Guideline

Wholesale
Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes

Version: 01.01.2026

Contents

Note: *The Guideline Wholesale Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes is written in German and translated into English. In case of discrepancies between the translation and the German version, the German original is valid.*

1 Fundamentals

For fundamentals of the QS scheme such as organisation, conditions of participation, use of the certification mark and sanction procedures see the **Guideline General Regulations**.

1.1 Scope

Wholesale fruit, vegetables, potatoes, including fresh, prepared and processed goods

- Wholesale fruit, vegetables, potatoes (including product handling, e.g. storage, preparation, marketing, transport, packaging; also applies to service providers that handle products) – all requirements must be adhered to
- Agencies (for definition, see 5.3 Terms and definitions) for fruit, vegetables, potatoes – only the requirements marked with an "A" after the heading must be adhered to

1.2 Responsibilities

The scheme participant is responsible for ensuring:

- Compliance with requirements
- Complete and correct documentation
- Completion of self-assessments
- Adequate and timely implementation of corrective actions
- Correct use of the QS certification mark and product labelling

Scheme participants must comply at all times with the requirements of the QS scheme and always be in a position to demonstrate compliance with said QS requirements. Scheme participants must ensure compliance not only with the requirements of this guideline and all other applicable QS requirements (e.g. General Regulations, Guideline Certification, Guideline Residue Monitoring) but also with the applicable legal provisions both within the country in which the QS produce is produced as well as the country in which they will be marketed by the scheme participant.

2 General requirements

2.1 General scheme requirements

2.1.1 General business data (A)

A company overview containing the following master data must be created:

- Company name
- Address of the main company (incl. QS ID) and all its locations
- Type of company and location number
- Current address
- Contact details of legal representatives incl. phone numbers and email addresses
- Details on production scope (first-line merchant, trading partner)
- Details on crisis management (name of crisis manager, etc.)

The master data must always be kept up to date in the QS database by the scheme participant.

Furthermore, the following information must be included in the company overview:

- Information on existing quality management and audit systems (e.g. ISO 9001, IFS, BRC)
- Information on commissioned laboratories (current address, phone and fax numbers, email address, area of analysis)

Where rooms are shared by several companies, all rooms belonging to the company must be identified in a business plan.

Company overview

Further document: Sample form "Business Data"

2.1.2 Use of the QS certification mark (A)

Scheme participants are entitled to use the QS certification mark once they have been permitted to do so by QS (via QS scheme agreement). The QS certification mark may only be used in accordance with the **Style Guide**.

Scheme participants may only deliver products with the QS certification mark on the label or outer packaging if they themselves and the location of the recipient/reseller is eligible to deliver in the QS database. Product labelled with the QS certification mark must be identified on the delivery notes in line with requirement 3.6.6 [K.O.] Labelling of marketed QS produce.

In justified individual cases, nonconformity may be allowed if it can be expected that the reseller will no longer actively advertise and/or market the products as QS produce in the course of its business transactions and when dealing with its own recipients. In the accompanying documents, the products must not be described as QS produce, or it must be clearly visible from the accompanying documents that the reseller no longer has permission to actively advertise the products as QS produce in the course of its business transactions and in contact with its recipients.

Goods from producers with a GLOBALG.A.P. Option 2 certificate or with a GLOBALG.A.P. Option 1 Multisite with QMS certificate may only be labelled with the QS certification mark, if the producers are authorized for the usage. Producers that are not authorized for the usage of the QS certification mark on their products are marked as such in the QS database.

Further documents:

- *Explanatory notes Delimitation of the scope of application for composite products*
- *Explanatory notes Use of the QS certification mark for composite products*

2.1.3 Incident and crisis management (A)

QS has developed a comprehensive crisis management system that actively supports scheme participants in the event of an incident or crisis. The scheme participants must inform QS immediately and – where a legal obligation exists – the competent authorities about critical incidents and public product recalls relevant to the QS scheme.

Critical incidents are scheme-relevant occurrences that pose or could pose a risk to humans, animals, the environment, assets or the QS scheme as a whole.

Scheme participants must inform QS, in particular if:

- Nonconformities occur in goods procurement, production or marketing that might pose a risk to food safety
- Preliminary proceedings are initiated due to violation of regulations to secure food safety
- Investigations are carried out by the media, there are critical reports in the media, or public protests are held on issues of food safety

Each scheme participant must maintain a documentation structure for reporting incidents, for example the QS paper of incident, to enable them to pass on any required information in the appropriate format if an incident occurs. Moreover, all scheme participants must name a crisis manager, who is reachable at all times. The name of the crisis manager must be entered into the QS database.

A procedure must be defined and introduced for conduct in the event of incidents or crises and verified at regular intervals, but at least once a year (approx. every 12 months). It must include the following points:

- Creation of a crisis team
- Emergency call list
- Procedure for product recall and return
- Communication plan
- Customer information

Paper of incident, incident and crisis management procedure

2.1.4 Handling of documents (A)

A procedure for archiving the documentation must be in place and must be applied in the company. All relevant records are to be kept in a detailed and seamless manner.

Documents and records of self-assessments must be retained for a period of at least two years – provided longer retention periods are not stipulated by law.

2.1.5 Company premises and access regulations

All buildings and operating facilities must be protected from unauthorized access and, where possible, be kept closed. Written access regulations must be in place. Operating rooms in which food is produced or stored may not be accessible to unauthorised persons.

External visitors may only have access to the operating rooms if accompanied by or in agreement with an authorized person. With the exception of drivers within the scope of loading activities in the designated loading zone, all external visitors must receive instructions prior to entering production areas.

If the business premises are entered by external vehicles, e.g. delivery or disposal vehicles, this must be accounted for in the risk assessment.

Access regulations

2.1.6 Monitoring of test equipment

When calibrating and monitoring the functionality of the instruments and devices used as test equipment (e.g. thermometers), the intervals stipulated by the manufacturers must be complied with. If a manufacturer has not made any stipulations in this regard, the test equipment must be calibrated or checked in line with the perceived estimation of the risk but at least once a year (approx. every 12 months).

The measuring methodology of the various test devices must be taken into consideration. The calibration or check procedure must be described for each test device. The results must be documented (incl. nonconformities, corrective actions) and clearly assigned. The measuring precision, reliability and functionality of operational test equipment must be guaranteed.

If calibration is not possible for some test devices, they must undergo appropriate maintenance and servicing.

If required by law, any scales that are in use must be calibrated.

Applicable documents are the German **Act concerning the placement and provision of measuring instruments on the market, their use and verification, and also on pre-packages**.

Evidence of adjustment and monitoring of test equipment, documentation of calibration/test

2.1.7 [K.O.] Conducting self-assessments (A)

Compliance with QS requirements must also be checked within the company itself. Self-assessments must be conducted regularly. They must be documented based on a checklist at least once a year (approx. every 12 months). Existing control and documentation systems can be used if they guarantee that the requirements are fulfilled.

