



THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE INDUSTRY SERIES



Session n°12

Navigating EU policies, regulations and standards impacting fruit and vegetable value chains

Tuesday 17 March 2026

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

[Online \(Zoom\)](#)

Live interpretation in English and French

1. Context

Compliance with rules set by the European Union (EU) is a prerequisite to enter the EU agri-food market. Recent legislation including corporate sustainability due diligence and packaging is now translating into concrete compliance obligations for companies operating within and supplying the EU market.¹

At the same time, ongoing revisions of pesticide residue thresholds and reinforced monitoring of imports are increasing scrutiny of consignments entering the EU.²

For fruit and vegetables (F&V) value chains, these developments affect pesticide management, traceability systems, packaging design and supply chain governance. In this evolving environment, regulatory anticipation is becoming a core element of competitiveness and risk management.

2. Priority EU regulatory developments for the F&V sector

Several recent EU regulatory developments are reshaping how fruit and vegetable operators access the EU market.

Pesticides and residue compliance: ongoing updates to Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) of pesticides on food products, combined with reinforced import monitoring, increase the importance of preventive residue management and reliable laboratory testing. Compliance gaps can result in shipment rejections, financial losses and reputational risks.³ Moreover, when the EU identifies potential risks to public health due to contaminants or pesticide residues in imported food, it can temporarily set stricter requirements for that food to enter the EU market. These increased official controls can have major practical impacts on affected sectors, including on trade.⁴

Corporate sustainability due diligence: The EU due diligence requirements aim to ensure corporate responsibility across entire value chains. While directly applicable to large EU-based companies, it might have practical implications for suppliers, who may be required to provide information on

¹ [European Commission, 2024, CSDDD](#) and [European Commission, 2024, Packaging Regulation](#)

² [European Commission, 2024, Maximum Residue Levels](#)

³ [European Commission, 2024, MRL Framework](#)

⁴ [AGRINFO, May 2025, Guidance Temporary increase of official controls of food imports – Regulation 2019/1793](#).



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human and environmental compliance, traceability capacity and structured risk management systems⁵.

Packaging and environmental sustainability: new EU packaging rules introduce stricter recyclability and waste-reduction requirements. For exporters, packaging design and documentation are increasingly linked to regulatory compliance and market positioning.⁶

These developments reflect a broader international trend linking agricultural trade, sustainability and risk management, as highlighted in recent OECD agricultural policy monitoring work⁷.

3. Implications for producers, exporters and SMEs

EU regulatory changes are reshaping the conditions under which F&V operators compete in the EU market.

Compliance increasingly depends on structured residue management, reliable digital traceability, documented risk assessment systems and sustainable packaging adaptation. Reinforced monitoring of imports and regular updates to pesticide residue thresholds underscore the operational importance of preventive compliance systems.

For larger exporters with established compliance infrastructures, regulatory alignment may strengthen market positioning. For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), adaptation may require significant investment in testing, documentation and governance capacity. OECD analysis shows that sustainability-driven policy reforms increasingly influence competitiveness and participation patterns in agricultural trade.⁸

In this context, maintaining inclusive value chains requires early access to regulatory intelligence, investment in digital and testing systems, and continued dialogue between EU importers and exporting countries.

4. Way Forward

As EU requirements evolve, fruit and vegetable value chains must move from reactive compliance to strategic adaptation. Navigating this environment means identifying priority risks, sequencing investments, and understanding how regulatory obligations interact with buyer expectations.

In practice, this involves strengthening regulatory intelligence, investing in traceability and testing systems, and engaging proactively with EU partners to clarify expectations and transition timelines while ensuring that adaptation remains feasible for SMEs and smallholder-based supply chains.

This session will focus on:

- The export risks linked to pesticide residue rules and border controls.
- The operational implications of new EU due diligence obligations.
- The impact of updated packaging and sustainability standards on market access and positioning.

⁵ [European Commission, 2024 CSDDD](#)

⁶ [European Commission 2024, Regulation](#)

⁷ [OECD; 2023, Agricultural Policy Monitoring and Evaluation](#)

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Agenda

Moderator: *José Brambila-Macias, Programme Manager, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, Agricultural Codes and Schemes, OECD*

10:00-10:05 Welcome and introduction: *Ines Bastos, Senior Expert Business Development, COLEAD*

10:00-10:10 Keynote address: *Sophie Primot, Programme manager, INTPA, European Commission*

10:10-10:50 Recent EU regulatory developments affecting F&V value chains

- *Andrea Barrios, EU Policy and Regulations Expert, COLEAD*
- *Jane Richardson, Principal Administrator, Working Party Pesticides, OECD*
- *Charles Mensah, Sustainability Researcher, University of Essex*

10:50-11:05 Impacts on exporters and producers: compliance challenges and adaptation strategies

- *Faly Rasamimanana, Managing Director Faly Export, Madagascar*

11:05-11:20 Q&A session

11:20-11:30 Conclusion and way forward: *Ahoefa Soklou, Project Officer, Networks and Alliances, COLEAD*



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