

*OECD Scheme for the Application of  
International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables*



# **Peer Review of the Fruit and Vegetables Quality Inspection System in the Netherlands**

**2012**



**Codes and Schemes  
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## FOREWORD

This Peer Review Report of the Fruit and Vegetables Quality Inspection System in the Netherlands is part of a series of reviews of national fruit and vegetables systems undertaken on behalf of the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme.

The Review was undertaken in June 2011. It included a three day visit to The Hague, the Netherlands, to meet officials and stakeholders in the fruit and vegetables sector. Günter Jessl (Austria) and Csaba Gaspar (OECD Secretariat) participated in the Peer Review Team. During the mission, meetings were held with officials at the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation and at the Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, (KCB). The Peer Review Team managed to see the implementation of the quality inspection at export and import stages and on the EU internal market.

The initial Report was drafted by the Peer Review Team in close collaboration with the stakeholders in the Netherlands. This Report brings together the policies and institutional structures related to the fruit and vegetables quality inspection system. In addition, it includes experts' assessment of the organisation of the administrative structure, and implementation of the fruit and vegetables quality inspection system in the Netherlands. This Report benefited from substantive contributions from officials at the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation and the Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, (KCB). They provided information on the implementation of the fruit and vegetables quality inspection system in the Netherlands, as well as comments on the Draft Report.

The Draft Report was discussed at the 70th Plenary Meeting of the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme in December 2011. The Delegation of the Netherlands made a comprehensive presentation on the Dutch horticultural sector and the organisation of the national fruit and vegetables quality inspection system. The Peer Review Team presented the conclusions and suggestions on possible further improvements to the Dutch well established quality inspection system. The Report also suggests to other Members to consider the application of good Dutch policies and practices to improve their national systems. After an in-depth examination, the 70th Plenary Meeting adopted the Peer Review Report.

The Peer Review Report is published under the responsibility of the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Peer Review Report has been approved by the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme. It has been drafted by the OECD Secretariat: Michael Ryan, Csaba Gaspar and Günter Jessl (National Expert, Austria). The OECD Secretariat is grateful for the contributions provided by Jan van de Wijnboom of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation of the Netherlands, Martien de Graaf, Jean Crombach, Peter Damen, Anouk Lafeber, Mat Kersten and Erwin Kook of the Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, (KCB). The organisation of the review mission, editing and formatting of documents were done by Sophie Boissonnade, Isabelle Braud and Simon Gregg of the OECD Secretariat.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Netherlands is one of the largest exporters and importers of fruit and vegetables in the world. The inspection system is well organised in order to manage the large volume and diverse range of fruit and vegetables traded. This Peer Review Report discusses the Dutch fruit and vegetables export and import quality inspection system, as well as the internal market inspection before the retail stage. Quality inspection at retail stage is outside of scope of this review.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation (Ministry) is the authority responsible for the implementation of fresh fruit and vegetables quality inspection. They provide the political and legislative background and control the implementation of the quality inspection system. The Ministry delegated the task of fruit and vegetables quality inspection to the Quality Control Bureau (Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, (KCB)) on international trade, and at the wholesale and producer level, and to the Netherlands Consumer Authority (NVWA), which is responsible for inspections at the retail level.

The Quality Control Bureau (KCB) is a non-profit body which was established for the implementation of public tasks. The KCB operates under the direction of the Board, with member representatives of traders and growers, as well as from the Government. KCB is the responsible body for the implementation of quality inspections in fruit and vegetables. The phytosanitary inspections are the responsibility of the Ministry, but the implementation of a great part of these inspections, e.g. fruits and vegetables, is delegated to KCB, since 2007. The concentration of both tasks in KCB, with its well trained and authorised inspectors for the implementation of both types of inspection, has created a favourable situation for the establishment of an integrated quality inspection system.

KCB employs 78 quality inspectors (June 2011). All inspectors are fully equipped with the necessary tools for inspections, which they are authorised to carry out. All inspectors have access to the KCB Procedure Handbook, which was developed taking into account OECD explanatory materials and guidelines. Every inspector is equipped with a personal digital assistant (PDA) and with the help of this IT tool, the administration of the inspection procedures is practically fully online.

The selection of candidates to become inspectors must have finished secondary vocational education or passed special training courses. The initial training period is 3 months, where they have to master the basic qualifications. The inspectors must attend refresher training programmes and pass an exam in order to maintain their qualification every 3 years. The KCB organises special harmonisation meetings especially at the beginning of a new season. Moreover, the daily work of the inspectors is supervised annually through an internal auditing process.

The Netherlands applies the EU marketing standards, which are the 10 specific standards (SMS) and a General Marketing Standard (GMS) for those products which are not covered by specific standards. The application of the OECD/UNECE standards is voluntary. The Government does not check the compliance of the traded products with these standards, only their compliance with the Specific Marketing Standard or the General Marketing Standard. However, OECD/UNECE standards may be applied by market partners.

The Dutch fruit and vegetables quality inspection system follows the EU inspection system which is based on the OECD inspection methods. In total, 87 products are subject to inspection. The national inspection system is based on risk analysis following the provisions set out in the relevant EU legislation. Structural supervision and general supervision are specific to the Netherlands which allow the quality inspection of produce intended for the internal EU market. The cost of inspection is covered by the inspected company.

The Peer Review Team followed the planning, processing and coordinating procedures for export and import inspection, as well as the structural supervision at the KCB office. The Team also visited private

companies where they followed export and import inspections, as well as structural supervision. The Peer Review Team assessed the Dutch quality inspection system as follows:

- Cooperation and communication between the Ministry and the KCB is excellent. The Ministry regularly receives feedbacks from the KCB and this information is taken into account in further developing the fruit and vegetables inspection system. The KCB is well organised and manages the quality inspection task well. Their administrative structure and their long experience and know-how ensure the proper implementation of the OECD and EU fruit and vegetables quality inspection systems.
- The initial education period for inspector candidates is less compared to other countries. However, this relatively short period can be explained with the KCB's recruitment policy. The candidates usually have an extended agricultural background and often come from the private sector with experiences in quality inspection. Moreover, the initial training period is flexible and can be extended depending on the individual situation.
- The Dutch implementation of the EU (and OECD) fruit and vegetables quality inspection system is pragmatic bearing in mind simplification, as in the original aims of the 2008 EU reforms. The KCB has the structural and human capacity to implement the phytosanitary and quality inspection in an integrated system. This integrated approach enhances the efficiency of the inspection system and means less visits and lower costs for the companies as they are less interrupted in their business.
- The Peer Review Team suggests that the Netherlands should concentrate the fruit and vegetables inspection, at all stages of marketing including retail stage, in the KCB. The delegation of this task is justified, as the methodology for fruit and vegetables quality inspection greatly differs from other food quality controls. The EU legislation also separates the fruit and vegetables sector from other food products. Moreover, it is important to ensure that the handling of the products at retail stores is properly done and quality is maintained. As the quality requirements are the same along the supply chain, it would be important and logical, that the inspection system is implemented in the same manner, at every stage of marketing.
- The Peer Review Team suggests to other member countries to also consider developing an electronic data management system. The Ministry, in cooperation with the KCB, established and operates an electronic data management system. The use of this system greatly increases the efficiency of inspection and simplifies the administration for traders, as well as for the inspection authorities. The Dutch system could provide a good example for such an IT system.
- The Peer Review Team also suggests to member countries to develop an integrated quality inspection system. The Dutch experience could serve as a model for other countries. Moreover, the Netherlands is a member of the OECD Working Group on Integrated Quality Inspection, where they share their experience and contribute to the ongoing work on this subject.

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**DRAFT PEER REVIEW REPORT**

**Objective of the Peer Review**

The Peer Review process is a systematic examination and assessment of the performance of a sector by experts from other countries under the auspices of the OECD Secretariat. The ultimate goal is to improve policy making, adopt best practices, and comply with established international standards and principles. The examination is conducted on a non-adversarial basis and relies heavily on mutual trust amongst the reviewers, as well as their shared confidence in the process.

A key goal of Peer Reviews is to harmonise the interpretation and implementation of common or similar rules. Another important goal is the learning process, made possible, where new ideas can be shared with existing and new countries. The value of establishing new and improving existing networks is an important part of the work of the Scheme.

**Chapter 1 - Introduction**

The Netherlands is one of the founding Members of the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme. Over the past 50 years they have been an active Member of the programme. The Netherlands was rapporteur, co-rapporteur of many OECD explanatory brochures e.g. onions, cucumbers and cultivated mushrooms. The Netherlands is a regular and active participant in many OECD working groups, workshops and training programmes, where they share their technical expertise and experience with other Members of the Scheme. Moreover, the Netherlands organised the 11<sup>th</sup> OECD Meeting of the Heads of National Inspection Services in 2002.

Imports and exports of fruits and vegetables play an important role in the economy of the Netherlands. The export and import inspection system plays a central role in facilitating trade. Therefore, the Authorities of the Netherlands are constantly interested in improving the compliance of the national fruit and vegetables quality inspection system with the OECD rules and EU legislation. This Peer Review is also a good opportunity to compare the Dutch fruit and vegetables quality inspection system with other national systems in Member countries. Moreover, the national inspection body, the Quality Control Bureau (Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, (KCB)) is interested in the assessment by experts from other Member countries of the organisation and implementation of the Dutch quality inspection system for fruit and vegetables. The outcome of this review would be taken into account in the future development and improvements of the national inspection system.

**1.1 Overview of the Netherlands**

**1.1.1 Geographical and Agro-climate Situation**

The Netherlands is one of the smallest countries in the European Union. More than half of its total surface area of over four million hectares is used for agricultural purposes, nearly one-fifth is water, and 12% is forest, or open, natural terrain. The biggest city is the capital Amsterdam, with 750,000 residents, followed by Rotterdam and The Hague with 580,000 and 500,000 inhabitants, respectively.

The Netherlands lies between latitudes 50° and 54° N, and longitudes 3° and 8° E. The country is divided into two main parts by three large rivers; the Rhine (*Rijn*) and its main distributaries, the Waal and the Meuse (*Maas*). These rivers functioned as a natural barrier between earlier fiefdoms and hence created traditionally a cultural divide, as is evident in some phonetic traits that are recognizable north and south of these "Large Rivers" (*de Grote Rivieren*).

The south-western part of the Netherlands is a river delta and two tributaries of the Scheldt (*Westerschelde* and *Oosterschelde*). Only one significant branch of the Rhine flows north-eastward; the IJssel river, discharging into the IJsselmeer, the former Zuiderzee ('Southern Sea').

Figure 1. Map of the Netherlands



Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation<sup>1</sup>

The Netherlands has a moderate maritime climate with cool summers and mild winters caused by the predominant wind direction from the South-west. This is especially the case in the direct proximity of the Dutch coastline, which is often over 10 °C warmer (in winter) or cooler (in summer) than places in the (south) eastern part of the country.

Ice days (maximum temperature below 0 °C) usually occur from December until February, with the occasional rare ice day outside of this period. Freezing days (minimum temperature below 0 °C) occur much more often, usually from mid November to late March, but can occur as early as mid October and as late as mid May. Moreover, if the temperature, measured at 10 cm above the ground level instead of the standard 150 cm, the measured temperature can be below zero even in the middle of the summer.

