



THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE INDUSTRY SERIES



FRUIT AND VEGETABLES SCHEME



OECD-COLEAD Fruit and Vegetables Industry Series

Session n°10:

The rise of convenience: How ready-to-eat foods are reshaping the Fruits and Vegetables sector

Thursday 19 June 2025

9:00-10:30 UTC/11:00-12:30 CET (time in Paris/Brussels)

BIODATA OF THE SPEAKERS

Salvatore Antonio, Chairman of the Board of Directors, OP OASI, Italy



Salvatore Antonio is a prominent figure in Italy's fruit and vegetable sector, recognized for his expertise in convenience foods and ready-to-eat (RTE) produce. As Chairman of the Board of OP Oasi, a major agricultural producers' organization based in Battipaglia, he leads the company in supplying fresh-cut and packaged vegetables to leading brands like Bonduelle, processing over 110 million bags of vegetables annually. Salvatore also serves as President of the IV Gamma Committee within Confagricoltura and Vice President of UNAPROA, playing a key role in shaping policies and driving innovation in Italy's fresh produce sector. He is a strong advocate for sustainable packaging solutions, focusing on recyclable materials and advancing traceability and transparency.

Eglė Baecke-Eimontaite, Director Advocacy & Regulatory Affairs, Freshfel Europe



Eglė Baecke-Eimontaite is the Director of Advocacy and Regulatory Affairs at Freshfel Europe, the European Fresh Produce Association, where she represents the interests of the fresh fruit and vegetable sector at the European level, closely monitoring EU legislation on food safety, product quality, and labeling standards. She plays a key role in developing and implementing proactive advocacy initiatives and is also the Secretary-General of the European Sprouted Seeds Association (ESSA), coordinating activities related to sprouted seeds within the EU. Eglė has been actively involved in EU-funded projects, including the FreshProducePEFCR, which aims to establish environmental footprint calculation rules for fresh products. She has represented Freshfel Europe in discussions with the Czech Presidency of the EU Council, addressing food safety and the competitiveness of the fresh produce sector. With expertise in European and international food policy, Eglė is dedicated to ensuring that regulations support the sector's sustainability, safety, and competitiveness.



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Isolina Boto – Head of Networks and Alliances, COLEAD



Isolina is the Head of Networks and Alliances at COLEAD, a non-profit association of private sector operators in the agrifood sector active in the European Union (EU), Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) regions. Isolina has more than 25 years of experience in agricultural development. She started her career with the European Commission, worked with various ACP embassies and NGOs in areas related to food security, rural development and trade. Before joining COLEAD, she was the Manager of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) Brussels Office (2004-2020) implementing policy initiatives related to the ACP-EU cooperation in the field of agricultural and rural

development. She has led trade and agribusiness projects in support of capacity development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurs and farmers organisations across Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

José Brambila-Macias – Programme Manager, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, Agricultural Codes and Schemes, OECD

Dr. José Brambila is the Programme Manager of the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme. He has a strong econometric background with a specialization in development economics. Before joining OECD, he worked for the University of Reading, UK, as a Research Fellow and as a consultant for FAO's Trade and Markets Division. Previously he worked for OECD's Statistics Directorate and at the International Monetary Fund in the Western Hemisphere Department. His areas of expertise include panel cointegration, pseudo-panels, quantile regression, generalised method of moments (GMM) and time series analysis.

Fleur De Wit, Senior Sustainability Manager, Blue Skies Holding Ltd, United Kingdom



Fleur De Wit serves as the Senior Sustainability Manager at Blue Skies Holding Ltd, a pioneering UK-based company specializing in fresh-cut fruits and juices sourced directly from farms across Africa, South America, and other regions. With a background in engineering and a deep commitment to sustainable development, Fleur plays a central role in shaping and implementing the company's sustainability strategy from ethical sourcing and packaging innovation to waste reduction and community empowerment. She collaborates closely with farmers, suppliers, and internal teams to ensure that Blue Skies delivers high-quality, ready-to-eat

products that respect both people and the planet. Her work bridges the gap between corporate responsibility and local impact, making her a key figure in driving positive change across the fresh produce industry.

Bertille Marcos, CEO, Les Fruits Tillou, Benin



Bertille Marcos Guèdègbé is a Beninese agronomist and entrepreneur, founder and CEO of Les Fruits Tillou, a company specializing in the production and export of organic pineapples and pineapple juice. Since its creation in 2000, the company has grown to become a key player in the pineapple industry in Benin, working with over 1,600 small-scale farmers. In 2015, she launched Les Jus Tillou, an industrial pineapple juice production unit. Bertille has also invested in a fruit drying unit to produce organic dried pineapples for the European market. Her company is Global GAP and HACCP certified, with products primarily exported to Europe. In

addition to her contribution to local economic development, Bertille supports women's empowerment and sustainable agriculture, with around 300 farmers certified organic. The company has also benefited from several support programs, including those from COLEACP, to train farmers in best agricultural practices.



Antoine Michotte Renier, Desk Officer, F&V Regulations & Standards, European Commission, DG AGRI

Antoine Michotte Renier is an expert in regulation and standards for fruits and vegetables at the European Commission, within the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI). He plays a central role in developing standards to ensure the safety, quality, and sustainability of agricultural products, particularly fruits and vegetables. He has contributed to key projects such as the revision of marketing standards under the European Green Deal and the "Farm to Fork" strategy. Antoine is also involved in applied research initiatives, such as the detection of undesirable substances in food, enhancing traceability and food safety across Europe.



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