolved into the 'Agriculture, Trade and Development Network' (ADTN).
Members	Relevant sectors of EU Member States bodies and of the EU Commission (development cooperation, agriculture and trade).
Goal	ADTN aims at improving policy coherence in the fields of agriculture, trade and development from a development-policy perspective. The focus lies in: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• improving the mutual understanding between experts from the respective fields• giving appropriate consideration to development aspects in agriculture and trade policies• achieving fast and informal agreement in the respective policy fields• implementing joint activities
Further reading	GTZ – Services for Rural Development Bulletin Nr. 14, July 2006, p. 5 http://www2.gtz.de/dokumente/bib/06-8514.pdf

GRASP – Good Risk-based Agricultural Social Practices

Initiative	Public private partnership project between the GTZ, EurepGAP and the multiple Swiss retailer Coop to elaborate a set of Good Risk-based Agricultural Social Practices (GRASP).
Goal	Running from June 2005 to February 2007, this project aims to produce concrete proposals for social criteria, along with guidelines for checking compliance, and to have them integrated into existing food or agricultural standards. The main goal is to determine whether the selected social requirements are applicable and verifiable to be proposed in the 2007 version of the EurepGAP standard.
Rationale	An integration of risk-based technically feasible requirements into existing audits of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) lowers the costs of social compliance certification and opens broader access to a range of potential clients for producers. Since EurepGAP is required by the majority of European retailers, integrating social codes into EurepGAP is a practical point of departure to expand the implementation of social standards. GRASP reaches credibility on a technically feasible basis without replacing or competing with other full range social audits.
Tasks	In the course of the GRASP project, a set of pragmatic social criteria is tested in pilot projects (Kenya, Brazil, Vietnam, Morocco and Spain), discussed in national multi-stakeholder workgroups and adopted to regional needs.
Further reading	GTZ GRASP – Webpage http://www.gtz.de/en/themen/uebergreifende-themen/sozial-oekostandards/7235.htm

Round Table Codes of Conduct

Initiative	The Round Table is a multi-stakeholder approach to codes of conduct and social standards in Germany providing a forum for exchange of experiences from a wide range of perspectives and branches.
Goal	The objective of the Round Table Codes of Conduct is to improve the implementation of labour and social standards in developing countries through corporate codes of conduct. To

this aim, Round Table participant groups set out to develop a common understanding of how voluntary codes of conduct can be introduced and applied – in an effective, transparent way and in a spirit of participation.

Members	The participants of the Round Table are representatives of the private sector (companies like Adidas, BASF, Karstadt and business associations), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade unions and the government.
Principles	<p>Guidelines for the work of the Round Table Codes of Conduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Round Table will not develop its own code of conduct • labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO) labour are part of CoC • monitoring and verification of CoC are the central themes of the Round Table • experience of similar initiatives (e. g. Ethical Trading Initiative) is taken into account (subsidiarity principle) • dialogue is sought with similar groups/initiatives in other EU Member States • North-South dialogue is to be conducted on Round Table issues
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction, monitoring and verification of voluntary codes of conduct (CoC) • design of universally acceptable processes for monitoring/verification of CoC • integration of trade unions/employee representatives and NGOs • derive and recommend examples of credible/effective processes to introduce, monitor and verify voluntary corporate codes of conduct elaborated
Further reading	<p>Round Table Codes of Conduct – Webpage http://www.coc-runder-tisch.de/coc%2Drunder%2Dtisch/rtf_intro_E.htm Codes of Conduct on Social Standards/Social Standards in Technical Cooperation http://www.coc-runder-tisch.de/coc%2Drunder%2Dtisch/rtf_intro_E.htm</p>

PAN UK – Pesticide Action Network UK

Initiative	Pesticide Action Network is an international non-profit organisation with five regional centres. PAN UK's International Programme works on issues of obsolete pesticides and their disposal; impacts of pesticide-dependent agriculture on health, the environment and food security; trade and corporate strategies affecting pesticide use; and policy tools for risk reduction and improved regulation of pesticides.
Rationale	Part of the rationale behind its project "Food & Fairness" is the fear that African smallholders are being squeezed out of export markets by stricter EU regulations on pesticides. Hence, PAN UK supports African partner organisations in information resources and outreach activities on pesticides and alternatives.
Approach	<p>PAN UK believes that dialogue between food chain players in Europe and Africa will explore the best practice and how to widely encourage this practice.</p> <p>In "Food & Fairness", PAN UK plans an exchange visit by African vegetable farmers to meet their counterparts in Europe to discuss common problems of pesticide dependency, the search for alternatives, supermarket pressures and the need to develop closer links with consumers. PAN UK then compares the attitude and actions of different companies in their practical support of farmers that shift to safer pest management. It also briefs African stakeholders on the health and environmental concerns of the hazardous pesticides still authorised for use in Europe.</p>