Internal controls can be documented via either an automatic registration process (e.g. automatic temperature records) or a manual recording process (e.g. incoming goods inspection).

Completion of self-assessments may also be contracted out to an external company with the appropriate qualification.

Self-assessment records and checklist

Further documents: Checklists Wholesale / Checklists Agency

2.1.8 Completion of corrective actions in the case of nonconformity (A)

Nonconformities that are detected during a self-assessment must be resolved within a specified period of time appropriate to the circumstances.

2.1.9 Food safety culture (A)

An appropriate food safety culture is established by the food business operator in accordance with **Reg (EU) 2021/382**. Responsibilities and accountabilities for all processes related to food safety are clearly defined. The implementation and timeliness of the food safety culture is to be ensured by the food business operator. The essential principles required for that purpose are part of the QS participation and certification.

Further document: Explanatory notes of the food safety culture

2.1.10 Commissioning of logistics companies/subcontractors (A)

Companies commissioned with the following logistics processes for QS goods must have the QS eligibility of delivery:

Process (service)	The commissioned logistics company is eligible to deliver QS-certified goods for one of the following production scopes
Transport of QS goods between QS scheme participants at the stages Wholesale/Logistics and/or Preparation/Processing	• Wholesale • Logistics; Certification schemes QS, IFS, BRC • Convenience • Preparation/Processing • Food retail warehouse
Transport of unpacked, loose QS potatoes and QS onions as bulk goods /goods in bulk packs	In addition to the production scopes listed above, the following are possible: • Logistics; Certification scheme GMP+ • Road transport (feed)
Storage and, if necessary, picking of QS goods	• Wholesale • Logistics; Certification schemes QS, IFS, BRC • Convenience • Preparation/Processing • Food retail warehouse

The customer of the logistics company is responsible for fulfilling the requirements for the eligibility of delivery. They must inform the logistics company if the goods are QS goods (e.g. via EDI).

Exemption for sporadic commissioning

In the case of sporadic commissioning of logistics companies for the transport of QS goods, deviations from the above-mentioned requirement for QS eligibility of delivery are possible.

In this case, the client must oblige the logistics company to comply with the QS requirements (⇒ Guideline Logistics, chapters 2.3, 3, 5) as part of the contract. The implementation of the requirements by the contracted logistics company must be ensured by means of evidence and checked on a random basis as part of the customers self-monitoring.

In addition, the customer must require the commissioned logistics company to allow inspections by the customers certification body and/or by QS in individual cases.

Process for checking QS eligibility of delivery, when using the exemption for sporadic commissioning of logistics companies: evidence of implementation of the QS requirements, self-assessment checklist, letter of commitment to enable inspections

2.2 HACCP

2.2.1 [K.O.] HACCP concept (A)

To ensure food safety, the company must develop, apply and maintain a hazard control system that is kept up to date in accordance with HACCP principles (**REG (EC) No. 852/2004**).

Basis and prerequisite for the implementation of a HACCP system are basic hygiene measures, including the codes of practice for good hygiene practice (GHP) and good manufacturing practice (GMP).

The structure of the HACCP concept must be understandable by third parties.

HACCP concept

2.2.2 HACCP team

The highest level of management must nominate a HACCP team to introduce and maintain the HACCP concept. The HACCP team must be documented in a written form. Evidence must be provided for the HACCP team having adequate experience in each area of the company. If required, the HACCP team must be trained. In this case, records of the training must be kept.

If there are multiple HACCP teams, a coordinator must be appointed who is responsible for the HACCP teams working systematically.

2.2.3 Product description

A full description of the product/article group and, if applicable, the purpose must be compiled. The product descriptions must contain all the relevant information needed to estimate the risks and to determine the critical control points. This may include the following aspects, for example:

- Composition of the product/the article group
- Physical and chemical structure
- Antimicrobial/bacteriostatic treatment
- Packaging
- Shelf life
- Storage conditions
- Distribution methods for the product (recipient, transporter and type of goods being traded, e.g. packaged goods, bulk goods, etc.)

2.2.4 Flow chart (A)

A systematic flow chart must be created containing all the operating processes and product groups.

2.2.5 Hazard analysis (A)

The HACCP concept is based on the determination of hazards that must be avoided, eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level.

2.2.6 Critical control points (CCP)

Critical control points (CCP) must be determined at the relevant process stage if control is required in order to avoid, eliminate or reduce any hazards to an acceptable level.

2.2.7 Limit values for CCP

If CCPs have been determined, limit values for the critical control points must be set, which are used to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable values with regard to the avoidance, elimination or reduction of calculated risks.

2.2.8 Monitoring and verification of limit values for CCP

Procedures for monitoring and verifying critical control points and must be defined and implemented. These procedures must be applied regularly.

2.2.9 Corrective actions for CCP

If CCPs have been determined, corrective actions must be determined in the event that monitoring shows that a critical control point exceeds the set limit value.

2.2.10 Responsibilities

Responsibilities must be clearly described in an organigram.

2.2.11 Records

Records that are commensurate to the type and size of the company must be kept providing evidence that the corrective actions listed in the HACCP principles are applied.

2.2.12 HACCP verification (A)

Implementation of the HACCP concept must be checked (verified) at least once a year (approx. every 12 months).

Self-assessment records, checklists

2.3 Good manufacturing and hygiene practice

2.3.1 Water quality

Drinking water must be provided in suitable quantities and may not pose any risk of contamination. A tapping point plan must be available within the company.

Water, irrespective of origin or state, which has direct contact with unprocessed products (e.g.: washing water/process water) must be sampled in accordance with a risk-based plan (at least once per year (approx. every 12 months)) to test for the following microbiological parameters:

- *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) 0 CFU/100 ml
- *Enterococcus* 0 CFU/100 ml

The water sample must be taken directly at the tapping point without removing any attached devices and inserts, without prior disinfection and without draining water. Sampling must be carried out by a qualified sampler (this may also be a trained employee).

Only an accredited and officially approved laboratory may be commissioned to analyze the water samples.

If the above limits are exceeded, measures to prevent product contamination must be defined and documented immediately.

Process/washing water must be replaced and/or prepared at regular intervals based on a risk assessment. The risk of contamination must be kept as low as possible.

For the water used in the final wash cycle or used for the application of post-harvest treatments, the above-mentioned requirements for carrying out microbiological water analyses apply.

The requirement to perform water analyses is only necessary when handling products that are suitable for raw consumption.

Water quality control plan, tapping point plan

Further document: Explanation note of the "water quality" requirement in food production

2.3.2 Cleaning and disinfection

Cleaning and disinfection plans must be in place and their implementation documented. These plans include:

- Responsibilities
- Products used and their instructions for use
- Areas and facilities (incl. cooling facilities and staff rooms) require cleaning or disinfection
- Cleaning intervals
- Record obligations
- Hazard symbols (if necessary)

The implementation of cleaning and disinfection plans must be checked annually (approx. every 12 months). The results must be documented.