Warm days (maximum temperature above 20 °C) are usually measured between April until September, but in some parts of the country such temperatures can also occur in March and October. Summer days (maximum temperature above 25 °C) are usually measured from May until August; tropical days (maximum temperature above 30 °C) are rare and usually occur only from June until August.

<sup>1</sup> This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

## **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

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Precipitation throughout the year is relatively equally distributed by month. Summer and autumn months tend to have a little bit more precipitation than other months; mainly because of the intensity of the rainfall rather than the frequency of rainy days (this is especially the case in summer, when lightning is much more frequent).

### *1.1.2 Political structure*

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy, with Queen Beatrix as current Head of State. The form of Government is a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature. The 150 members of the House of Representatives are chosen by general election, and the 75 members of the Senate are chosen indirectly by Provincial Councils, the legislatures of the 12 Dutch provinces.

The Netherlands has a long history of working towards international cooperation. It was a founding member of the European Union in the 1950s, and one of the founding Members of the OECD, as well as the Fruit and Vegetables Scheme in 1962.

The agriculture sector has to deal with the Government requirements as well as with regulatory industrial organisations. The industrial organisations are made up from the representatives of employer associations and unions in the relevant sector. These organisations can issue binding instructions for the relevant product group, not only for primary production, but also for supply, trade, and processing. The most important industrial organisations in the agricultural sector are the Higher Commodity Board for Arable Farming, the Product Board for Horticulture, the Dutch Dairy Commodity Board, and the Product Boards for Livestock, Meat and Eggs.

### *1.1.3 Role of agriculture in the Economy and demography*

The Netherlands is one of the world's wealthiest nations with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over EUR 596 billion in 2010. The global recession has caused a decrease in GDP of 3.5% in 2009 and 0.25% in 2010.

The Dutch economy is internationally oriented. The most important sectors are trade and the high-quality financial and professional services. The Netherlands is one of the largest exporters of agricultural products due in large part to the country's good transport infrastructure. The Port of Rotterdam is the largest in Europe and second largest in the world in terms of cargo transfer, making the Netherlands a major transit country for all sorts of goods. Labour productivity is high and the investment climate is good, therefore many international companies are based in the Netherlands.

The Netherlands has 16.5 million inhabitants of which nearly 25% are below 20. Life expectancy at birth is 78 years for men and 82 years for women. With an average of 488 inhabitants per square kilometre, the Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. About two-fifths of the people live in highly urbanised areas and one-fifth of the population in non-urban areas. One-fifth of the total population has roots outside the country, with one-half of this group being of non-Western descent. Within this group, the majority is of Turkish descent, followed by Surinamese and Moroccan.

The Netherlands has 7.3 million households with an average size of 2.22 persons. However, one-third of them are single-person households. Each household spends an average of 14% of its collective income on food, beverages, and tobacco in total of EUR 36.5 billion in 2007. The largest expenditures were for meat and fish (EUR 5.7 billion), followed by tobacco (EUR 3.7 billion), beverages (EUR 3.5 billion), dairy (EUR 3.4 billion) and fruits, vegetables, and potatoes (EUR 2.5 billion).

### *1.1.4 Agricultural sector and trade*

Agriculture is a significant part of the Dutch economy with the most important being dairy, livestock and horticulture sectors. The agricultural-industrial complex (i.e. agriculture, horticulture, and associated

products and services) represented nearly 10% of the Dutch economy, with the added value of almost EUR 48 billion in 2007. This was slightly less than in 2001. Although the added value of the agri-complex increased by 18% since 2007, the entire economy also grew by 25%. At the same time, employment in the sector dropped by 6% (45,000 labour years), while total employment grew by nearly 2%.

The agricultural sector, as the whole economy, is internationally-oriented. Exports of agricultural products represented about 20 % of total exports with an export value of EUR 61 billion in 2009. The most important trading partners for the Netherlands are the Member countries of the European Union, representing 80% of the total value of agricultural exports. Due to tradition, Germany is the most important trading partner. Agricultural products exported to Germany exceeded EUR 16 billion, representing more than 25% of the total agricultural exports in 2008. In turn, nearly 25% of the imported agricultural products arrived from Germany to the Netherlands with a value of EUR 7.5 billion in 2008. After Germany, the Netherlands' most important trading partners are Belgium, France and the UK.

Agricultural imports are also sizable with an estimated value of EUR 38 billion, representing nearly 10 % of total imports in 2009. Nearly 25% of the imported agricultural products comes from Germany to the Netherlands and amounted to EUR 7.5 billion in 2008. The Netherlands also had a considerable share of the agricultural imports from France and Italy, at 10% and 8%, respectively.

Dutch agricultural trade is very diverse. In 2008, exports of ornamentals and other plants were valued at nearly EUR 8 billion, meat and meat products EUR 7 billion, and eggs and dairy products EUR 6 billion. Meat, dairy, fruits and vegetables, grain, cocoa and cocoa preparations represented the largest share of imported products.

### *1.1.5 Fruit and vegetables sector*

Horticulture is significant within the agricultural sector. It represented 39% of total agricultural production with a value of EUR 14.5 billion in 2009. It contributed 21% to the surplus of the Dutch trade balance. The sector employed close to 290,000 people directly and 455,000 indirectly.

Within horticulture, the fruit and vegetables sector produced EUR 2.6 billion in 2010. The sector plays a prominent role in international trade with an export value of EUR 9.3 billion, including re-exports, and an import value of EUR 7.1 billion in 2010.

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

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**Table 1. Fruit and vegetables production in the Netherlands (in value)**

<b>Production</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010*</b>
	<b>EUR million</b>		
<b>Nutrition Horticulture</b>	<b>2297</b>	<b>2185</b>	<b>2660</b>
Fresh vegetables	1971	1850	2255
-under glass	1259	1215	1455
-Field vegetables	363	385	380
-Onions	33	20	210
-Mushrooms	316	230	210
Fresh fruit	326	335	405

Source: Product Board for Horticulture

Horticulture production under greenhouses is well developed in the Netherlands and occupied approximately 10,000 hectares in 2009. Cut flowers, pot plants and bedding plants were grown on 5 thousands hectares which was divided amongst 4 thousands holdings. Vegetables were produced on about 4,800 hectares, representing about 1900 holdings. The most important products are tomatoes and sweet peppers (*see table below*).

**Table 2. Fruit and vegetables production in greenhouses in the Netherlands**

	<b>Production area of greenhouse vegetables (hectares)</b>		
	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Vegetables (total)</b>	<b>4037</b>	<b>4344</b>	<b>4732</b>
Tomatoes	1133	1396	1676
Sweet peppers	1155	1236	1399
Cucumbers	663	631	668
Egg-plants	76	90	104
Other produces	1011	991	885

Source: Statistics Netherlands

Dutch producers grew horticulture products outdoors on almost 100,000 hectares in 2009. The most important products were vegetables, grown on 24,000 hectares, representing more than 3000 holdings, followed by flower bulbs production on 23,500 hectares representing 1800 holdings, and fruit production on 20,000 hectares representing 2700 holdings. The most important outdoor vegetables were onions, peas and carrots. As regards fruits, apples are produced in the most extended area; however it shows a decreasing tendency. In contrary, strawberry production became more significant in the past decade (*see the tables below*) almost doubling its area of production.

Table 3. Vegetables production in the Netherlands (outdoor)

	Production area of outdoor vegetables (hectares)		
	2000	2005	2010
<b>Vegetables (total)</b>	<b>66158</b>	<b>66741</b>	<b>72309</b>
Onions	19979	22520	28876
Carrots (large)	4729	4700	5568
Peas	5864	5091	3434
Witloof Chicory	4198	3423	3016
Brussels sprouts	4834	3095	2950
Leek	3184	2725	2843
Beans	3626	4254	2753
cabbage	2544	2473	2752
Asparagus	2084	2334	2695
Cauliflower	2160	2394	2370
Carrots (small)	2985	2551	2088
Broccoli	846	1311	1966
Lettuce	1090	1303	1877
Broad bean	694	790	1144
Other vegetables	7341	7776	7986

Source: : Statistics Netherlands

Table 4. Fruit production in the Netherlands (outdoor)

	Production area of fruit (hectares)		
	2000	2005	2010
<b>Fruits (total)</b>	<b>22352</b>	<b>20869</b>	<b>22759</b>
Apples	12834	9737	8.682
Pears	6019	6692	7990
Plums	-	-	267
Other stone fruits	701	645	496
Strawberry	1756	2301	3064
Other fruits	1052	1494	1097

Source: : Statistics Netherlands

Supermarkets have gained importance as a sales channel in the last decades. The three largest supermarket chains are responsible for 70% of the domestic sales of fruits and vegetables. It is expected that in the near future ten to fifteen retail chains will dominate the European market. In response, trade and production of fruit and vegetables are scaling-up in the Netherlands and reducing the number of holdings in all groups (see annex II).

As regards domestic consumption, Dutch consumers purchased tomatoes, cucumbers onions, apples, oranges and bananas in the largest volume in 2009.

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

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Table 5. Consumption of fruit and vegetables in the Netherlands (2009)

Top-10 Domestic purchase of fresh vegetables per Household, in kgs			Top-10 Domestic purchase of fresh fruit per Household , in kgs		
Nr.	Product	2009	Nr.	Product	2009
1	Tomatoes	7.13	1	Apples	22.33
2	Cucumbers	5.77	2	Oranges	17.41
3	Onions	5.94	3	Bananas	13.67
4	Cauliflower	5.26	4	Mandarins	7.44
5	Lettuce(incl. mixes)	4.68	5	Pears	5.10
6	Witloof Chicory	4.20	6	Grapes	3.63
7	Beans	2.98	7	Kiwis	3.44
8	Broccoli	3.10	8	Melons	3.27
9	Sweet peppers	2.92	9	Strawberries	2.78
10	packages with cut vegetables, ready-to-use for cooking	2.86	10	Nectarines	2.07

Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation

### Chapter 2 - Legislative background for Fruit and Vegetables Inspection

#### 2.1 Agricultural Policy

The Dutch agricultural policy, which is also valid for the fruit and vegetables sector, concentrates on the establishment and maintenance of a sustainable agricultural production chain. Therefore innovation is a particularly important part of this policy. This is also expressed in the recent reorganisation in the structure of the relevant Ministries; merging them into one under the name of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation in 2011.

The other main goal of agricultural policy is to minimise the administrative burden for the agricultural sector. Therefore, the Ministry endeavours to reduce the number of inspections e.g. with the introduction of an integrated inspection system for fruit and vegetables in 2007.

#### 2.2 Legislation

##### 2.2.1 Legislation of the European Union

The fruit and vegetables sector is regulated within the European Union as part of the common organisation of agricultural markets. The Netherlands, as a member of the EU, implements these common policies including the relevant provisions to the fruit and vegetables sector. The relevant EU regulations on quality standards, and their national and international application and inspection as follows:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 of 22 October 2007 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products (Single CMO Regulation);
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 543/2011 of 7 June 2011 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 in respect of the fruit and vegetables and processed fruit and vegetables sectors;

The European Union undertook a reform of the fruit and vegetables sector in 2008. The goal of the reform was to simplify the legislation and to reduce the administrative burden for the government, as well as for stakeholders. As a result of the reform, the number of specific standards (SMS) was reduced from 36 to 10. The EU also introduced the General Marketing Standard (GMS) for products which were not covered by SMS. As an alternative, the legislation allowed the use of OECD/UNECE standards for products which are not covered by the ten SMSs.

