



# 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

## HIGHLIGHTS

### About the Fruit and Vegetable (F&V) Industry Series

In the context of the United Nations (UN) 2021 International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme and COLEAD launched an online series highlighting the importance of the F&V sector. The series aims to share knowledge on markets and operators, promote sustainable production and healthy diets, and showcase innovations from both European and Southern countries.

Session 12 focused on how evolving EU policies, regulations, and standards are reshaping fruit and vegetable value chains, with practical implications for exporters, SMEs, and producers. The session attracted strong interest, with 417 registrants seeking insights, resources, and opportunities to engage with key actors in the sector.

All information about the session is available on [Agrinnovators](#) entrepreneur's platform.  
Recording of the session: [Link](#)

### Key points discussed

#### Managing complexity and ensuring compliance in practice

The volume and pace of EU regulatory changes make it difficult for operators to identify what is relevant and act accordingly. The main challenge is not access to information, but the ability to translate it into concrete actions. At the same time, meeting EU requirements, particularly on pesticide residues, requires consistent application of good agricultural practices and reliable control systems at production level. Tools that help centralise, simplify, and interpret regulatory updates are therefore essential to support effective implementation and maintain market access.

#### Packaging is becoming a critical market access condition

New EU packaging rules are introducing stricter requirements on recyclability, materials, labelling, and chemical safety. These changes require exporters to redesign packaging, strengthen documentation, and invest in testing and certification. For many exporters, especially those supplying distant markets, this creates additional costs and operational constraints, making early adaptation and closer coordination with buyers essential.

#### Market access increasingly depends on systems and documentation

EU buyers are reinforcing requirements related to traceability, compliance documentation, and sustainability performance. Exporters must therefore strengthen internal systems,



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improve data management, and engage proactively with buyers to align on standards and expectations. Failure to do so increases the risk of rejection or loss of market access.

### **Innovation can improve inclusion, but scalability remains a challenge**

Alternative models combining local governance and digital tools can help reduce certification costs, simplify data collection, and improve traceability for small producers exporting to the EU. For example, real-time photos, geolocation, and remote audits can reduce the need for costly field inspections. However, these approaches are still in early stages of recognition and are not yet widely integrated into export certification systems, limiting their immediate use for international markets.

### **Meet our speakers**



**Andrea Barrios**  
EU Policy and  
Regulations Expert,  
COLEAD



**Jane Richardson**  
Principal  
Administrator,  
Working Party on  
Pesticides, OECD



**Charles Mensah**  
Sustainability  
Researcher, University  
of Essex



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

#### ***Andrea Barrios, EU Policy and Regulations Expert, COLEAD***

Andrea introduced AGRINFO as a practical tool to help operators navigate EU regulatory developments. She demonstrated how regulatory information can be monitored, consolidated, and translated into user-friendly summaries, highlighting the importance of making complex policy changes accessible and actionable for exporters.

#### ***Jane Richardson, Principal Administrator, Working Party on Pesticides, OECD***

Jane explained how pesticide regulations are developed, focusing on the role of field trials and data in setting Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs). She also presented OECD tools such as the MRL calculator and ongoing work on biopesticides, aimed at supporting regulators and operators with harmonised methodologies and technical guidance.

#### ***Charles Mensah, Sustainability Researcher, University of Essex***

Charles provided a detailed breakdown of the new EU packaging and packaging waste regulation, explaining specific requirements related to plastic reduction, recyclability performance, labelling, and chemical safety. He also outlined practical steps for exporters, including mapping packaging formats, identifying high-risk materials, and preparing for compliance through documentation and redesign.

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

Faly presented the SPG Fihavanana model developed in Madagascar, highlighting how local governance structures, cultural practices, and digital tools can be combined to support compliance. He illustrated how visual tools, community validation, and real-time data collection can make certification processes more accessible for producers with limited literacy and resources.

## Resources

### 1. Report and studies

Agrinfo, 2019, [Temporary increase of official controls of food imports – Regulation 2019/1793](#)

European Commission, 2020, [EU Farm to Fork Strategy](#)

European Commission, 2022, [EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation \(PPWR\) Proposal](#)

European Commission, 2023, [Maximum Residue Levels \(MRLs\) in Food and Feed](#)  
OECD, 2021, [Pesticides and biocides](#)

European Commission, 2024, [EU Due Diligence in Supply Chains \(CSDDD\)](#),

World Bank, 2023, [Traceability Systems in the Agro-Food Sector](#)  
[Agrinfo](#)

### 2. Trainings and other opportunities

[Agrinfo webinars](#)

[ITC SME Trade Academy](#)

[European Commission, Better Training for Safer Food](#)

[GSI Training, Traceability and Digital Supply Chains](#)

[GLOBALG.A.P. Academy, Certification & Compliance Training](#)

#### Coordination team for these series:

OECD: Jose Brambila-Macias, Programme Manager, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, Agricultural Codes and Schemes.

COLEAD: Ahoefa Soklou, Project Officer and Nina Desanlis-Perrin, Project Officer, Networks and Alliances Department.

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