The cleaning staff is informed of the proper use of the designated cleaning product (per the instructions for use/cleaning plan).

Cleaning and disinfection plan, results of implementation checks, operational disinfectant lists

Further documents:

- *Sample form "Registry of hazardous substances"*
- *Sample form "Hygiene Checklist"*

2.3.3 Pest control

It must be ensured that a high level of cleanliness and hygiene is maintained in all work/storage areas in order to prevent the attraction of pests and vermin. Both in the operating rooms and in outdoor areas, precautionary measures must be taken to repel pests that adversely affect food. Appropriate corrective actions for pest control must be introduced.

Within the implementation of pest monitoring and control, the procedure and qualifications of the user must comply with the legal requirements of the respective country as well as the particular product specifications. Monitoring and bait points must be controlled at least once a month by qualified personnel provided no other control intervals were determined based on a risk assessment. In order to guarantee the safety of the food as

well as the safety of the employees, suitable pest control methods and pesticides must be used. Pest control procedures must not jeopardise the safety of the produced or stored products.

Permanent baiting (without infestation) using rodenticides (anticoagulants) is only permissible in exceptional cases if it is carried out strategically by a pest controller or professional operative (per the German **Hazardous Substances Ordinance** Annex I Number 4 Paragraph 4.4). A professional operative or pest controller must provide evidence of and document the conditions for each exceptional case individually via an annual risk analysis and risk assessment. Compliance with the measures for risk minimization determined in the analysis must be guaranteed. In this case, only bait permitted for this purpose may be used and the bait points must be controlled at least once per month. Differing legal provisions may apply in other countries and must be complied with accordingly.

The documentation must contain at least the following information:

- Information on products used for pest prevention and control
- Date of treatment and specification of the applied quantities
- Proof that the employees involved in pest control are suitably qualified (the expertise required for the respective activity)
- Control point plans showing the positioning of monitoring and bait stations (including temporary control points)
- Records of pests found (findings)
- Corrective action plans in case of pest infestation

Documentation on pest prevention and control, pest control plan, evidence of qualifications (if applicable), contracts with specialist companies (if applicable)

Further document: IFS Pest Control Guideline

2.3.4 Foreign substance management

The entrance of foreign substances into food must be avoided. Risk analyses must be performed to identify and assess potential entry sources for foreign substances. Precautionary measures must be taken and procedures established to minimise the risk.

Documentation of foreign substance management

Further document: IFS Guideline for an effective foreign body management

2.3.5 [K.O.] Risk of contamination

Food contamination must be avoided. A risk-based management approach must be pursued, whereby a wide variety of contamination sources such as food waste or lubricants must be taken into account. All measures necessary to avoid contamination must be identified and documented.

Documentation of contamination management

2.4 Technical/structural condition

Note: *The following requirement is described in Chapter 2 (General Requirements) on a superordinate basis. The requirement is evaluated on a more detailed level in the process-specific chapters: incoming goods, storage, cold storage rooms, frozen storage rooms, packaging/redistribution and order picking, outgoing goods/shipping.*

Operating facilities involved with the handling of food and rooms in which food products are stored, prepared, treated or processed must be clean and well maintained in accordance with **REG (EC) No. 852/2004** Annex II. They must be constructed, designed and built so as to enable sufficient cleaning and/or disinfection, avoid contamination or reduce it to a minimum.

The following requirements must be fulfilled:

- All floor coverings must be kept in proper condition and must be easy to clean and, if required, easy to disinfect.
- Ceilings (or in the case of no ceilings, interior roof) and ceiling structures must be built and processed so that any accumulation of dirt is avoided and that condensate, undesired mould as well as the peeling away of material particles is reduced to an absolute minimum.
- Windows and other openings must be constructed in a manner that avoids the accumulation of dirt. Openings extending outward require insect mesh that can be easily removed for cleaning.

- Doors must be easily cleaned, and if required, disinfected. They must have water-repellent and smooth surfaces.
- Surfaces (including equipment surfaces) on areas in which food materials are handled, and in particular surfaces that come into contact with food, must be kept in an unobjectionable condition and must be easy to clean and to disinfect. They must be made of smooth, abrasion-proof, corrosion-proof, non-toxic material.

Operating rooms and facilities must be subject to maintenance and repair in line with predefined written instructions. A maintenance plan must be created and implemented for all operating rooms, facilities and equipment from which respective maintenance measures can be taken in order to ensure that work can be performed in a hygienic and unobjectionable manner. Maintenance work may not pose any hazards to food safety.

The maintenance plan must include the following elements (if available):

- Operating areas and operating rooms
- Facilities and transport systems (if available)
- Conformity of the materials and lubricants used
- Responsible employees (own employees and external companies)
- Frequency

Fulfilment of these requirements must be verified based on records documenting maintenance work.

Maintenance plan, documentation of maintenance works

2.5 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

Note: *The following requirement is described in Chapter 2 (General Requirements) on a superordinate basis. The requirement is evaluated on a more detailed level in the process-specific chapters: incoming goods, storage, cold storage rooms, frozen storage rooms, packaging/redistribution and order picking, outgoing goods/shipping.*

All rooms, operating facilities and machines in which foods are stored, prepared, treated or processed must be in a clean, hygienic and dirt-free condition.

Water retention in clearance rooms and major corrosion on machines and facilities must be avoided. Equipment must be functional and hygienically sound.

Transport containers and vehicles must be hygienically sound.

The rooms must be cleaned regularly according to the cleaning plan. This applies especially to floor coverings. The cleaning frequency must be aligned with work patterns/new usage of operating rooms/storage rooms.

2.6 Ground clearance

Note: *The following requirement is described in Chapter 2 (General Requirements) on a superordinate basis. The requirement is evaluated on a more detailed level in the process-specific chapters: incoming goods, storage, cold storage rooms, frozen storage rooms, packaging/redistribution, order picking, outgoing goods/shipping and transport/logistics.*

A system must be implemented and enforced whereby products and containers containing or intended to contain food must not be placed directly on the floor. The goods must be stored and transported in such a way that there is no risk of contamination. The following are excluded:

- Automated storage systems that are limited by physical barriers and from which containers are picked mechanically from above. Storage areas are not accessed except for cleaning and maintenance purposes, are in a hygienically sound state and do not pose a risk of contaminating produce.
- Industrial containers (e.g. BIG boxes), that are designed to stand on runners or legs off the floor. If these containers are stacked, contamination of the food must be prevented via company regulations.
- Unpacked potatoes and onions: These can be stored directly on the floor or appropriate equipment it the floors or the material on which the goods are stored are in perfect hygienic and clean condition.

2.7 Staff hygiene

2.7.1 General rules of conduct

Documented guidelines must be present concerning staff hygiene, which have been communicated to staff during training sessions. At least the following points must be taken into consideration:

- Hand washing and disinfecting

- Eating, drinking, smoking and chewing gum
- Conduct in the event of skin injuries (cuts, grazes)
- Handling fingernails, jewelry, piercings and watches
- Handling hair, beards

Smoking while working and inside work rooms is forbidden and only permitted in the designated places and rooms. Rooms must be fitted with clearly visible signage (no smoking).