In the last years, the Members of the European Union implemented the reform in a heterogeneous way with different interpretations of the new EU rules. The Netherlands stuck to the main goal of the reform which was the simplification and rationalisation of the inspection system. They adjusted the national inspection system accordingly, dealing with only the compulsory inspection of GMS and the ten SMSs.

##### 2.2.2 National Legislation

The most important national legislation relevant to the fruit and vegetables sector is the *Agricultural Quality Law*, which has been in force since 1977, but was updated in 2007. The Law serves as a legislative background for all of agriculture, including milk, eggs, meat and the fruit and vegetables sectors. The *Agricultural Quality Decree* and the *Agricultural Quality Regulation* are also important laws. These laws establish the administrative structure for inspection of fruit and vegetables for the different types of inspection and for different stages of marketing and appointing different bodies for quality inspection.

## **Chapter 3 - Marketing standards**

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### **Chapter 3 - Marketing standards**

The Netherlands applies the EU marketing standards, as defined in the EU legislation. Their application is compulsory. During the 2008 EU reform of the fruit and vegetables sector, the EU kept specific standards only for the 10 most important traded fruit and vegetables products which are the following:

- apples
- citrus fruits
- kiwifruit
- lettuces, curled leaved and broad-leaved endives
- peaches and nectarines
- pears
- strawberries
- sweet peppers
- table grapes
- tomatoes

The remaining 26 specific standards were repealed and the EU introduced the General Marketing Standard for those products, which are not covered by the specific standards. The GMS is practically a list of minimum requirements completed with provisions on tolerances and labelling of the country of origin. The EU also allows the use of OECD/UNECE standards for the products which the EU does not have specific standards for. In this case, the quality class can be labelled on the product.

The application of the OECD/UNECE standards is voluntary in the Netherlands. The Government does not check the compliance of the traded products with these standards, only their compliance with the Specific Marketing Standard and the General Marketing Standard. The reason is that the EU reform originally aimed to reduce the number of inspections. The introduction of the OECD/UNECE standards equivalent to the EU standards would increase the number of inspections considering their high numbers. It would mean a heavy burden on the administration system, as well as on the industry taking into account the high range and volume of production, exported and imported fruit and vegetables in the Netherlands.

However, OECD/UNECE standards may be applied by market partners. The KCB informs inspectors on the OECD/UNECE standards during the regular refreshment training courses. The inspectors also have access to the standards via their computers and PDA.

In 2011, twenty-six UNECE standards will be translated into Dutch for those products for which EU standards were repealed during the reform. However, the OECD explanatory brochures are not planned to be translated into the national language, as most of the traders know one of the official languages of the OECD.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation (CAP Department) is involved in the elaboration and revision of the quality standards, in cooperation with Horticultural Produce Board and the

Quality Control Bureau (Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, KCB). In the preparation process for international standardisation meetings, such as at the OECD, UNECE, or Codex, the representatives of the industry (private organisations) are also informed about the proposed changes. Moreover, depending on the subject, an electronic consultation or a meeting is organised with them. After such a meeting, a report on the outcome is sent to the representatives of the private organisations.

Major changes in standards or new publication are mentioned as a news item on the website of the Product Board of Horticulture ([www.tuinbouw.nl](http://www.tuinbouw.nl)). This is subsequently spread through the newsletters, publications and websites of the industry. In addition, the current EU standards are available on the same website together with the links to the websites of the OECD and the UNECE. Moreover, another website was launched by the Board ([www.groentenenfruitportaal.nl](http://www.groentenenfruitportaal.nl)) in March 2011, in which the industry has easy access to the digital version of the OECD brochures and the UNECE standards as well.

## Chapter 4 - Structure of the Administration System

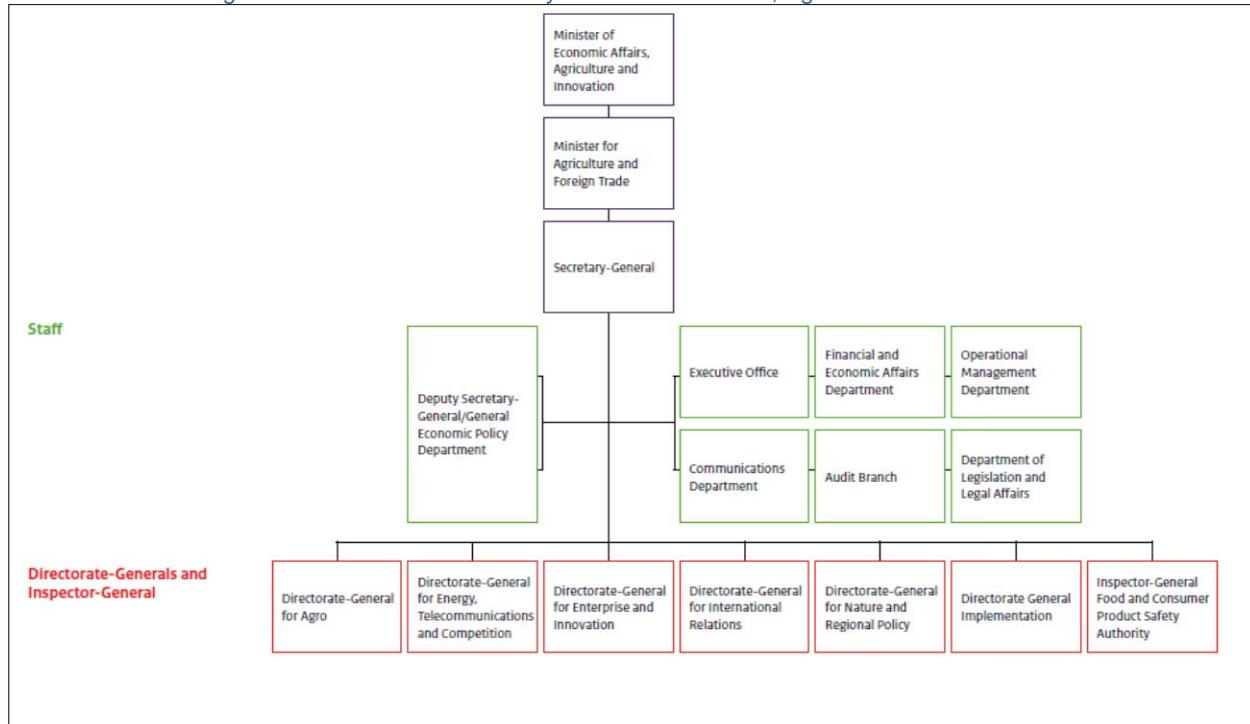
### Chapter 4 - Structure of the Administration System

The Netherlands implements the quality inspection system according to the EU legislation. The provisions of the relevant EC regulation No. 543/2011 are implemented in the National Legislation, as described in the Agriculture Quality Law, The Agriculture Quality Decree and the Agriculture Quality Regulation. These three national laws lay down the legal basis of the national administration system of the fruit and vegetables quality inspection.

#### 4.1 Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation

The Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation (Ministry) is a relatively new Ministry. The Dutch administration system went through a major reorganization in 2010/11. This new Ministry was established with the merger of the Ministry of Economical Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. The new organizational structure was established on 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2011. The main changes were the reduction in the number of departments mostly through mergers. This also meant the reduction of employees by about 20 percent. The policy departments of the former Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality are situated in two Directorates: the Directorate for Agriculture and the Directorate for Nature and Regions.

Figure 2. Structure of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation



Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation

The Ministry is the responsible authority for the proper legal implementation of the international regulation of fresh fruit and vegetables quality inspection. The Ministry is the coordinating authority for the EU, as well as the responsible authority for the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme.

The Ministry delegated the task of implementation of fruit and vegetables inspection to the KCB on the international trade and at the wholesale and producer level, and to the Netherlands Consumer Authority (NVWA), which is responsible for the inspections in the retail phase. The Ministry supervises the technical audits of the inspection bodies as well as their financial activities.

The Ministry represents the Netherlands at international meetings on EU-policy and the international policy regarding the quality of fresh fruit and vegetables e.g. at the EU, OECD, Codex or the UNECE. Depending on the subject of the meeting, the Ministry can delegate the task of the national representation to the Product Board of Horticulture or the KCB. They can participate at the meeting alone or with the Ministry. The mandates for the meetings are formulated in close cooperation with the Product Board of Horticulture and, every so often, the KCB is also consulted for advice.

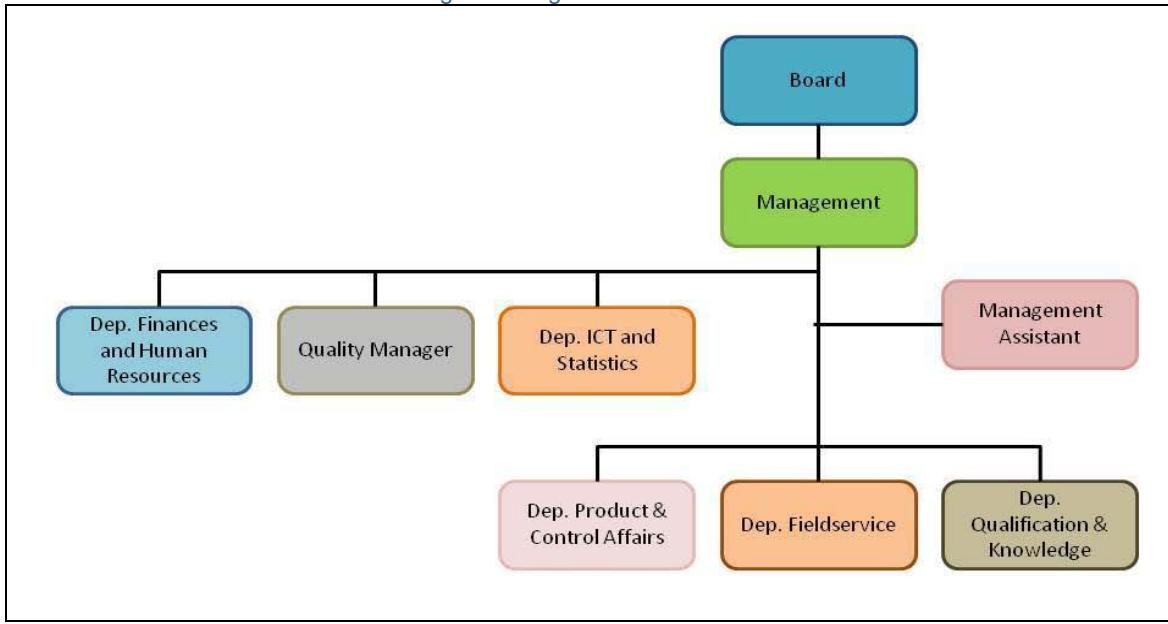
### 4.2 Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau (KCB)

The KCB, the Quality Control Bureau was established in 1924 by Dutch growers and traders. They recognised that the West-European population was becoming wealthier and willing to spend more money on better quality fruit and vegetables. Therefore, the Bureau was established with the primarily task of quality inspection of Dutch fruit and vegetables exports to Western European markets. As of today, the KCB is still a fully independent body.

