



Foreign Agricultural Service

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## **European Union**

# **Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards**

# **Conformity Certificate Requirements for Fruit and Vegetables**

## **2003**

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### **Report Highlights:**

**Fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts imported from third countries into the EU are required to be checked for conformity with EU marketing standards for quality and labeling.**

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Includes PSD changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Brussels USEU [BE2], E2



## EU Conformity Certificate Requirements for Fruit and Vegetables

Fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts imported from third countries into the EU are required to be checked for conformity with EU marketing standards for quality and labeling. Commission regulation 1148/2001 (amended by regulation 408/2003) describes how these conformity checks should be carried out by the approved inspection bodies at the point of entry. These checks may also be performed prior to import into the EU by third countries whose control procedures are officially recognized. The regulation explains how to apply for official approval. So far, Hungary, Switzerland, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Morocco, South Africa and Slovakia have been authorized to perform their own conformity checks; the U.S. did not apply for EU approval of their checking operations. Regulation 1148/2001 enters into force on March 31, 2003.

<b>Products subject to EU marketing standards</b>
<b>Fruits:</b> apples, apricots, avocados, cherries, clementines, grapes, lemons, mandarins, melons, nectarines, oranges, peaches, pears, plums, satsumas, strawberries, water melons
<b>Nuts:</b> hazelnuts in shell, walnuts in shell
<b>Vegetables:</b> artichokes, asparagus, aubergines, beans, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, garlic, iceberg lettuce, leeks, lettuce and endives, mushrooms (cultivated), onions, peas, spinach, sweet peppers, tomatoes, witloof chicory
Mixed packages containing at least one of the products listed above

Details of each marketing standard can be found on our website at [www.useu.be/agri/Fruit-Veg.html](http://www.useu.be/agri/Fruit-Veg.html).

Marketing standards apply to produce intended for the fresh market. A conformity certificate is required for all shipments of fresh produce destined for the fresh market before release into free circulation within the EU. Importers or their agents obtain conformity certificates from the official inspection bodies at the point of import. Products covered by EU marketing standards which are intended for processing require a certificate of industrial use but are not subject to conformity. A copy of the certificate must be signed by the processor and returned to the competent inspection body. The packaging of products intended for processing must be clearly marked "intended for processing" or in the case of bulk products, this indication must be given on the accompanying documents.

Regulation 408/2003 (amendment to reg. 1148/2001) establishes a risk-based system for inspecting conformity of imported fresh produce with EU marketing standards. It allows member states to focus the checks on the highest risk shipments. Member states must establish criteria for assessing these risks and develop rules on how checks may be relaxed for lots with a low risk on non-conformity. The proportion of checks on imports accompanied by a certificate from countries whose inspection procedures are officially recognized by the EU will be lower than on imports from non-recognized countries. Fees charged for the checks are proportionate to the checks realized.

### Related reports from USEU Brussels:

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<b>Report number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date released</b>
E21134	Horticultural Products Certification	11/9/2001
E21058	EU Fruit & Vegetables Regime	5/7/2001
E22084	Food & Agricultural Import Regulations & Standards	8/21/2002

**Visit our website:** EU marketing standards for fruits, vegetables and nuts and links to the referenced legislation can be found on our website at [www.useu.be/agri/Fruit-Veg.html](http://www.useu.be/agri/Fruit-Veg.html). Our website [www.useu.be/agri/usda.html](http://www.useu.be/agri/usda.html) also provides a broad range of useful information on EU import rules and food laws and allows easy access to USEU reports, trade information and other practical information. E-mail: [AgUSEUBrussels@fas.usda.gov](mailto:AgUSEUBrussels@fas.usda.gov).