Each employee must be provided with a sufficient quantity of appropriate protective clothing and headgear where required.

There must be sufficient hand hygiene stations available. If disinfectants are provided, signage with instructions on how to use the disinfectant must displayed.

Hand hygiene facilities in the production area must at least fulfil the following requirements:

- Running cold and hot water
- Liquid soap from dispensers (not bottles, for example)
- Appropriate options for hand drying (devices for hygienic hand drying)

If the company policy includes a provision for coat hooks to be fitted, they must be properly and sensibly positioned.

Staff hygiene provisions must be observed and applied by all concerned (employees, service providers, etc.). There must be a procedure for regularly checking the consistent implementation of staff hygiene in the company. The results must be evaluated and, if necessary, corrective actions for optimization initiated. Staff whose activities directly affect product safety must have the necessary experience/training.

Rules of conduct, procedure for implementation and monitoring of staff hygiene

2.7.2 Staff rooms and sanitary facilities

Suitable changing rooms must be provided for employees and external visitors. Outdoor and protective clothing must be kept separate where required. Staff rooms and sanitary facilities must be kept clean and in good order and only used for their designated purpose.

The rooms must be cleaned regularly. Cleaning must be documented.

Cleaning documentation

2.8 Training of staff

2.8.1 [K.O.] Hygiene training

Based on **REG (EC) No. 852/2004**, hygiene training courses are to be held in the company every year (approx. every 12 months). Documented training programs must be defined in line with the product and the employees' field of activity.

The training plan contains each rule of conduct (⇒ 2.7.1 General rules of conduct) in addition to:

- Contents
- Training intervals
- Participants and instructor
- Languages

Training program and training proof

2.8.2 Information on the QS scheme (A)

All responsible employees must be informed of the basic principles of the QS scheme and the relevant requirements contained in the QS scheme manual that fall within their scope of work. Responsible employees must be informed regarding checks that are carried out on the proper use of the QS certification mark on produce.

2.8.3 General training

Responsible employees must participate in internal/external training on the following topics (among others) once per year, and participation must be recorded in company documentation:

- Produce knowledge and labelling
- Quality standards/marketing standards including general and special marketing standards per **REG (EU) No. 2023/2429** and **UNECE standards for fruit and vegetables**

- Disease and pest infestation of products
- Transport and packaging
- Safety at work

All employees must be trained on their responsibilities when taking up the role and as an annual refresher. Training must be aligned with the further development and responsibilities of the employees being trained. The name of the instructor, the date of the training, the participants, the topic and any training material used and/or distributed must be documented.

Training program and evidence of training

3 Process-specific requirements

3.1 Incoming goods

3.1.1 Technical/structural condition

⇒ 2.4 Technical/structural condition

The incoming goods area is to be designed in such a way as to enable access restrictions and not allow outside persons to enter the company unrestricted. A separate entrance for staff must be present.

3.1.2 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

⇒ 2.5 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

Rooms must be protected from pest infestation with closable gates and doors. Delivered goods must also be inspected for infestation and the appropriate corrective actions must be implemented if necessary.

3.1.3 Ground clearance

⇒ 2.6 Ground clearance

3.1.4 Order and organisation

Goods must be received via structured work processes. Spatial arrangements must be clearly highlighted in the work process and any potential risks for food safety must be avoided. The path of the goods must be designed so that no cross-contamination may occur. Goods that require refrigeration must be delivered immediately into the cold storage rooms (if the goods are not being handled straight away), otherwise corrective actions must be taken to guarantee compliance with the cold chain.

3.1.5 Transport vehicles delivery

Delivery vehicles must be in a hygienically sound and tidy condition and display no signs of previous soiling. Drivers and any accompanying persons must be wearing clean clothes. The goods may not be impaired by the clothing or by the way the goods are handled.

The goods to be transported must be loaded in an appropriate hygienic condition.

3.1.6 Incoming goods inspection

Incoming goods inspections must follow a defined and written procedure and must be implemented based on internal specifications. The controls on incoming goods must be documented. They must incorporate all relevant products. If required, the incoming goods inspection must be adjusted to any changes in manufacturing, storage or transport conditions.

Incoming goods inspection

3.1.7 [K.O.] Labelling of purchased QS produce (A)

QS goods must be clearly identified as such in the delivery documents (e.g. delivery notes, shipping notification, weighing slips, invoices, credit notes). The labelling can be indicated either on the article/on the article item (example: Apples (QS), QS Apples) or by an explanatory note (e.g.: "All items are QS goods", "All apples are QS goods", "DE = QS"). This applies to the physical shipment of goods as well as marketing through an agency.

If cross-company merchandise management systems or electronic data exchange systems (e.g. EDI) are used, QS goods can also be labelled digitally.

As an alternative to labelling QS goods in the (digital) delivery documents, producers,

- who are members of a producer organisation with a contractual delivery obligation, or
- who are closely associated with the buyer of the goods in terms of organisation and company law (e.g. producers with a wholesale company, same ownership structure)

may agree general agreements with the buyer, provided that

- the QS crops entitled to be delivered are marketed to the customer as QS goods without exception, and
- the procedure is documented by the producer and the customer, is known to the employees concerned and can be traced in the audit.

The labelling obligation applies to all QS goods, regardless of whether the QS certification mark is used on the label or the outer packaging (⇒ 2.1.2 Use of the QS certification mark) or not.

Information about the QS status of the goods must be available at the time of physical receipt of the goods or during the outgoing goods inspection. In the case of marketing through an agency, it must be possible to trace the information on the QS status of the physically delivered goods at the agency.

The clear assignment between QS goods and corresponding delivery documents must be guaranteed at all times.

The regulations for labelling QS goods are known to the responsible employees who work with the products - even if no QS goods are handled.

Proof of QS produce (e.g., delivery notes, invoices etc.)

Further document: Explanation note of the labelling of fruit, vegetables and potatoes as QS goods

3.1.8 [K.O.] Product temperature

The temperatures of goods that are subject to mandatory cooling regulations (legal requirements, producers' specifications) must be recorded and documented during the incoming goods inspection. If lower temperatures have been defined in the company and agreed with the supplier, they must be complied with and observed when receiving goods. The procedures must be designed in such a way that the temperature requirements are complied with at all times. The required product temperatures must be adhered to and may only deviate for a short period if this is required for reasons of practicality (e.g., during loading and unloading, during transport into the facility).

In the case of frozen food, the temperature throughout the food must be maintained at minus 18 °C or below. During unloading and putting into storage, short-term variations by a maximum of 3 °C are permitted (in accordance with **TLMV (German Frozen Food Ordinance)**).