The KCB's decision making body is the Board whose members are appointed by relevant trade and producer organisations. The Board appoints a chairman that must be approved by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation. Under the Board there are two directors. The General Director is in a direct contact with the Members of the Board and responsible for the implementation of their strategic decisions. The General Director is also responsible for the financial management of the KCB. The Technical Director's responsibility is the daily operation of the inspection body and the organization and implementation of the different inspection tasks. The Quality Manager is working under the Management with the responsibility of maintaining and controlling the quality systems, such as the ISO17020, that have been awarded to the KCB.

Under the control of the Management, there are 5 Departments at KCB. The *Field Service* is responsible for the implementation of the control and the inspections, including planning. The *Department for Product and Control Affairs* is headed by the Technical Director. This Department is responsible for the translation of the national and international legislation into procedures and work instructions for the Field Service. They also provide a helpdesk for the field service and stakeholders. They are also responsible for keeping contacts with the Ministry, the NVWA (NPPO/PPS) and organisations that represent trade and production. The *Department for Qualification & Knowledge Management* is responsible for the training and qualification of inspectors, the uniformity in execution by the Field Service, as well as for contacting with the fruit and vegetables sector on quality issues. In the last years, the *ICT Department* gained importance as all the information from the request for inspection via the organisation of the inspection to the issuance of certificates is computerised and fully online. They are responsible for the maintenance and operation of the IT system.

Figure 3. Organisation chart of KCB



Source: Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau

The KCB has four District Offices covering the territory of the Netherlands. They are responsible for the implementation of inspections of their specific region. Even though the Offices are prepared for all types of authorised inspection, they are specialised according to the main horticultural activities in their districts. The *Northwest Office* is covering the big auctions and implements many inspections of flowers. The *Midwest Office* is mostly dealing with glasshouse vegetables and flowers. The *Southwest Office* is covering the trade of the big international ports, such as Rotterdam. The *East Office* is the least busy, as the horticultural trade is not as concentrated in this part as it is in other parts of the Netherlands.

As a basic rule, KCB can implement only public tasks, as set out in the relevant National and International Legislation. However, during the years more tasks were added besides its original responsibility for export inspection. In 2007, as part of the Plantkeur-project, the Dutch Government delegated the task of import inspection to KCB, covering fruit and vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants.

Since 2007, the number of inspectors has been doubled with the inspectors who were formerly employed by the NPPO/PPS. This resulted in a great challenge to the body, as they had to educate all inspectors to implement both phytosanitary and quality inspection. Today, KCB has sufficient capacity to carry out the necessary inspections, in terms of number of staff, facilities and knowledge. All inspectors are authorised to implement both types of inspection, which means a solid basis for the implementation of an integrated quality inspection system.

Moreover, there is an agreement between the Ministry and KCB that some of the responsibilities of the Ministry, as a Coordinating Authority, are done by KCB. These activities are mostly related to the technical implementation of the EU and OECD rules. The cooperation and communication between the Ministry and KCB is described in a long-term agreement. There are two annual meetings at the Board level, twice per year, and two annual meetings on rather operational level. The Product Board of Horticulture is also involved in the last meeting. Reports are being made on both types of meetings. Moreover, the KCB reports yearly to the European Union on behalf of the Coordinating Authority.

The activities of the KCB are audited by independent organizations: The implementation of phytosanitary inspection by the Plant Protection Service; the implementation of the EC regulation 543/2011 and also the phytosanitary inspection by the Dutch Council of Accreditation. In addition, the annual budget, tariffs and balance sheet of KCB are subject to approval of the Ministry.

### 4.2.1 Quality inspectors

The KCB employs 78 inspectors (June 2011) responsible for quality control of fruit and vegetables before the retail phase. They belong to the Field Service within the organisational structure of the body.

Any person, who wants to become an inspector must have good knowledge of the agricultural sector, and must have finished secondary vocational education or training. Each new inspector has to undertake a 3 months initial training programme which is organised by the Department for Qualification and Knowledge Management (KKB). As part of the initial training, the new inspectors are introduced to all the departments of KCB and to learn their role in the Organisation. The programme covers theoretical and practical trainings in order to master the three basic qualifications:

- Quality inspection of fruits and vegetables,
- Phytosanitary inspections of fruits and vegetables and
- Phytosanitary inspections of flowers and pot plants.

There are 4 other types of qualifications, which an inspector can acquire at a later stage:

- Phytosanitary inspections of seeds;
- Phytosanitary inspections of bulbs;
- Phytosanitary inspections of potatoes; and,
- Phytosanitary inspections of other products.

Once every three year, the inspectors have to attend a refresher training course on each qualification, which they hold. During these one day refresher courses their knowledge on the specific qualification is refreshed and/or deepened. The inspectors have to pass a test at the end of each course in order to maintain their qualification.

Besides the refreshment courses, special harmonisation meetings are organised when necessary, to bring all inspectors up to date regarding interpretation of quality standards. This usually happens at the beginning of a new season.

All inspectors are fully equipped to implement the inspections which they are qualified to do. The measuring tools are calibrated with the required frequency. Any visual aids are developed by the specialists of the KKB Department, in close cooperation with the sector. It is especially important in order to have the commitment of growers and traders for their use in daily practice. The visual aids are compared with the original (mother card) every 2 years. Dirty or faded ones are destroyed, and the inspector receives a new copy.

Every inspector is equipped with a personal digital assistant (PDA). They receive on it, the details of the inspections which they have to carry out, and they use it to register the results of the inspection. The inspector also carries blank declarations of non conformity and blank control certificates (certificates of conformity) in case of the need of issuance. (Blank phytosanitary certificates are also carried by the inspectors, but they are not considered in respect of this Peer Review.) In the Netherlands, control

## **Chapter 4 - Structure of the Administration System**

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certificates are only issued for exports, for the 87 fruit and vegetable products that have to be declared and inspected. The control certificate is mainly considered as a communication document at Customs.

The Inspectors check the products according to the procedures and standards, as described in the KCB Procedure Handbook. These guidelines are digitally available both via computer and PDA. There are separate chapters in the Handbook with procedures for Import Quality Inspections, Import Phytosanitary Inspections, Export Quality Inspections, Export Phytosanitary Inspections, Internal EU market Inspections and Company Inspections.

The EU Specific Market Standards (SMS) and General Market Standard (GMS), and their Dutch interpretations are also available via the Procedure Handbook on the intranet. Any updates of the Procedure Handbook are published on the intranet, so they are immediately available to the inspectors. The Quality Manager is responsible for the communication of updates, to make people aware of the aspects that have changed. If necessary, the specialist of the KKB Department will organize instruction meetings for all inspectors. Moreover, the KCB has a weekly reports system via email, to bring issues to the attention of the inspectors quickly.

The KCB has an internal auditing system, in order to harmonize inspections between individual staff. The inspectors are audited yearly on each qualification which they hold. The audits are done by the Assistant Specialist of the District Office, who is nominated by the Management. The Assistant Specialists, on their turn, are audited by the Specialists of KKB Department. Moreover, the KKB Department is analyzing the database with inspection results (IBP) on a monthly basis, in order to check if all inspections are executed by qualified inspectors, and to see the number of non conformities per inspector. Notable cases are discussed with the district manager and the Assistant Specialist in the area. In case of large errors, an inspector may lose a qualification. This can be regained after sufficient training, followed by examination by the Specialist of the KKB Department.

The KCB attends training courses abroad, e.g. in the UK or the OECD sponsored international training courses, in order to harmonize their inspection system with other national systems. They also take part in technical working groups of the OECD, visit professional meetings such as the international meeting in Bonn organised by BLE. They also have bilateral meetings with EU member states and OECD members on the interpretation of standards.

### *4.2.2 Industry Awareness*

As described earlier, KCB can implement only public tasks, and is not allowed to have any commercial activities. Therefore, KCB does not provide training courses to the industry. Such training is provided by the specialized training institute, N&S. The KCB can provide expertise to this company upon request.

KCB contributes to the improvement of quality via inspections, but is not further involved in activities to improve the quality of production. This is the task of the companies in the agricultural sector. KCB also informs the sector about news and developments on quality issues via publications in professional journals by the KKB Department. Moreover, KCB meets with the professional organisations representing traders and growers to discuss the interpretations of quality standards, if necessary. KCB also meets with representatives of specific sectors to tune on relevant and actual issues e.g. on a yearly meeting with the coordinators of the quality control in companies.

## Chapter 5 - Fruit and vegetables quality inspection

### ***5.1 Inspection system***

The Dutch fruit and vegetables quality inspection system follows the requirements of the EU Regulation No. 543/2011. The national system is based on risk analysis following the provisions set out in this relevant EU legislation. The criteria for the risk assessment are:

- type of company (e.g. grower, importer, exporter, packer, logistical service provider) – This factor is used for risk assessment in Structural Supervision only (see paragraph 82 and further);
- type of product;
- volume of the product flow;
- country of origin;
- period of the year; and,
- experiences from the past with the product, i.e. non-conformities.

The KCB analyses these parameters on a yearly basis, to evaluate the risks and design the inspection programme. The KCB does examine trends in the number of inspections per year. As a result of the analysis, they have different inspection percentages for import, for export, for the internal EU market, and for different products, countries and periods, which improves the effectiveness of the inspection system.

In total, 87 fruit and vegetable products are subject to quality inspection at the import or export stage:

- 10 products with specific marketing standards since 1/7/2009;
- 26 products which had a specific marketing standard until 31/6/2009 and have since 1/7/2009 a general marketing standard; and,
- 51 other products which have been selected by KCB (in cooperation with representatives from the horticultural sector) based on the experience with the product, the sensitivity of the product to quality problems and the size of the product flow.

### ***5.2 Method of inspection***

The Netherlands, like other EU Member Countries, applies the OECD inspection methods for the quality inspection of fruit and vegetables. As regards sampling, the standard is a random reduced sample of 3 boxes per lot per inspection. When the inspector experiences quality problems with the lot, the sample is expanded to the necessary amount of boxes per lot for non conformity, as it is laid down in the EU Regulation No. 543/2011 and the OECD rules. The method for the determination of the size of the lot depends on the type of inspection. In case of an import or export inspection, the total consignment is considered as one lot. When part of the sample indicates non conformity in only one part of the consignment, then the sample is expanded for that part of the consignment. For inspection on the internal EU market (via Structural or General Supervision), a consignment is divided in lots per individual grower.

When a consignment is located in a warehouse, the sample boxes are picked randomly from the total number of boxes. If an import consignment is in a transport vehicle, the sample boxes are taken

## **Chapter 5 - Fruit and vegetables quality inspection**

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from the first six pallets in the container. All the boxes in the sample are emptied for inspection. In case of an export inspection, the total consignment must be ready for inspection. If part of the consignment is already in the transport vehicle, the vehicle has to be unloaded again.

For Dutch produce, a tolerance of 10% is applied, in which 2% is the maximum tolerance for products which do not fulfil the minimum requirements, i.e. products which are affected by decay. For foreign produce, a tolerance of 10% tolerance is also applicable, but with a maximum of 3% tolerance for produce which is affected by decay. Same tolerance level applies for the inspections before the retail phase, in ware houses and growers. However, the interpretation of standards may be different.

