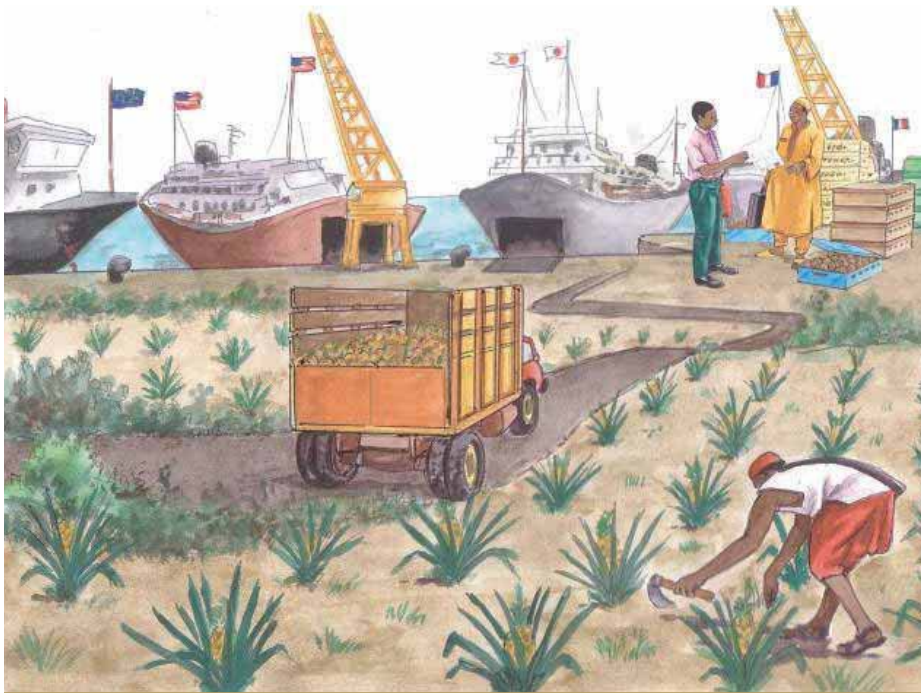


A Practical Manual

for Producers and Exporters from West Africa

REGULATIONS, STANDARDS & CERTIFICATION FOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORT



partageons les connaissances au profit des communautés rurales
sharing knowledge, improving rural livelihoods



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Why this manual?

Objectives

Provide producers and exporters with information on:

- * the regulations of main import countries*
- * major certification programmes*
- * contacts where more information on import regulations and certification schemes can be found*

Many producers may feel that the market for certified agricultural products is very complex and that the opportunities and requirements associated with the certification programmes are not always clear. In addition, producers do not always know if the requirements are compulsory (created as an official law or regulation in the importing country) or voluntary. It is in this framework that this manual has been created. After having read its content, the reader should be able to understand **the main voluntary certification schemes, their importance, the differences between them as well as their advantages and limitations**. In order to be able to export his/her products any producer or exporter must also conform with the regulations of importing countries. Therefore, the reader will be able to find in this manual information concerning **the main import regulations in the United States (US), the European Union (EU) and Japan**. However, topics such as farming practices and post-harvest activities are beyond the scope of this manual.

This manual comprises **two parts**:

- **standards and Import Regulations**
- **main voluntary Certification Schemes**

It is difficult to provide comprehensive information on import regulations and certification programmes for many reasons such as the changing nature of regulations in import countries and the diversity of products and their characteristics. Therefore, numerous Internet addresses have been provided where additional information can be obtained when necessary. You will find at the end of the manual a blank page that will enable you to update or add the Internet links gathered during your search.

We hope this manual responds to your needs.



An important part of the mandate of the Commodities and Trade Division (ESC) of FAO is to identify the problems affecting commodity trade and propose solutions to address them, preferably through international action. ESCR (the Raw Materials, Tropical and Horticultural Products Service) became involved in issues regarding social and environmental certification as these continued to arise in the analytical work on trade and economic problems related to bananas and other commodities for which it is responsible.

FAO-ESCR has produced several technical studies and information publications on social and environmental certification. These include: a small brochure targeted at wholesale and retail buyers of bananas, explaining the differences between various certification schemes; an extension manual aimed at producer associations and exporters in Central America on voluntary certification programmes and describing the import regulations of main export markets; cost-benefit analyses on certified citrus in Spain and in Costa Rica; and recently, a technical paper on environmental and social standards, certification and labelling for cash crops. FAO has established an Internet portal where relevant studies and links to organizations working to improve social and environmental conditions in agricultural production and trade can be found.

http://www.fao.org/es/ESC/en/20953/22218/highlight_44152en.html



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The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) was established in 1983 under the Lomé Convention between the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States) and the European Union Member States. Since 2000, it has operated within the framework of the ACP-EC Cotonou Agreement.

CTA's tasks are to develop and provide services that improve access to information for agricultural and rural development, and to strengthen the capacity of ACP countries to produce, acquire, exchange and utilize information in this area. CTA's programmes are designed to: provide a wide range of information products and services and enhance awareness of relevant information sources; promote the integrated use of appropriate communication channels and intensify contacts and information exchange (particularly intra-ACP); and develop ACP capacity to generate and manage agricultural information and to formulate ICM strategies, including those relevant to science and technology. CTA's work incorporates new developments in methodologies and cross-cutting issues such as gender and social capital.

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GLOSSARY

Bioterrorism

Bioterrorism is a new form of terrorism based on pathogen use. This practice comprises the use of bacteria, virus or other toxins against persons, animals or plants.

Biological contamination

It is the contamination of any material or living matter by pathogens or genetically modified organisms.

Fumigation

It is a treatment based on the disinfection of products by chemical agents. This type of treatment is also sometimes required to disinfect material used for commodity packaging meant for export.

Quarantining

Quarantining is the confinement of products that do not comply with the phytosanitary requirements of import countries. This confinement of products aims at avoiding the introduction and the spreading of diseases. Confined products are kept under observation and research or for further inspection, testing and/or treatments.

HACCP principles

The HACCP system maintains food safety along the food supply chain from farm to consumer table. It consists of analysing possible contamination hazards in order to identify critical control points in the production line of the product and therefore avoiding possible contamination and ensuring food safety. The steps leading to HACCP system implantation are:

- Assemble the HACCP team
- Describe product and identify intended use
- Construct flow diagram and on-site confirmation of flow diagram
- List all potential hazards associated with each step, conduct a hazard analysis and consider any measures to control identified hazards
- Determine critical control points
- Establish critical limits for each critical control point
- Establish a monitoring system for each critical control point
- Establish corrective actions
- Establish verification procedures
- Establish documentation and record keeping