Documentation of temperature

3.1.9 Returns management (A)

A documented system for processing returns must be in place. All returned goods must be recorded and evaluated. Decision processes relevant to the further use of returned goods must be followed. Appropriate corrective actions must be implemented to prevent the recurrence of nonconformities. The separation of QS produce, and non-QS produce must be observed. In the case of returns of goods that are not legally marketable, the further handling of the goods or the disposal of the goods must be documented.

3.1.10 Complaints and objections (A)

There is a documented system for handling product complaints from authorities (incl. food safety-related failure reports) and product complaints from customers and end consumers. All complaints are evaluated and appropriate measures are taken where necessary.

3.1.11 Quality requirements

Random samples of the goods are to be visually examined for any defects. Appropriate corrective actions must be initiated if necessary. The results of the goods control must be documented.

Random samples must be taken to monitor compliance with the quality requirements of the relevant marketing standards or (if available) applicable legal classification. In doing so, the **special and general marketing standards** according to **REG (EU) No. 2023/2429** and the **UNECE standards for fruit and vegetables** must be observed.

This involves checking, for instance:

- Minimum characteristics: appearance, smell, ripeness
- Special provisions stipulated by standards
- E.g., Brix content in certain table grapes
- Weight information for pre-packaged products
- Quality
- Sizing
- Quality and size tolerances
- Uniformity
- Packaging

Random samples must be taken to check the completeness of the goods via weighing, counting and measuring. Random sampling must be adapted to the product and country as necessary.

In addition, the dispatch date of the goods, the size and quantity of packaged units, pallets, transport booking allocation, means of transport (flight number, name of ship, lorry ID) and expected arrival date should be documented.

Potatoes
In the case of potatoes, a representative sample is to be taken before or while putting them into storage and at the end of long-term storage. The sample is to be examined and documented in line with the RUCIP rules and in Germany the **Berlin Agreement** and **Leitfaden für die Qualitätskontrolle bei Speisekartoffeln (Guideline on quality control for food potatoes).**

Checklist for receiving goods/rating log/analysis log, results log

3.1.12 Hygiene requirements

The condition of the goods must be examined in relation to product defects and any noticeable adverse impact. Rejected goods are to be removed or returned if necessary (random sampling for spoilage or partial spoilage due to rotting or mould, dirt and impurities, odor-intensive contaminants, disease and pest infestation).

Checklist for incoming goods

3.1.13 Product labelling (A)

Compliance with European and national regulations and laws on labelling of fresh and prepared/processed fruit, vegetables and potatoes (such as the **general marketing standard** and **special marketing standards** per **REG (EU) No. 2023/2429** and any **UNECE standards** applied) must be monitored.

This applies to:

- Packages (cardboard boxes, plastic crates)
- Retail packs
- Accompanying documentation/delivery notes/labels

In the case of loose fruit, vegetables and loose food potatoes, the information must be declared on the transport packaging (e.g. cardboard box/fruit crate/plastic crate). Each package must display the information in legible, indelible letters and numbers that are visible from the outside or on a label forming an integral part of the package or affixed in a durable manner to it.

Depending on the legal requirements, the following information must be provided:

- Type of produce/variety
- Country of origin
- Quantity/filling weight
- Batch/lot number
- Legal commercial grade/commercial specifications/cooking type/class
- Treatment instructions (post-harvest treatment/sprout control)
- Distributor/packaging company
- Commercial denomination
- Special storage instructions (temperature)
- Best-before date/use-by date
- Notice of allergenic substances

Further applicable documents are the **German act governing units of measurement and calibration (Eichgesetz), German packaging act (FertigPackV), EU food information regulation (LMIV), German**

batch labelling ordinance (LKV), German price indication ordinance (PAngV), German additive approval ordinance (ZZulV), EU marketing standards, RUCIP and the **German "Berlin Agreement" terms and conditions**.

3.1.14 Labelling of QS produce with an identification number (A)

QS produce must be labelled with the OGK number/QS ID or another producer identification number stored in the QS database (e.g. GLOBALG.A.P. number (GGN) or global location number (GLN)) on the delivery note/accompanying documentation or on the produce label (or box label).

For batches that may contain produce from multiple producers due to the produce being combined as a consequence of bulk storage or technical packaging/preparation processes (e.g. sorting facilities), and for packages that may contain goods from multiple producers, the QS ID, GH No. or other identification number stored in the QS database for the packaging location (e.g. GGN, GLN) may be used.

3.2 Storage

3.2.1 Technical/structural condition

⇒ 2.4 Technical/structural condition

3.2.2 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

⇒ 2.5 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

3.2.3 Ground clearance

⇒ 2.6 Ground clearance

3.2.4 Stock management

A systematic and comprehensible stock management plan must be documented and implemented (e.g. FIFO/FEFO). It must be quick and easy to identify which goods were stored and when. Each product or packaging unit that has been put into storage or temporarily set down must be clearly identifiable. The storage conditions may not have any negative effects on the product properties.

A procedure must also be specified and known to the relevant members of staff that specifies the corrective actions and steps in the event of a facility malfunction. Furthermore, there must be a procedure determined for the handling of blocked products and goods that are non-compliant.

The following information must be documented in a comprehensible manner based on company records:

- Date of delivery
- Warehouse/Box/Crate designation
- Supplier
- Variety
- Quantity

It must be ensured that goods are stored in batches. The batches must be labelled. The storage company defines what is meant by a "batch". Varieties may not be mixed.

Documentation on storage, storage management process

3.2.5 Best-before date

It must be ensured that the best-before date is observed in all rooms. Regular inspection of the best-before date must be guaranteed for this purpose. Goods with an expired best-before date must be handled according to the internal guidelines. A responsible employee must be named for this purpose.

3.2.6 Prerequisite for maintaining quality

In rooms or facilities where products or materials are stored, the specific climate conditions such as temperature and humidity, and any guidelines according to specifications of the stored products must be adhered to (especially the immediate drying of potatoes that are still moist from harvesting, healing wounds, etc.). Temperature changes must be taken into account to avoid condensation.

During storage, the condition of the goods and the specified storage conditions must be controlled and documented regularly. Fruit and vegetables that are sensitive to ethylene (e.g. kiwi, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, etc.) and potatoes must not be stored in the immediate proximity of fruit and vegetables that release high levels of ethylene (e.g. apples, nectarines, peaches, melons, etc.) when stored over a longer period.

Potatoes
When storing potatoes, the application of cool air must take into account the extent to which each variety forms reducing sugars.

Documentation on quality of goods and storage conditions

3.3 Cold storage rooms

3.3.1 Technical/structural condition

⇒ 2.4 Technical/structural condition

3.3.2 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

⇒ 2.5 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

Mould formation in cold storage rooms must be avoided. If necessary, steps must be introduced to remove the mould. It should also be ensured that frost formation is kept to a minimum. The cooling systems must be regularly maintained and kept in a hygienically sound condition.