The costs of the inspections are invoiced to the market actors. For imports and exports, KCB applies a standard fee per inspection (for covering administrative and travelling costs), plus a fee per minute for the duration of the inspection (for covering inspection costs). For Structural Supervision a standard price per year applies per risk category, and the inspector takes a standard time for the duration of the visit depending the type and size of the company. The standard time varies between  $\frac{1}{6}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour:  $\frac{1}{6}$  hour in case of a (big) trader or packing house and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour in case of a primary production company. In case of necessity, the duration of the visit can be extended.

### *5.2.1 Imports*

Imports can enter the Netherlands via 15 different ports of entry: five by sea and ten by air. Imports of fruit and vegetables are in practice restricted to the two seaports of Rotterdam and Vlissingen, and the two airports of Schiphol and Maastricht. The inspections are carried out in port warehouses and at the point of destination. In 2010, 1 023 000 tonnes of fruits and vegetables were inspected, of which 613 000tonnes were products which were covered by one of the EU Specific Standards.

All imports of the 87 fruit and vegetable products, which are subject to inspection, should be notified to KCB. Most importing companies notify the KCB by using an IT system (Client Import).This system assigns inspections randomly to the shipments based on determined inspection frequency in the risk assessment system.

The products which are covered by the EU specific standards (SMS) are inspected, 100 percent. The products which are under the scope of the general marketing standard (GMS) are subject to ten percent inspection, unless the analysis shows a higher or lower risk. In case of a high risk, the inspection percentage is increased to 20% at first, but if the risk is judged to be high continuously over the years the inspection percentage may rise to 40, 60, 80 and eventually 100%. If the risk becomes lower over the years, the inspection percentage will go down again. In case of a low risk, the basic inspection percentage of 10% is decreased to 5%. The inspection frequency can be adjusted to a product irrespective of its origin or to a product from a specific origin in a specific period of the year only.

Products arriving from approved third countries, which have an EU accepted quality control system for export, are not subject to the 100% import inspection on SMS products. This exception is applicable strictly only for the products originated from the third country itself, and if a conformity certificate issued by the approved inspection service of the third country accompanies the shipment. In this case the inspection frequency is reduced to 5% of the lots. The same 5% inspection percentage is applicable for approved traders (RIK) who have an approved internal quality control system.

### *5.2.2 Exports*

In total 15,810 lots were inspected for export in 2010. This corresponds to 2 204 000 tons, of which 1 389 000 tonnes was SMS produce.

The 87 fruit and vegetable products which are subject to import inspection are also subject to export inspection. As regards the inspection frequency, consignments with only SMS products or a mix of SMS

and GMS products are inspected in 100 percent. The consignments which contain only GMS products are randomly checked in a 10 percent frequency. However, the risk analysis system can further adjust the inspection frequency; e.g. for approved traders, only five percent of the shipments is subject to inspection.

#### 5.2.3 Internal EU market

The quality of the produce in the internal EU market is inspected via *Structural Supervision* and *General Supervision*. The Structural Supervision is a regular unannounced control of producers, packers and traders of fruit and vegetables. The General Supervision is an extra unannounced control of companies (i.e. in addition to Structural Supervision), based on signals from experts, the market or other countries, or on non-conformity cases.

#### 5.2.4 Structural Supervision

KCB is responsible for controlling fruit and vegetable producers and traders in the Netherlands. Every location where production or marketing activities related to fruits and vegetables take place, is regarded as a potential place of control. All these locations, including their specific characteristics, have been collected in a central database system. As a basic rule, production is inspected in the primary production locations. The traded products to the internal EU market are inspected in locations where the fruits and vegetables are packed, sorted, or loaded.

The Structural Supervision is based on risk analysis. This system determines the frequency of the supervision of the growers and traders. There are some differences between the Structural Supervision for Traders and the Structural Supervision for Primary Production Companies.

##### 5.2.4.1 Risk analysis and classification in Structural Supervision for Traders

There are about 400 trading companies in the Structural Supervision system. In 2010, KCB inspected 26,801 lots during 4,396 visits. The decision on the need for Structural Supervision in a control location is based on three factors:

- the position of traders in the fruit and vegetables supply chain (e.g. grower, importer, exporter, packer, logistical service provider);
- applicable risk factors (e.g. product handling (sorting, packing), storage, import/export); and,
- size of the traders (e.g. volume, value).

These factors are incorporated into a scoring system, which determines the frequency of the supervision. The scores by factors are described in Table 6. The factors can increase or decrease the start score given to the grower or trader. The reduction of the score means a reduction of the potential risk.

The different types of market participants are mentioned in the first column of Table 6, with the corresponding start score in the second column. The third and fourth column represents the different risk factors with their corresponding scores. The start score and the scores associated with the risk factors must be added and/or deducted. The sum is then multiplied with 1, 2 or 4, depending on the size of the company, as mentioned in the fifth column, to give the total score.

The Structural Supervision for Primary Production Companies of SMS produce started on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 (see section 5.2.4.2).

## Chapter 5 - Fruit and vegetables quality inspection

Table 6. Overview of the scoring system in case of the Structural Supervision of Traders

Type of company	Start score	Risk factors increasing the start score	Risk factors reducing the start score	Multiplication factor by size
Grower of SMS produce	0	Loading (partly abroad directly or to retail): + 2		< 1000 ton x 1 1000 - 5000 ton x 2 > 5000 ton x 4
- Trader (import, export, internal EU market) - Sorting & Packing - Logistic Service Provider	4	- Storage of foreign products > 7 days without warehouse status : + 2 - > 2 SMS products + 2 - Sorting & Packing station (sorting, packing, repacking, marking) : + 2 - Pre-packing: + 2	<i>Specific for importers and exporters:</i> - Export: > 50% of size for export non EU destination : - 4  <i>For logistical service providers import:</i> - Logistic service provider import, no owner of the products - 4 - Import of products for storage completely via warehouse - 4	< 10000 ton x 1 10000 - 50000 ton x 2 > 50000 ton x 4

Source: Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau

The companies are classified into risk categories, based on their total risk score. The risk categories are associated with the control frequency as it is described in Table 7 below. The traders and sorting and packing stations which are dealing with only GMS products are classified as risk category III-a. Approved Traders (RIK) are not subject to the scoring system and classified as risk category IV with 2 visits per year.

Table 7. Overview of risk categories and control frequencies in the case of structural supervision of traders

Total score	Risk category	Control frequency per year
> 25	I	52 visits
13-25	II	26 visits
6-12	III	12 visits
	III-a*	6 visits
	IV**	2 visits
3-5	V	2 visits
0-2	-	No Structural Supervision

\* Traders and sorting & packing stations with only GMS produce are classified as risk category III-a.

\*\* Participants in the Approved Trader system (RIK) are not subject to the scoring system and classified as risk category IV with 2 visits per year.

Source: Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau

### 5.2.4.2 Risk analysis & Classification in Structural Supervision for Primary Production Companies

Structural Supervision in primary production companies is currently under development in the Netherlands. The Board of KCB has approved a proposal for such a system in March 2011. KCB expects that about 300 to 400 companies will be subject to the Structural Supervision for Primary Production Companies.

The Structural Supervision for Primary Production Companies will be applied only for SMS products for the time being. In the Netherlands this means: strawberries, tomatoes, sweet peppers, pears, apples,

lettuce and endives. Primary production companies with only GMS produce will be brought under Structural Supervision at a later stage.

The Structural Supervision will be applied only to companies of which the produce is directly transported to the retailers and/or abroad. Primary production companies that have their produce sorted (and packed) elsewhere, will be excluded from the Structural Supervision as the KCB is already inspecting the sorting and packing stations in the Structural Supervision system for traders.

Moreover, the primary production companies, of which produce is not transported directly to retailers and/or abroad, but is delivered 100 percent to the collection points in the Netherlands which are already in the Structural Supervision System for Traders, will also be excluded from the Structural Supervision. In case, a primary production company meets the criteria for Structural Supervision, but delivers 100 percent of its product to one approved company (RIK), the control frequency for the production company will be reduced to 1 visit per year.

The decision on the need for Structural Supervision in a primary production location is based on three factors:

- the product that is being produced;
- the size of the production area (in ha) per product; and,
- where the product is delivered to.

The factors are incorporated into a scoring system, which determines the frequency of the supervision. The scores by factors are described in Table 8 below.

In the first column the different products are shown. The third column describes the different risk factors associated with scores. The start score and the scores for risk factors must be added. The sum is then multiplied with 1, 2, 3 or 4, depending on the size of the company, as mentioned in the fourth column. This will give the total score.

**Table 8. Overview of the scoring system for the Structural Supervision of Primary Production Companies**

Type of company/grower of	Start score	Risk factors (increasing) with points	Multiplication factor for size
Sweet pepper Tomato Lettuce (except Iceberg Lettuce) Strawberry (open) Endive	0	Loading (partly abroad directly or to retail): + 2*	< 3 hectare x1 3 - 5 hectare x2 5 - 15 hectare x3 > 15 hectare x4
Fruit (apple and/or pear) Iceberg Lettuce	0	Loading (partly abroad directly or to retail): + 2*	< 10 hectare x1 10 - 20 hectare x2 20 - 50 hectare x3 > 50 hectare x4
Strawberry (glass/plastic)	0	Loading (partly abroad directly or to retail) + 2*	< 1 hectare x1 1 - 3 hectare x2 3 - 5 hectare x3 > 5 hectare x4

\*Excepted are primary production companies that have no packing activities and/or packed products on their premises.  
Source: Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau

## Chapter 5 - Fruit and vegetables quality inspection

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The companies will be classified into risk categories, based on their total risk score. The risk categories are associated with the control frequency as it is described in Table 9 below. The company which delivers 100% of its produce to one approved company will be put into the risk category "T IV".

Table 9. Overview of risk categories and Control frequencies in case of Structural Supervision for Primary Production Companies

Total score	Risk category	Control frequency per year
8-12	T I	12 visits
6-7	T II	6 visits
3-5	T III	2 visits
0-2	--	No Structural Supervision
n.a.	T IV*	1 visit

\* Companies that deliver 100% to one RIK company are assigned to this risk category.

Source: Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau

### 5.3 Approved traders (RIK)

Quality inspection is necessary as well as compulsory in international trade. However, it is a time consuming procedure and therefore hampers logistical processes. This time loss could mean a heavy burden for many companies, especially for those who already have their own quality control systems in place. The Netherlands recognized this problem and was looking into possibilities for a less frequent control of companies, which have an operating quality control system. At about the same time, the EU created in the EU Regulation No. 1148/2001, the possibility to reduce the inspection frequency for companies that meet certain criteria, concerning the assurance of product quality. In the Netherlands this led to the development of the system of approved traders. The approval results in reduced numbers of inspection for import and export. Approved companies are also assigned to a lower risk category in the Structural Supervision.

The companies must meet the following criteria, in order to participate in the RIK (Reglement Interne Kwaliteitscontrole, Regulation on Internal Quality control) system and become an approved trader:

- To have good inspection results over a period of six consecutive months; this means less than 10% non conformities over this period; and,
- To have an operating quality control system for fruit and vegetables in place that meets the criteria that are laid down in the KCB Quality Code.

The quality control system is audited, before a trader gets the RIK approval. During the audit, the KCB examines the design and implementation of the quality control system, the qualifications of the quality inspectors and the maintenance of the system. In the first year, the company is audited two times, and in the following period only once per year. Any deviation recognised during an audit can eventually lead to the exclusion of companies from the RIK system. Moreover, in case of severe problems, like manipulation of country of origin, transportation of produce that is in non conformity or repetitive offenses, companies can be excluded.

