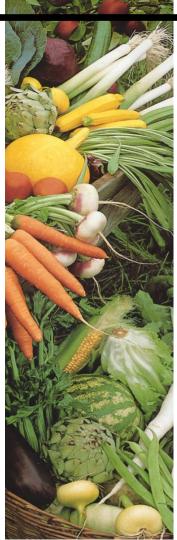


Fruit and vegetables inspection in Europe



István Ecsedi Hungary



Purpose of standards and their inspections



Inspection of compliance with international standards

- Protection of the market from products not conform to the standards;
- Offering choice in quality for the consumer in close connection with the price
- Reference point for the trader;
- Motivation for the producer to ship quality produce. 'Better quality better price' – in theory.

"Only good quality can guarantee success" (Israel, New-Zealand, USA, South-Africa)



UNECE standards and the European Union



UNECE standards are enforced either, by:

- National legislation or,
- Common rules of the EU



Fruit and Vegetables Inspection (following the EU reform)



- Legal background (EU)
 - Council Reg. (EC) No 1234/2007
 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets
 - Commission Reg. (EC) No 1580/2007
 laying down implementing rules
 - Commission Reg. (EC) No 1221/2008



COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1234/2007



Article 113a

Additional requirements for the marketing of the products of the fruit and vegetables sector

(1) The products of the fruit and vegetables sector which are intended to be sold fresh to the consumer, may only be marketed if they are sound, fair and of marketable quality and if the country of origin is indicated.



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



Before 1st July 2009:

•36 standards for 44 products in force were compulsory

After 1st July 2009: Simplification!?

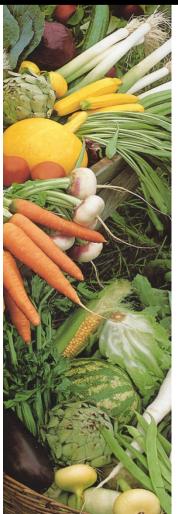
Introduction of a general marketing standard(?) and only 10 specific marketing standards

International standards:

- **•UNECE**
- Codex Alimentarius
- •EU



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



Specific marketing standards (based on UNECE)

Apples	Citrus fruit (lemons, mandarins, oranges)
Kiwifruit	Headed salad, curled-leaved endives and broad-leaved endives
Peaches and nectarines	Sweet peppers
Pears	Table grapes
Strawberries	Tomatoes



bananas (Commission Regulation (EC) No 2257/94)



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



General marketing standards

However, where the holder is able to show they are in conformity with any applicable standards adopted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the product shall be considered as conforming to the general marketing standard.



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



Main elements of the general marketing standards:

1. Minimum quality requirements

In all classes, and bearing in mind the permitted tolerances (see below), the products must be::

- intact,
- sound, produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is exluded,
- clean, pratically free of any visible foreign matter,
- pratically free from pests,
- practically free from damage caused by pests,
- free of abnormal external moisture,
- Free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

The development and condition of the pruduct must be such as to enable them::

- to withstand transportation and handling,
- To arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



Main elements of the general marketing standards:

2. Minimum maturity requirements

The product must be sufficiently developed and display satisfactory ripeness.

The development and state of maturity of the products must be such as to enable them to continue their ripening process and to reach a satisfactory degree of ripeness.



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



Main elements of the general marketing standards:

3. Tolerance

A tolerance of 10 % by number or weight of product not satisfying the minimum quality requirements shall be permitted in each lot. This tolerance shall not however cover product affected by rotting or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



Main elements of the general marketing standards:

4. Marking of origin of produce

Full name of the country of origin.



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



derogation from Article 113a(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007, the following products shall not be required to conform to the marketing standards:

- intended for industrial processing, or
- intended for animal feed or other non-food use
- producer selling in his own farm
- kitchen ready
- for home processing (MS decide)



(amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



By way of derogation from Article 113a(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007, the following products shall not be required to conform to the general marketing standard:

- mushrooms other than cultivated mushrooms of CN code 0709 59,
- capers of CN code 0709 90 40,,
- bitter almonds of CN code 0802 11 10,
- shelled almonds of CN code 0802 12,
- shelled hazelnuts of CN code 0802 22,
- shelled walnuts of CN code 0802 32,,
- pine nuts of CN code 0802 90 50, and,
- saffron of CN code 0910 20.

and potatoes, sweet corn



COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 1580/2007 (amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



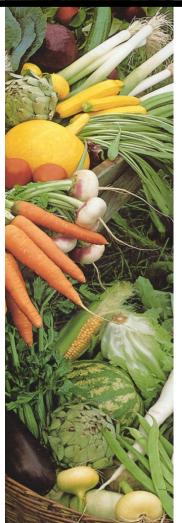
Definition of trader:

"Trader" means any natural or legal person:

- a) holding fruit and vegetables subject to marketing standards with a view to,
 - i. displaying or offering them for sale,,
 - ii. selling them, or
 - iii. marketing them in any other manner, or
- b) who actually carries out any of the activities referred to in points (i), (ii) and (iii) of point (a) as regards fruit and vegetables subject to marketing standards.



COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 1580/2007 (amendments coming into force after 1 July 2009)



Inspections:

on domestic market

-based on risk analysis

at export and import stages

- in case of products falling under the scope of the specific marketed standards, compulsory,
- in case of products falling under the scope of the general rules based on risk analysis
- accepted third countries (only for the 10 products)

Method of inspection set in Annex (based on OECD guidelines)



Problems in practice



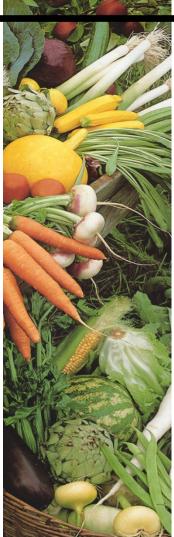
Different interpretation between Member States Different risk analysis

There has been introduced a double quality regime

Study on effects???



General conclusions of the Study



- Should take into account specificities of the F&V sector and the limitations of the Study (focused on limited number of products, less than a year after the application of new rules),
- Arguments in favour and against the repeal of SMS not yet confirmed by facts



General conclusions of the Study



Pros:

- + Costs savings on controls: very limited for national authorities, administrative burden linked to control stable for operators,
- + Regulatory simplification: only partial,
- + Offer/product diversification: no change,
- + Decrease in discards: no significant change,
- + Decrease in consumer prices: no impact.



General conclusions of the Study



Cons:

- Development/proliferation of private standards: repealed EU SMS replaced by UNECE standards in DE, FR, IT, and distributors specifications in UK and PL;
- Decrease in producer prices: no impact,
- Decrease of the quality of products: no impact,
- Impact on the comparability and transparency of the market: no significant changes.



Final conclusion



Where international standard for a given product exists and there's need for regulation that has to implemented in order to avoid technical barrier for trade and confusion



Thank you for your attention!