3.3.3 Ground clearance

⇒ 2.6 Ground clearance

3.3.4 Stock management

⇒ 3.2.4 Stock management

3.3.5 [K.O.] Temperature recording and monitoring

Temperature recording and monitoring must be managed in such a way that the product temperature requirements (⇒ 3.1.8 [K.O.] Product temperature) are met. The product with the lowest temperature level determines the temperature for the entire storage room.

The temperatures of each cold storage facility must be registered and documented. Furthermore, a procedure in the event of a technical defect must be, documented and known.

Potatoes
Specific climate control and warehouse climate records are required for potatoes. These include:

- Outdoor air temperatures
- Indoor air temperatures
- Tuber temperatures
- Hours of ventilation
- Operating mode of the ventilation systems

Temperature and climate records, temperature checklist, documentation of corrective actions in case of nonconformity

3.3.6 [K.O.] Best-before date/use-by date

Compliance with the best-before date or use-by date must be observed in all rooms. Regular inspection of the best-before date/use-by date must be guaranteed for this purpose. Goods with an expired best-before date must be handled according to internal guidelines. Goods with an expired use-by date may not be distributed. A responsible employee must be named for this purpose.

3.3.7 Prerequisite for maintaining quality

⇒ 3.2.6 Prerequisite for maintaining quality

3.4 Frozen storage rooms

3.4.1 Technical/structural condition

⇒ 2.4 Technical/structural condition

3.4.2 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

⇒ 2.5 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

Frozen storage rooms must be in a clean and hygienically sound condition. There is no contamination. It must also be ensured that frosting is kept to a minimum. A documented cleaning plan must be in place for the cooling systems. Proof of cleaning must be documented.

3.4.3 Ground clearance

⇒ 2.6 Ground clearance

3.4.4 Stock management

⇒ 3.2.4 Stock management

3.4.5 [K.O.] Temperature recording and monitoring

Temperature recording and monitoring must be managed in such a way that the product temperature requirements (⇒ 3.1.8 [K.O.] Product temperature) are met.

The temperatures of each cold storage facility must be registered and documented. There must also be a defined procedure in place, with which the responsible employees are familiar in case of technical faults.

Self-assessment records, checklists, documentation of measures in the event of nonconformity, documentation of temperature

3.4.6 [K.O.] Best-before date

It must be ensured that the best-before date is observed in all rooms. Regular inspection of the best-before date must be guaranteed for this purpose. Goods with an expired best-before date must be handled according the internal guidelines. A responsible employee must be named for this purpose.

3.5 Packaging/redistribution

3.5.1 Technical/structural condition

⇒ 2.4 Technical/structural condition

3.5.2 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

⇒ 2.5 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

3.5.3 Ground clearance

⇒ 2.6 Ground clearance

3.5.4 Storage of packaged goods

Packaged goods that have been prepared for transport must be stored in a manner that preserves their quality through:

- Appropriate hygiene conditions
- Protection from physical and chemical hazards (appropriate temperature, no permanent exposure to light, etc.)

3.5.5 Storage/transport containers for products

Storage/transport containers for goods used internally within companies may only be used for storing or transporting the goods. The containers must be suitable for their intended purpose, be harmless, clean and hygienically sound, and they must guarantee the prevention of contamination.

3.5.6 [K.O.] Temperature recording and monitoring

Temperature guidelines must be available for all packaged or labelled products requiring cool storage, which are also included as a notice on the final consumer packaging. The cold chain must be monitored and documented within the company's sphere of influence. If temperature limits are exceeded, the respective corrective actions must be defined and known to the respective members of staff.

Documentation of temperature

3.5.7 Packaging material

Only packaging material from which the outer packaging has already been removed may be used in the production rooms. Packaging damage is to be avoided and prevented, particularly in the case of packaging materials such as plastics (HACCP).

Reusable packaging (crates, etc.) must undergo mechanical cleaning after each cycle, i.e. before it is used again. Reusable big bags (> 60 x 90 cm) can also be cleaned using other suitable processes (e.g. high-pressure cleaner).

3.5.8 [K.O.] Declaration of conformity/declaration of no objection (A)

Packaging material that comes into direct contact with food must be harmless and hygienically sound. The certificate of compliance must be guaranteed to be up to date. All packaging materials in use that do not have a declaration of conformity according to **REG (EU) No. 10/2011 on plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with food** must have a declaration of no objection.

Packaging materials and packaging resources must be suitable for the intended purpose and conform with the current legal provisions. The packaging company must hold copies of the certificates of compliance for the packaging material in use.

If the packaging material is purchased by another company (e.g. agency), that company must also hold copies of the corresponding certificates.

Declaration of conformity/declaration of no objection, packaging material

3.6 Order picking, outgoing goods/shipping

3.6.1 Technical/structural condition

⇒ 2.4 Technical/structural condition

3.6.2 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

⇒ 2.5 Room, equipment and plant hygiene

3.6.3 Ground clearance

⇒ 2.6 Ground clearance

3.6.4 Order and organisation

In the area of order picking, shipping and purchase acceptance, clearly defined procedures and processes must be defined so that at least the following points and their adherence are taken into consideration:

- Temperature
- Labelling (labels, packing notes, QS certification mark)
- Best-before date/use-by date/storage instructions
- Damages/soiling

3.6.5 [K.O.] Inspection of outgoing goods

A structured and comprehensible inspection of outgoing goods must be implemented within the company. The manner in which nonconformities are handled must be specified. The responsible employees must be trained in dealing with non-conforming products. Before loading, the accompanying documents must be checked, the load must be reconciled (goods and packaging) as well as an inspection of the correct product labelling must be conducted. Specifications must be complied with.

Random samples must be taken to monitor compliance with the quality stipulated in the relevant **marketing standards** or (if available) any declared classifications that apply. Random sampling must be adapted to the product and country as necessary. It must be ensured that QS produce is clearly identifiable and that no confusions may arise. When loading, sensitivities towards temperature and ethylene must be taken into account (loading plan).

Outgoing goods checklist/delivery note

3.6.6 [K.O.] Labelling of marketed QS produce (A)

Goods can only be marketed/delivered as QS goods if a corresponding QS eligibility for delivery exists for the company's own location and the goods were purchased as QS goods.

QS goods must be clearly identified as such in the delivery documents (e.g. delivery notes, shipping notifications, weighing slips, invoices, credit notes). The labelling can be indicated either on the article/on the article item (example: Apples (QS), QS Apples) or by an explanatory note (e.g.: "All items are QS goods", "All apples are QS goods", "DE = QS"). This applies to the physical shipment of goods as well as marketing through an agency.

If cross-company merchandise management systems or electronic data exchange systems (e.g. EDI) are used, QS goods can also be labelled digitally.

The labelling obligation applies to all QS goods, regardless of whether the QS certification mark is used on the label or the outer packaging (⇒ 2.1.2 Use of the QS certification mark) or not.

Information about the QS status of the goods must be available at the time of physical receipt of the goods or during the outgoing goods inspection. In the case of marketing through an agency, it must be possible to trace the information on the QS status of the physically delivered goods at the agency.