### 5.4 Retail

Inspections at the retail level are carried out by inspectors of NVWA (Netherlands Consumer Authority).

## 5.5 Non conformities

Non conformity can occur during all types of inspection, but the follow-up can be different. The inspector will always put the consignment on hold and issue a declaration of non-conformity (VVnC). This means that the company, who holds the product, is not allowed to transport the consignment without approval of KCB.

During import inspection, if a non conformity is determined, the company has the possibility to correct the problem (e.g. with relabeling, resorting or repacking), or send it back or give it a non-EU destination (the last two options are seldom used in practice). However, if the product is rotten, the consignment will mostly be destroyed. In cases, where the problem is corrected or the product is destroyed, KCB makes a follow-up visit to approve that the measures have been taken. As the receiving company cannot be held responsible for the bad quality of the products which are shipped by the supplier, no legal actions are taken. However, if an imported consignment, which has been put on hold because of non-conformity, is moved without approval, a Report of Offense (RvO) is made by KCB.

In the case of export inspection or General and Structural Supervision, an occurring non-conformity case must be solved by the company before KCB approves any further transport of the shipment. A non conformity case in these types of inspection leads more often to a Report of Offense, compared to the import, as the companies can be held responsible for the quality of the products presented for inspection.

Generally, the first offense of the requirements of the quality standards is followed by a written warning to the market actor. If the first offense is very severe or more offenses occur, the case can be referred to the Disciplinary Tribunal by KCB. When the Disciplinary Tribunal considers the offense as proven, the market actor can be sanctioned, e.g. by a fine.

In 2010, 17 cases were taken to the Disciplinary Tribunal, and the fines varied from 225 euro to 4,500 euro (the maximum). The Tribunal received 21 cases in 2009 and 5 cases in 2008. In severe cases, when there are multiple offenses in a short period of time or when the nature of the offense is serious, the case will be taken over by the NVWA (Netherlands Consumer Authority) and the market actor will be prosecuted. However it is a rare case and has not happened in 2009 and 2010.

The declarations of non conformity for imports are entered into the central EU database via the AWAI Portal of DG Agriculture and Rural Development, on a monthly basis. If the country of origin is an EU member state, the system can generate a message to that country directly. Otherwise, the Netherlands does not inform the countries of origin about non conformities. However, it is planned to explore the possibilities to start doing this in the near future.

In the case of exports or General and Structural Supervision, there is no follow up action and no information is given to a third party. Most of the time, these non-conformity cases are concerning to products, which originate in the Netherlands. If the product originates from another country, the reason of the non-conformity is usually the rotten of products. This quality problem cannot be related back to the country of origin because the product may have been stored in the Netherlands already for some time.

Occasionally, KCB receives a notification of non conformity from a third country. This information is submitted to the Department for Product & Control Affairs at the KCB Head Office. The information is passed to the relevant District Office, which informs the respective company.

## **Chapter 6 - Summary and conclusion**

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### **Chapter 6 - Summary and conclusion**

The Peer Review visit took place in The Hague, where the Peer Review Team met with officials from the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, which is the responsible authority for fruit and vegetables inspection. The Team also met with representatives of KCB which has the delegated task for implementation of fruit and vegetables inspection from the Ministry. During the visit, the Peer Review Team managed to follow the quality inspection at export and import stages in packing houses in the Midwest region (The Hague) and the Southwest region (Rotterdam), as well as an Structural Supervision inspection (in this particular case of an approved trader).

#### ***6.1 Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation***

The Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation (Ministry) is a newly established Ministry in the Dutch administration system. This Ministry is the responsible authority for the implementation of fresh fruit and vegetables quality inspection in the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme. They provide political and legislative background and control the implementation of the quality inspection system. The Ministry delegated these tasks of quality inspection to the Quality Control Bureau (Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, KCB) on the international trade and at the wholesale and producer level, and to the Netherlands Consumer Authority (NVWA), which is responsible for inspections at the retail level.

#### ***6.2 Quality Control Bureau (Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, KCB)***

The Quality Control Bureau was originally established in 1924 by producers and traders for export inspection of Dutch fruit and vegetables intended for the Western European Market. Over the years, this task was extended by internal market and import inspection of a wider range of products. Since 2007, the Ministry delegated also the task of phytosanitary inspection to KCB. The concentration of the task of the implementation of these two types of inspection into KCB, and the well trained and authorised KCB inspectors for the implementation of both types of inspection created a good basis for the establishment of an integrated quality inspection system.

The KCB is operating under the direction of the Board, with representatives of traders and growers, as well as the Government. The implementation of the different types of inspections is audited by independent organisations. KCB is a non-profit body and is only authorised for the implementation of public tasks. Therefore, the annual budget and the fees of the Bureau that companies have to pay for inspections are subject to approval by the Ministry. As regard the structural organisation, KCB has four District Offices, besides its Headquarters, giving full territorial coverage of the Netherlands. These offices are responsible for the execution of inspections in their specific regions.

#### ***6.3 Inspectors***

The KCB employs 78 inspectors (June 2011) responsible for quality control of fruit and vegetables. All inspectors are fully equipped with the necessary tools for the implementation of inspections which they are authorised for. All inspectors have access to the Procedure Handbook, developed by KCB, where they can find the inspection procedures and the national standard interpretation. The OECD explanatory materials and guidelines were taken into account in the development of this Handbook. Moreover, every inspector is equipped with a PDA which is particularly important, as all information on their daily inspection plan and the result of the completed inspection is exchanged via this IT tool. All the administration of the inspection system is practically online and the control certificate is mainly considered as a communication document at Customs.

Candidates shall have a good knowledge of the agricultural sector, and must have finished secondary vocational education or training. The initial training is 3 months where they have to master the three

basic qualifications, the quality inspection of fruits and vegetables and the phytosanitary inspection of fruit and vegetables as well as flowers and pot plants. At a later stage, they can also master an additional four qualifications. The inspectors must attend on refreshment training subject to their qualification and pass a test in order to maintain their qualifications. Besides the refresher courses, KCB organises special harmonisation meetings, if it is needed, especially at the beginning of a new season. Moreover, the daily work of the inspectors is supervised through an annual internal auditing process.

### **6.4 Marketing standards**

The Netherlands applies the EU marketing standards, as defined in the EU legislation. Their application is compulsory. During the 2008 EU reform of the fruit and vegetables sector, the EU kept specific standards only for the 10 most important traded fruit and vegetables products. The EU also introduced the General Marketing Standard for those products which are not covered by specific standards.

The application of the OECD/UNECE standards is voluntary in the Netherlands. The Government does not check the compliance of the traded products with these standards, only their compliance with the Specific and General Marketing Standards. However, OECD/UNECE standards may be applied by market partners.

### **6.5 Fruit and vegetables quality inspection system**

The Dutch fruit and vegetables quality inspection system follows the requirements of the EU Regulation No. 543/2011. They apply the current 10 Specific and the General EU marketing standards. In total, 87 fruit and vegetable products are subject to inspection. The national inspection system is based on risk analysis following the provisions set out in the relevant EU legislation. The EU system is based on the OECD inspection methods. According to the risk assessment, the Netherlands established different inspection frequencies for export and import and for the internal EU market. There is also a risk analysis in place for products, countries and specific periods. The cost of inspection is covered by the inspected companies. The fees that inspected companies have to pay to the KCB are approved by the Ministry.

Imports can enter the Netherlands via 15 different ports of entry. The inspections are carried out in port warehouses and at the point of destination. All imports of the above mentioned 87 products have to be notified to the KCB. Most of the importing companies use the IT system Client Import to do this. Only a few do not apply the system, and they notify KCB by fax. The IT system Client Import assigns inspections randomly to the shipments based on determined inspection frequency in the risk assessment system. For exports a similar IT system is made, but this system is in an introduction phase. Until this system is used by exporting companies, they have to notify KCB before exporting by fax.

The quality of the produce in the internal EU market is inspected via Structural Supervision and General Supervision. The Structural Supervision is a regular control of producers and traders of fruit and vegetables. The General Supervision is an unannounced control of companies, based on signals from the market or other countries, or on non-conformity cases. Both types of inspections are based on risk analysis.

Dutch companies, which have an operating quality control system, can become approved traders under certain conditions, based on article 12 of EU Regulation No. 543/2011. The approval results in a reduced numbers of inspections for import and export. Approved traders are also assigned to a lower risk category in the Structural Supervision.

In case of non-conformity, the inspector always puts the consignment on hold and issues a declaration of non-conformity (VVnC). In this case the company is not allowed to transport the consignment without approval of KCB. However, in most cases, the company corrects the mistakes and requests a new inspection.

## **Chapter 6 - Summary and conclusion**

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### **6.6 Technical visit**

The Peer Review Team followed the planning and processing procedures for export and import inspection, as well as the planning and coordination of the monitoring inspections for the Structural Supervision at the KCB office. The Team also visited companies where they were able to see, export and import inspections, as well as Structural Supervision. The quality inspection at retail stage was not followed as it is implemented by another inspection body.

The Netherlands is one of the largest exporters and importers of fruit and vegetables products in the world. The inspection system has to be well organised in order to manage the large volume and diverse fruit and vegetable consignments. Moreover, KCB covers besides the quality inspection of 87 fruit and vegetable product also the phytosanitary inspection of many products (fruits, vegetables, cut flowers, pot plants and diverse products). Therefore, the Dutch data management system for inspection has to manage and coordinate a large amount of information covering all products and all types of inspection. This system is fully digitalised from the request for inspection to the issuance of certificates. The system is run by the Ministry for Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation but the daily operation is the responsibility of KCB.

Most traders have a user interface for the IT system Client Import via which they notify KCB on all incoming import consignments. Companies that don't have such interface notify KCB by fax, and KCB enters the data in the IT system. It is obligatory to enter all imports of fruits, vegetables and flowers in this IT environment, as the system is connected to the risk analysis system and automatically analyses the data input on the consignments and decides if an inspection is necessary. The inspection frequency is determined by risk assessment, and the system randomly assigns the consignments to inspection (like a dice game) accordingly. For export a similar IT system is in the introduction phase.

The consignments which are subject to inspection come into an electronic system where they are associated with inspectors. This planning is done by experienced experts, who take into account the place of inspection, the required type(s) of inspection, the qualification of the inspector and the capacity of the inspectors in charge of the given day. The electronic system is usually running smoothly. However, during the visit, the central server collapsed and all the system was shut down. In this case, the coordination of inspection has to be done manually, using the traditional method of paper notifications, phone calls, faxes and paper based documentation. These periods requires extra attention from the Coordination Unit of KCB, even though they are well prepared for these events.

The inspectors automatically receive their daily inspection plan on their PDA. They have to implement the phytosanitary and/or quality inspection of the consignment and fill in the online forms. As a result of a positive inspection, a code is sent to traders via the system. With this code, custom clearance can be done by the trader. If the result is negative, the inspector puts the consignment on hold. The custom authorities are also informed of this decision.