Tasks	<p>Tasks (pilot project in Senegal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement expert interviews with public and private stakeholders including information on export horticulture and smallholder livelihoods • take produce samples from small and large growers, conventional and IPM produce at farmgate/packhouse and in local markets to compare quality for local and export markets • compare quality through analysis in European accredited laboratories following EU residue directive sampling protocols • create awareness in Europe that imported produce from developing countries is not more subject to pesticide input than produce from intensive European agriculture • brief food sector companies in Senegal on their responsibilities under the revised FAO 'International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides'⁸⁷⁾ • participate in stakeholder forums addressing environmental, food safety, and ethical aspects of export horticulture, such as COLEACP/PIP, EurepGAP, SAI and 4C initiative
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Further reading Pesticide Action Network UK – Website
<http://www.pan-uk.org>

Small Scale Producers and Standards in Agrifood Supply Chains

Initiative	The UK Department for International Development (DFID), in cooperation with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), explore dialogue in the supply chain, information about standards and links between markets, as well as good practice in procurement.
Goal	Given the rise of private standards and the current changing public standards, the programme aims to create opportunities and identify favourable outcomes for small-scale producers in developing countries to participate in international horticultural supply chains, in particular those in the UK.
Approach	The programme addresses the issue of improving equity in chains from three angles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the standard setter by proposing adjustments to protocols and standards • the buyer by assisting to modify procurement policies • the government by proposing development tests to the new (European) standards
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitating dialogue among supermarkets, other retailers, standard-setting bodies, industry associations, producer organisations, public policy-makers, civil society organisations, and development agencies including bilateral donors and multi-lateral agencies in the north and in sub-Saharan Africa on the future direction of private standards set within the market place and changes in public standards. • facilitating access to information on standard setting and compliance issues for the export horticultural sector, including the costs and benefits of compliance with standards to assist small-scale producers to access the most beneficial market entry points • promoting good practice with regard to standard-setting and implementation, with the inclusion of small-scale producer-friendly elements into existing and future standards, through shared learning and piloting of innovative solutions
Further reading	Small Scale Producers and Standards in Agrifood Supply Chains – Webpage http://www.agrifoodstandards.org/

TSPN – Trade Standards Practitioners Network

The TSPN is an emerging network, and the discussion among its members about mission and approach has not yet been concluded. The following information should therefore be considered preliminary.

Mission	Improve the effectiveness of initiatives that support developing countries in capacity-building and participation in the implementation of trade-related social, environmental and sanitary/phytosanitary standards and related measures through information sharing, policy research and capacity building. In doing so, the TSPN seeks to foster more sustainable, competitive and equitable developing country supply chains by improving their ability to respond to different commercial, safety, social and environmental requirements.
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⁸⁷ see: http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/Code/PM_Code.htm

Rationale	Technical specialists working in the fields of social accountability, environmental standards, food safety and agricultural health frequently operate and communicate within particular 'silos' with little cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences. The TSPN seeks to cut across these technical 'silos' and facilitate a more effective flow of information and experiences among a diverse group of interested organisations.
Approach	The work of membership interventions shall be analysed in order to develop best or better practices that will enhance developing country capacity to implement market standards. The TSPN serves as a community of practice addressing the need for consistent dialogue and sharing of experiences. This collaborative effort is built upon the strengths of individual institutions while working as a community to achieve the shared goals. The TSPN offers participants the opportunity to explore possibilities for forging partnerships and undertaking joint projects to improve capacity for implementing standards in developing countries.
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing strategic guidance to standards related capacity building efforts. • deepening awareness and knowledge among developing country stakeholders • creating a network of practitioners, policy makers and groups working on building developing countries' standards management capacities and improving the sustainability of their supply chains • achieving outreach and disseminating information
Membership	<p>The TSPN is open to organisations and companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involved in pertinent standard setting and/or standards-related capacity strengthening • involved in multi-country settings and/or activities • able/willing to contribute to attaining TSPN objectives through institutional knowledge and implementation experiences • having own networks/contacts that can be useful in information gathering and dissemination <p>The last meeting in February 2006 was hosted by the World Bank and attended by COLEACP, European Commission, GTZ, IFC, IICA, ISEAL, SAI, University of Guelph, UNIDO, USAID, WWF and others</p>
Further readings	<p>The website is currently under construction and will be launched in 2007</p> <p>http://www.tradestandards.org</p>