The clear assignment between QS goods and corresponding delivery documents must be guaranteed at all times.

The regulations for labelling QS goods are known to the responsible employees who work with the products - even if no QS goods are handled.

Incoming and outgoing goods documents

Further document: Explanation note of the labelling of fruit, vegetables and potatoes as QS goods

3.6.7 [K.O.] Product temperature

The legally required product temperatures and any specifications must be adhered to and may only be exceeded for a short period if this is required for reasons of practicality (e.g. during loading and unloading, during transport into the plant).

If lower temperatures have been defined within the business (internal requirements) and agreed with the client (e.g. according to specifications), these must be fulfilled.

Temperatures must be monitored and documented.

Temperature documentation, outgoing goods checklist

3.6.8 [K.O.] Product labelling (A)

Compliance with European and national regulations and laws on labelling of fresh and prepared/processed fruit, vegetables and potatoes (such as the **general marketing standard** and **special marketing standards** per **REG (EU) No. 2023/2429** and any **UNECE standards** applied) must be monitored.

This applies to:

- Packages (cardboard boxes, plastic crates)
- Retail packs
- Accompanying documentation/delivery notes/labels

In the case of loose fruit, vegetables and loose food potatoes, the information must be declared on the transport packaging (e.g. cardboard box/fruit crate/plastic crate). Each package must display the information in legible, indelible letters and numbers that are visible from the outside or on a label forming an integral part of the package or affixed in a durable manner to it.

Depending on the legal requirements, the following information must be provided:

- Type of produce/variety
- Country of origin
- Quantity/filling weight
- Batch/lot number
- Legal commercial grade/commercial specifications/cooking type/class
- Treatment instructions (post-harvest treatment/sprout control)
- Distributor/packaging company
- Commercial denomination
- Special storage instructions (temperature)
- Best-before date/use-by date
- Notice of allergenic substances

Further applicable documents are the **German act governing units of measurement and calibration (Eichgesetz), German packaging act (FertigPackV), EU food information regulation (LMIV), German batch labelling ordinance (LKV), German price indication ordinance (PAngV), German additive approval ordinance (ZZulV), EU marketing standards, RUCIP** and the **German "Berlin Agreement" terms and conditions**.

All information on the label that is provided by the company itself must be correct (e.g. QS ID, location number, GLOBALG.A.P. number (GGN), (regional) indications of origin).

3.6.9 Labelling of QS produce with an identification number (A)

QS produce must be labelled with the OGK number/QS ID or another producer identification number stored in the QS database (e.g. GLOBALG.A.P. number (GGN) or global location number (GLN)) on the delivery note/accompanying documentation or on the produce label (or box label).

For batches that may contain produce from multiple producers due to the produce being combined as a consequence of bulk storage or technical packaging/preparation processes (e.g. sorting facilities), and for packages that may contain goods from multiple producers, the QS ID, GH No. or other identification number stored in the QS database for the packaging location (e.g. GGN, GLN) may be used.

3.7 Other business premises

3.7.1 Packaging material storage

Packaging material must be stored in its own area that is separate from other goods. The room must be clean and organised, and cleaned in accordance with the cleaning and disinfection plan. When storing packaging material and any packaging resources, the risk of contamination must be considered.

3.7.2 Storage of cleaning agents and disinfectants

Rooms or facilities in which cleaning products, disinfectants and cleaning equipment are stored must be kept clean and tidy. They must ensure hygienic storage of the equipment and, if necessary, a clear separation of clean/unclean equipment. The equipment must be regularly maintained and cared for. A procedure for cleaning and, if necessary, disinfecting the rooms and cleaning equipment must be available and familiar to staff.

Current safety data sheets and usage instructions must be available for cleaning products and disinfectants. Usage instructions must be known to the responsible members of staff and must be stored on site. Cleaning/disinfection products and equipment must be clearly labelled and stored separately from food in accordance with the specific requirements.

For environmentally hazardous substances, additional precautions (e.g. protective trays) must be met in accordance with the relevant safety data sheets and usage instructions.

Safety data sheets, usage instructions

3.7.3 Waste disposal logistics

Food waste and other waste products

- must be removed from locations in which food is handled as quickly as possible in order to prevent accumulation of waste
- must also be stored in closed containers. These containers must be suitable for proper maintenance, easily cleanable and, if necessary, easy to disinfect. If there is a risk of confusion between waste containers and food containers, or for any another necessity, the containers must be labelled.

Suitable precautions must be taken for the storage and disposal of food waste and other waste products. Waste collection rooms must be designed and managed in a way that they can be kept clean and free from animals (dogs, cats, birds) and pests. The rooms must be cleaned regularly. This must be documented. Waste must be stored in an area where it is protected against unauthorised access.

Waste must be disposed of as per local hygiene regulations in a hygienically sound, environmentally sustainable manner and may not impair food. Waste water disposal facilities must be constructed in such a way that they cannot impair goods.

To avoid unnecessary waste and to ensure efficient use of resources, the company must have its own waste management/recycling system in place. Waste must be disposed of selectively (e.g. dual system or similar). The recycling management plan must be documented, and evidence must always be available for:

- Waste produced
- Disposal route
- Fate

Recycling management

3.8 Transport/logistics

3.8.1 Product-compliant transport

Goods must be transported as per product requirements. Goods must be transported in closed, heat-insulated vehicles or refrigerated vehicles, taking into account the type of goods, transport distance and outside temperatures. Fruit, vegetables and potatoes that are transported in open bags on open vehicles must be adequately covered. Loose goods are to be transported in such a way that no contamination may occur.

3.8.2 Transport hygiene

Delivery vehicles must be in a hygienically sound and tidy condition and display no signs of previous soiling. Cargo holds and loading surfaces may only be used if they are clean and free from any contamination. Before loading and after unloading, the loading area must be checked for dirt. If necessary, the loading area needs to be cleaned.

Drivers and any accompanying persons must be wearing clean clothes. The goods may not be impaired by clothing or by the way the goods are handled, for instance. The goods to be transported must be loaded in an appropriate hygienic condition.

Transport vehicle checklist

3.8.3 [K.O.] Temperature control

For vehicles in the company's own fleet, the temperature inside cargo holds must be set in accordance with the goods to be transported. The temperature must be checked and documented before the start of the journey. If necessary, the temperature recorders on the vehicle must be checked and read. Temperature checks before the journey may be omitted if temperatures are recorded continuously during transport.

For goods that require cold storage, the temperature for the entire journey must be maintained and continuously documented in accordance with the applicable guidelines and specifications.

⇒ 3.3.5 [K.O.] Temperature recording and monitoring

Temperature recording

3.8.4 Ground clearance

⇒ 2.6 Ground clearance

3.9 Treatment

3.9.1 Treatment and sorting

During treatment and sorting, continuous attention must be paid to damage to the goods and, if necessary, the packaging. Furthermore, the goods must be monitored for the correct product labelling. It must be ensured that QS produce is clearly identifiable and that no confusion may arise.