The Peer Review Team visited an importing company, "Hispa", which originally was specialised on Spanish imports. Nowadays the company focuses on imports of pineapple. The company has its own quality inspection on place and they also have all necessary inspection tools. The inspection table is mobile, and was well illuminated. The inspector chose the sample boxes randomly. He implemented the phytosanitary and quality inspection at the same time. All fruits in the sample boxes were checked for both phytosanitary and quality aspects. Each checked box was marked by the inspector with visible stickers. The inspection result was registered on the inspector's PDA and the result was sent to the central database. It meant that the IT system automatically sent back a code to the trader that the consignment is ready for custom clearance.

During the visit to an exporting company, the Peer Review Team followed the measures taken in case of non-conformity. The inspector followed the same procedure for sampling and inspection as described in the Section on import inspection (see Section 5.2.1). The sweet pepper consignment fulfilled

the phytosanitary requirements but failed to meet with the marking provisions of the EU Specific Standard. In this case the inspector issued a declaration of non-conformity and put all consignment on hold. The pallets were clearly marked with a copy of the declaration. This measure meant that this consignment could not be moved anywhere without the agreement from KCB. The company had to request a repeated inspection in order to justify that the necessary correction was made on the lot.

The inspector explained that the result of the quality and phytosanitary inspections is treated in an integrated system. If the consignment does not comply with one of those requirements, the consignment is put on hold. Once the trader makes the necessary corrections and the repeated inspection justifies that the consignment fulfils the phytosanitary and quality requirements, the consignment can be cleared by the custom authorities.

The Peer Review Team also followed the Structural Supervision of an approved company in the RIK system. This type of inspection takes place twice per year in approved companies. The inspection frequency of non approved companies is calculated based on risk assessment. During the structural supervision the inspector has the right to control the company's quality inspection system and all products which are in the storage facilities and already prepared for the trade. The inspection methods follow the same principles as described for import inspection. All inspection results are registered in the IT system and the risk associated with the company is modified according to the outcome of the supervision. A positive outcome of the supervision is necessary for the RIK companies in order to maintain their approved status.

## **Chapter 7 - Assessments and Recommendations**

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### **Chapter 7 - Assessments and Recommendations**

#### **7.1 General remarks**

This Peer Review Report discussed the Dutch fruit and vegetables export and import quality inspection system, as well as the internal market inspection before the retail stage. The retail stage itself was not discussed, as it is implemented by another authority. The Peer Review Team followed the export and import inspection and a Structural Supervision inspection (at an approved trader in this particular case). The assessment and recommendations on the quality inspection system are based on this experience.

#### **7.2 The Designated Authority (Ministry and the KCB)**

The Peer Review Team met with officials of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, which is the responsible authority in the OECD and EU inspection system. The Team also met with officials of the Quality Control Bureau (Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, KCB) which has the delegated task of implementing the fruit and vegetables inspection at the export and import stage, as well as in the internal market before the retail stage. They provided all the necessary information and shared their experiences on fruit and vegetables quality inspection.

The cooperation and communication between the Ministry and the KCB is excellent. The Ministry regularly receives feedback from the KCB, and this information is taken into account in the further development of the fruit and vegetables inspection system. The KCB is well organised and manages the quality inspection task well. Their administrative structure and their long experience and know-how ensures the proper implementation of the OECD and EU fruit and vegetables quality inspection system.

#### **7.3 Quality inspectors**

##### **7.3.1 Educational background and training**

The KCB quality inspectors have a good educational background and a great affinity with the agriculture sector. The initial education generally takes three months where the candidates acquire knowledge on the KCB and pass theoretical and practical exams on the major qualifications of fruit and vegetables quality and phytosanitary inspection and flower and pot plant phytosanitary inspection. The inspectors have to confirm their qualification every three years by attending refresher courses and passing the necessary exams.

The initial education period is less extended in time compared with other OECD Scheme Members. However, this relatively short period can be explained by KCB's recruitment policy. The candidates usually have an extended agricultural background and often come from the private sector with experiences in quality inspection. Moreover, the initial training period is flexible and can be extended, adapting to the individual's needs.

##### **7.3.2 Inspector's equipment**

The Peer Review Team confirmed that Dutch inspectors are well equipped with inspection kits and IT tools for electronic data management. In more detail, the inspector's bag includes all the necessary tools and equipment such as scales, measuring rings, knife, caliper and refractometer. The measuring tools are regularly calibrated. All inspectors are equipped with a PDA, on which they receive the daily inspection plan and manage all administrative obligations related to quality inspection. They also have access to the KCB Procedure Handbook via the PDA. This Handbook includes procedures for all types of inspection as well as the EU Specific Standards and the General Marketing Standard and their Dutch interpretation. KCB

took into account the OECD guidelines and explanatory materials during the development of this Handbook.

### **7.2 Quality inspection system**

#### *7.2.1 Implementation of the quality inspection system*

The Dutch implementation of the EU (and OECD) fruit and vegetables quality inspection system is pragmatic, bearing in mind the need for simplification as stated in the original aim of the 2008 EU reform. The KCB has the structural capacity to implement the phytosanitary and quality inspection in an integrated system. This integrated approach enhances the efficiency of the inspection system and means less visits, less administrative burden for the companies and they are less interrupted in their business activities.

The Peer Review Team suggests that other countries could also consider developing an integrated quality inspection system. The Dutch practice could serve as a model for other countries. Moreover, the Netherlands is a member of the OECD Working Group on Integrated Quality Inspection, where they can share their experience and contribute to the ongoing development of a study on this subject. However, it should be noted that the Dutch integrated approach can be developed in countries where the phytosanitary and quality inspections are implemented by one single organisation. In case of national systems, where these inspections are divided and implemented by different bodies, better coordination could be a way for the establishment of an integrated quality inspection system.

#### *7.2.2 Data management system*

The Ministry in cooperation with the KCB established and operates an electronic data management system. The use of this system greatly increases the efficiency of inspection and simplifies the administration for traders, as well as for the inspection authorities. Most traders have a user interface with the Client Import system installed on their computer via which they can notify the authorities on all import consignments. The system analyses these inputs and determines the need for import inspections based on a risk assessment system. For exports, a similar system is in the introductory phase. On the other side, all inspectors are equipped with a PDA, on which they receive the daily inspection plan and manage all administrative obligations related to quality inspection.

The Peer Review Team suggests to member countries to develop an electronic data management system as it reduces the administrative burden and increases the efficiency of the inspection system. The Dutch system provides a good example for such an IT system.

#### *7.2.3 Quality inspection in different stages of marketing*

KCB implements fruit and vegetables quality inspection except at the retail stage. The Ministry delegated the task of inspection of retailers to the Netherlands Consumer Authority (NVWA) upon the request of the retailers. Their argument was based on a reduction in the number of visits to the retail shops by different authorities to a minimum. Therefore, the Ministry decided to concentrate all types of food control, including fruit and vegetables at retail stage into NVWA as they already implement all types of food controls.

However, the methodology of fruit and vegetables quality inspection greatly differs from other food quality control. The sampling methods and the spot checks are the peculiarities of the fruit and vegetables quality check comparing with the food control based on laboratory analysis. These differences require special knowledge for the implementation of these two types of inspection. Moreover, the EU legislation also separates the fruit and vegetables sector from other food products.

## **Chapter 7 - Assessments and Recommendations**

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It is also necessary to emphasize the importance of the proper handling and maintaining the quality of the products at retail stores. This is the last stage in the food chain and the displayed products should meet all quality requirements as labeled on the shelves and/or packages. Therefore, a proper inspection is necessary. As the quality requirements are the same along the supply chain, it would be important and logical, that the inspection system is implemented also in the same manner at every stage of marketing. From the above, the Peer Review Team suggests to the Netherlands to concentrate the fruit and vegetables inspection at all stages of marketing in KCB.

**ANNEXES**

- ANNEX I.           BASIC STATISTICS OF THE NETHERLANDS (2009)**
- ANNEX II.          NUMBER OF HOLDINGS IN THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES SECTOR IN THE NETHERLANDS**
- ANNEX III.         DUTCH EXPORT AND IMPORT OF HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS BY VALUE**
- ANNEX IV.          DECLARATION OF NON-CONFORMITY**
- ANNEX V.           PROGRAMME OF THE PEER REVIEW VISIT**
- ANNEX VI.          LIST OF PERSONS MET BY THE PEER REVIEW TEAM**
- ANNEX VII.         LIST OF REFERENCES**

## ANNEX I.

## BASIC STATISTICS OF THE NETHERLANDS, 2009

## THE LAND

Area (1 000 km <sup>2</sup> )		Major cities (thousand inhabitants)	
Total	41.5	Amsterdam	747
Agricultural area (1 000 km <sup>2</sup> )	19.1	Rotterdam	583
Woodland	3.7	The Hague	475

## THE PEOPLE

Population (thousands)	16 485	Total employment (thousands)	8 638.5
Natural increase (thousands)	50.7	Employment (% of total, 2008)	
Number of inhabitants per km <sup>2</sup>	489	Agriculture	2.6
		Industry	18.0
		Other	79

## PRODUCTION (2008)

Gross domestic product (in billion EUR)	595.9	Gross fixed capital investment	
Gross domestic product per head (thousands EUR)	36.2	In % of GDP	20.4

## Per head (EUR)

7 401.3

## THE GOVERNMENT

Public consumption (% of GDP)	28.2	Composition of Parliament (seats)	150
General government (% of GDP)		Christian Democratic Appeal	41
Current disbursements	48.9	Dutch Labour Party	33
Current receipts	46	Socialist Party	25
		People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	21
		Party for Freedom	9
		Others	30
Last election: November 2006			
Next election: June 2010			

## FOREIGN TRADE

Exports of goods and services (% of GDP)	69.3	Imports of goods and services (% of GDP)	62
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## THE CURRENCY

Monetary unit: Euro		Currency unit per USD, average of daily figures:	
		Year 2009	0.72
		April 2010	0.75

Source: OECD Economic Surveys: The Netherlands 2010

## ANNEX II.

## NUMBER OF HOLDINGS IN THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES SECTOR IN THE NETHERLANDS

	<b>Number of holdings</b>					
	2000	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010*
<b>Nutrition Horticulture Production</b>						
vegetables under glass (incl. strawberries)	3.433	2.547	2.211	2.022	1.878	1.765
Field vegetables (incl. strawberries)	16.457	12.625	12.019	11.748	11.331	11.039
fruit under glass (excl. strawberries)	142	115	133	117	109	108
fruit outdoor (excl. strawberries)	3.433	2.724	2.637	2.660	2.692	2.665
Mushrooms	546	315	253	242	215	194
<b>Wholesale</b>						
total	1.249	1.265	1.217	1.216	1.218	.
Internal wholesale (trade > EUR 0,5 mln)	428	443	455	453	455	.
exporters (trade > EUR 0,5 mln)	286	295	324	322	335	.
importers (trade > EUR 0,5 mln)	115	128	130	137	143	.
distributive trade (trade > EUR 0,3 mln)	119	115	116	112	99	.
<b>Retail trade</b>						
Potato, Fruit-and vegetable companies	2.666	2.028	1.871	1.818	1.737	1.699
Market and street trade	1.268	1.274	1.245	1.213	1.190	1.177
<b>Processing Industry</b>						
(conservation of fruit and vegetables)	114	72	67	66	71	78
<b>First processing of fruits and vegetables)</b>						
(cutting, washing, packaging of fresh fruit and)	76	84	74	77	89	.

\* = preliminary data

Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation

**Annexes**

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**ANNEX III.**

**DUTCH EXPORT AND IMPORT OF HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS BY VALUE**

<b>Export (including re-export)</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010*</b>
	<b>x million Euros</b>		
Nutrition Horticulture (total)	5.831	6.968	9.340
Vegetables total	3.358	3.532	4.640
• Fresh	2.695	2.885	3.900
• Processed	663	647	740
Fruit total	2.110	2.844	3.900
• Fresh	1.157	1.824	2.500
• Processed	953	1.020	1.400
Nuts & spices	363	592	800

Source: Eurostat

<b>Import (including re-export)</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010*</b>
	<b>x million Euro</b>		
Nutrition Horticulture	4.285	5.269	7.080
Vegetables total	1.031	1.244	1.520
• Fresh	659	839	1.040
• Processed	372	405	480
Fruit total	2.641	3.243	4.580
• fresh	1.397	2.083	2.870
• Processed	1.244	1.160	1.710
Nuts & spices	613	782	980

Source: Eurostat

## ANNEX IV.

## DECLARATION OF NON-CONFORMITY

Verklaring van niet conformiteit, als bedoeld in artikel 20, lid 3 van de EG-verordening 1580/2007		Nr. 000000 IBP Nr.																																																	
 <p><b>KWALITEITS - CONTROLE - BUREAU</b> www.kcb.nl</p> <p><b>VERKLARING VAN NIET CONFORMITEIT</b></p>																																																			
<p>Na het uitvoeren van een inspectie bleek onderstaande partij groenten of fruit niet te voldoen aan de eisen, die bij of krachtens het Landbouwkwaliteitsbesluit 2007 zijn gesteld. Het vervoeren, verplaatsen, verhandelen of vernietigen van deze partij is slechts toegestaan nadat hiervoor door het Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau toestemming is gegeven. Indien in strijd hiermee wordt gehandeld, is dit een overtreding van artikel 14 van de Landbouwkwaliteitsregeling 2007.</p>																																																			
Terugmelden aan KCB rayonkantoor	Telnr.	Datum																																																	
Naam marktdeelnemer		Soort inspectie	IMPORT / EXPORT / STRUCTUREEL TOEZICHT / ALGEMEEN TOEZICHT / ARBITRAJE* OVERIG:																																																
Adres		RIK bedrijf	JA / NEE*																																																
Postcode en vestigingsplaats		Handtekening bedrijf																																																	
Mondeling medegedeeld aan																																																			
Partij identificatie/merk	Product en variëteit	Aangeduide klasse																																																	
Aangeduide maat/sortering	Aangeduide inhoud (kg/st)	Aantal colli	Land van herkomst																																																
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2)		colli	colli																																																
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4)		colli	colli																																																
Uitgevoerde handeling om partij in overeenstemming te brengen			Stempel inspecteur																																																
Aanvullende gegevens bij afkeuring buitenlands product (evt. importdocumenten bijvoegen bij kopie hoofdkantoor)																																																			
Wijze vervoer naar EU en identificatie NAW verpakker LvH (zie colli)	Nr. fytosanitair certificaat																																																		
NAW exporteur LvH																																																			
NAW ontvanger EU																																																			
Opmerkingen																																																			

\* Doorhalen wat niet van toepassing is

Groen: KCB / Blauw: KCB / Geel: bedrijf / Geel dik papier: afgekeurde partij

**ANNEX V.**

**PROGRAMME OF THE PEER REVIEW VISIT**

**Tuesday 7 June 2011**

9.30	Pick-up from hotel (by Ministry)
10.00	Opening session at the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, VNO-NCW Building, Bezuidenhoutseweg 12, 2594 AV The Hague Presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Organisation of the ministry</li><li>- Fruit and Vegetable sector in the Netherlands</li><li>- Organisation of Quality Control for Fruit and Vegetables in the Netherlands</li></ul>
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch at the Ministry
13.00 – 13.30	Transport to Kwaliteits-Control-Bureau Head Office (KCB), Platinaweg 10, The Hague
13.30 – 14.00	Presentation “Introduction to KCB” (by Jean Crombach, Technical Director)
14.00 – 15.00	Presentation “Organisation of quality inspection system” (by Anouk Lafeber, Product & Control Affairs)
15.00 – 15.15	Coffee breaks
15.15 – 16.15	Presentation “Organisation of training of inspectors” (by Peter Damen, Qualification & Knowledge Management)
16.15 – 17.00	Discussion and questions
18.00	Dinner at Le Bistroquet – Lange Voorhout 98 – 2514 EJ Den Haag (with EL&I and KCB representatives)

**Wednesday 8 June 2011**

08.30	Pick up from hotel (by KCB)
08.30 – 09.30	Travel to Barendrecht
09.30 – 09.45	Welcome at KCB rayon office Barendrecht
09.45 – 10.00	Explanation on request, processing and planning of import and export inspections via PDA (by Ben Schaaf)
10.15 – 11.45	Import inspections at Hispa or Hilfresh (depending on availability)
12.00 – 13.15	Lunch at Restaurant van der Valk in Ridderkerk
13.30 – 15.15	Export inspections at Zoutewelle or T. van Noort (depending on availability)
15.30 – 16.00	Wrap up meeting at KCB rayon office Barendrecht
16.00 – 17.00	Return trip to hotel in The Hague

**Thursday 9 June 2011**

08.30	Pick up from hotel (by KCB)
08.30 – 09.00	Travel to Poeldijk
09.00 – 09.15	Welcome at KCB rayon office Poeldijk
09.15 – 09.30	Explanation on planning and co-ordination of monitoring inspections for Structural Supervision in internal market (by Erwin Kok)
09.45 – 12.00	Monitoring Inspection Structural Supervision at Van Rijn
12.15 – 13.30	Lunch at Party centre Madestein
14.00 – 16.00	Closing session at KCB head office, Platinaweg 10, The Hague

**ANNEX VI.**  
**LIST OF PERSONS MET BY THE PEER REVIEW TEAM**

Name	Title	Address
<b>OECD PEER REVIEW TEAM</b>		
Mr. Gunter Jessl	Coordinator III/10 Fruit, Vegetables, Special Crops	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management Stubenring 1 A-1010 Vienna Austria  Tel: +43 1 71100-2745 Fax: +43 1 71100-2891 Email: guenter.jessl@lebensministerium.at
Mr. Csaba Gaspar	Agricultural Policy Analyst	OECD Trade and Agriculture Directorate Agricultural Codes and Schemes Marshall Building 5087 2 rue André-Pascal 75016 Paris France Tel: +(33-1) 45 24 95 53 Email: Csaba.GASPAR@oecd.org
<b>MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, AGRICULTURE AND INNOVATION</b>		
Mr. Jan van de Wijnboom	Senior staff officer	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation Department of Agro chains and Fisheries Prins Clauslaan 8 NL-2595 AJ 's-Gravenhage The Netherlands Tel: +(31)70 378 46 42 Email: j.a.f.vandewijnboom@mineleni.nl

**Annexes**

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<b>KWALITEITS-CONTROLE-BUREAU</b>		
Mr. Martien de Graaf	General Director	Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau (KCB) Platinaweg 10 NL-2544 EZ 's-Gravenhage The Netherlands Tel.: +(31)70 308 80 00 Fax: +(31)70 308 80 01 Email: m.degraaf@kcb.nl
Mr. Jean Crombach	Technical Director and Head of the Department Product & Control Affairs	Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau (KCB) Platinaweg 10 NL-2544 EZ 's-Gravenhage The Netherlands Tel.: +(31)70 308 80 00 Fax: +(31)70 308 80 01 Email: j.crombach@kcb.nl
Mr. Peter Damen	Head of Department Qualification & Knowledge Management	Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau (KCB) Platinaweg 10 NL-2544 EZ 's-Gravenhage The Netherlands Tel.: +(31)70 308 80 00 Fax: +(31)70 308 80 01 Email: pmmdamen@kcb.nl
Mr. Mat Kersten	Specialist Quality Affairs, Department Qualification & Knowledge Management	Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau (KCB) Platinaweg 10 NL-2544 EZ 's-Gravenhage The Netherlands Tel.: +(31)70 308 80 00 Fax: +(31)70 308 80 01 Email: m.kersten@kcb.nl
Mr. Erwin Kok	Planner (Midwest district)	Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau (KCB) Platinaweg 10 NL-2544 EZ 's-Gravenhage The Netherlands Tel.: +(31)70 308 80 00 Fax: +(31)70 308 80 01 Email: e.kok@kcb.nl
Mrs. Anouk Lafeber	Employee Department Product & Control Affairs	Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau (KCB) Platinaweg 10 NL-2544 EZ 's-Gravenhage The Netherlands Tel.: +(31)70 308 80 00 Fax: +(31)70 308 80 01 Email: a.lafeber@kcb.nl

<b>VISITED COMPANIES</b>
Hispa Fruit BV
T. van Noort/ Van Oers United
Van Rijn Trading

**ANNEX VII.**

**LIST OF REFERENCES**

**COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 of 22 October 2007 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products (Single CMO Regulation);

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2011)**

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 543/2011 of 7 June 2011 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 in respect of the fruit and vegetables and processed fruit and vegetables sectors;

**MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, AGRICULTURE AND INNOVATION**

Landbouwkwaliteitswet, Landbouwkwaliteitsbesluit 2007, Landbouwkwaliteitsregeling 2007 (Agricultural Quality Act, Decree and Regulation); Tuchtrechtsbesluit Landbouwkwaliteitswet (Disciplinary Powers Decree for Agricultural Quality);

**MINISTRY OF SECURITY AND JUSTICE**

Wet tuchtrechtspraak bedrijfsorganisatie 2004 (Disciplinary Powers Act); Algemene wet bestuursrecht (General Administrative Law Act).

**MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR AND KINGDOMRELATIONS**

Kaderwet zelfstandige bestuursorganen (Autonomous Administrative Authorities Framework Act);

**OECD (2006)**

Council Decision Revising the OECD "Scheme" for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables [[C\(2006\)95](#)]

**OECD (2010)**

OECD Economic Surveys: The Netherlands 2010

**QUALITY CONTROL BUREAU (Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, KCB), Website:**

<http://www.kcb.nl/>

# **Peer Review of the Fruit and Vegetables Quality Inspection System in the Netherlands**

## **2012**

This Peer Review is produced within the framework of the Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables established by the OECD in 1962. The Peer Review is a systematic examination and assessment of the performance of national fruit and vegetables quality inspection systems by experts from other countries under the umbrella of the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme. The ultimate goal is to help to improve policy making, adopt best practices and comply with established international standards and principles. The examination is conducted on a voluntary basis, and relies on mutual trust and co-operation among reviewers, as well as their shared confidence in the process.

This Dutch Peer Review primarily focuses on the fruit and vegetable export and import quality inspection system. The Netherlands is one of the largest exporter's and importer's of fruit and vegetables in the world with an export value of over EUR 61 billion per year. The inspection system is well organised and efficient in order to manage the large volume and diverse range of fruit and vegetables traded. The Peer Review examines the implementation of the quality inspection system for exports, imports and the EU internal market, as well as the electronic data management system and the integration of different types of inspections. Moreover, the Peer Review also outlines recommendations on possible further improvements in the Dutch quality inspection system such as the concentration of inspection at all stages of marketing into one body. The Dutch model of inspection and the application of policies and practices could facilitate a useful reference for other countries.