In addition, the quality requirements for the **Marketing standards** must be observed and spot checked (⇒ 3.1.11 Quality requirements).

Water that is used for washing produce may only contain the additives intended for this purpose. The use of these substances is to be documented.

Potatoes
Before potatoes are removed from long-term storage, a representative sample must be taken to determine the internal and external tuber defects. Depending on the established results, a decision is made regarding the next steps for preparation and marketing.

Potatoes may only be removed from storage if the tubers are in a suitable condition. The potatoes must be marketed in accordance with the latest version of the **Berlin agreement** if relevant. The tuber grading/laboratory analysis results must be noted and documented in the inventory file.

Grading protocol

3.9.2 [K.O.] Post-harvest treatment and sprout suppressants

Any post-harvest treatment or application of chemical sprout suppressant must be documented along with the:

- Batch number
- Application date and location of usage
- Concentration
- Post-harvest treatment product or chemical sprout suppressant

Only products permitted in the country of application may be used for post-harvest treatment or chemical sprout control. The statutory requirements of the country of destination, including the labelling on each of the packages and shipping units, must be adhered to.

Protocol usage, post-harvest treatment product/sprout suppressant agents

3.10 Product-specific criteria for the storage of potatoes

3.10.1 Suitability of warehouse

The facilities for incoming goods must enable a safe and appropriate transfer of the goods from transport vehicles. The structural and technical design of the warehouse must meet the requirements of potatoes in terms of protective handling.

3.10.2 Suitability of the equipment for incoming and outgoing goods

The number and height of the steps at each transfer point must be as low as possible. Furthermore, to avoid strain on the tubers, attention should be paid where the flow of goods is redirected, as well as to belt speeds, rolling distances and any edges, corners, screws, etc. that are sticking out.

3.10.3 Suitability of preparation and packaging systems and cleaning

An analysis must be carried out and documented on the preparation lines to assess for danger spots where tubers could be damaged as well as other dangers to the quality and appearance of tubers. The preparation facility must be cleaned regularly. The cleaning process must guarantee the varietal purity of each batch and the prevention of phytosanitary contamination/impurities as well as any health hazards to employees (cleaning plan/hygiene checklist).

Cleaning plans, hazard analysis

3.11 Residue monitoring

3.11.1 Organisation of the residue monitoring (A)

The organisation of QS residue monitoring must be known. This involves knowledge of the required amount of samples as per the control plan and commitment to enter sample related data in the QS database when fresh, unprepared/unprocessed QS produce are purchased.

3.11.2 [K.O.] Implementation of the residue monitoring (A)

Participation in QS-approved residue monitoring is mandatory for all scheme participants. The obligation relates to fresh, unprepared/unprocessed QS goods. Prerequisites for implementing residue monitoring are, for instance, to commission a QS-recognized laboratory for residue analyses, sampling per the control plan and sharing analysis result data with QS via the laboratory.

The volume of samples is aligned with the quantity of QS produce purchased. Compliance with the control plan is mandatory. This relates to both the required number of samples per product and to the analysis methods listed as minimum requirements in the control plan for each product. At least one sample must be taken per year if 10 percent of the tonnage defined in the control plan for the respective product has been purchased as QS goods. The fulfilment of the required number of samples must be proven for a 12-month period.

All the requirements are described in the **Guideline Residue Monitoring**, which is obligatory for the implementation.

Entering the analysis results into the QS database is obligatory for all scheme participants that purchase QS produce. Any data provided or transferred via alternative means will not be accepted and will be evaluated as incomplete. It is the responsibility of the company to enter sample related data regularly and to check and enter analysis results. A sample can only be used once to make up the targeted number of samples. For all samples, only one sample related data set and one analytical result per physical sample is allowed.

All scheme participants using facility protection products or post-harvest treatments are also committed to complying with the maximum levels for pesticide residues on food (**REG (EC) No. 396/2005**) – or similar provisions – applicable in the country of production and country of destination. The following are exempt from implementing residue monitoring:

- Wholesale companies that do not own the goods but act solely as a service provider (e.g. washing, sorting, packing).
- Companies at the stage wholesale that are closely associated with their suppliers on the wholesale level in terms of organisation and company law.

This exemption from the obligation to implement residue monitoring does not apply to goods a company purchases from third parties.

Laboratory results in the database

4 Traceability and origin of goods

Note: *In order to verify the identity and traceability of the products in the QS scheme, cross-audit delivery note checks or so-called cross-checks are carried out in the QS supply chain fruit, vegetables, potatoes.*

Further document: Cross-Checks Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes

4.1 Methods and control of traceability

4.1.1 [K.O.] Methods of traceability (A)

Evidence of a transparent commodity flow must be provided. Scheme participants must set up traceability systems and procedures in accordance with **REG (EC) No 178/2002**. The batch sizes produced by each supplier must be defined to ensure traceability. It must be ensured that an article or article group can be traced back to the daily production or shift as a minimum.

A labelling and registration system must be in operation that is understandable to third parties. The labelling and registration system must ensure that goods can be clearly identified and that the commodity flows and packaging materials are traceable and comprehensible at all times.

Each inbound goods shipment that is announced must be issued with a batch number/ID. The respective batch number must be noted on the corresponding accompanying documentation (e.g. supplier notice/fax, inventory notes, quality records, delivery note/packing slip, customer invoice, supplier statements), and must accompany the goods from arrival at the company through to delivery to the customer. Existing labelling systems may also be adopted provided the identification/homogeneity of the goods is assured. The batch number must capture all data required for identification/classification/sorting/preparation and traceability.

A labelling and registration system must be in operation that is understandable to third parties. The labelling and registration system must ensure that goods can be clearly identified and that the commodity flows and packaging materials are traceable and comprehensible at all times.

It must be ensured that traceability data is submitted to QS within 24 hours after contacting the scheme participant.

Internal traceability processes must be structured during an audit in such a way that the respective information can be compiled within four hours.

The following information on customers, suppliers and deliveries is relevant:

- Name, address and telephone number of the food business operator from whom the food was obtained or dispatched
- Name, address and telephone number of the food business operator to whom the food was marketed or delivered
- QS ID and location number (provided these identification numbers are assigned as part of the QS scheme)
- Type and quantity of the delivered products
- Dispatch date, delivery date
- Batch number (if generated during the production process)
- For bulk goods, the batch/lot number on the outer packaging

Supplier and customer list
It must be possible to trace which products/packaging materials were procured from which supplier. A list of all the suppliers must be available.

It must be possible to trace which products are delivered to which customer. A list of all the customers must be available.

Batch labelling, traceability system, batch formation, incoming goods documents (e.g. delivery notes, incoming goods inspection) and outgoing goods documents, supplier list, customer list

4.1.2 [K.O.] Separation and identification of QS produce/non-QS produce

Companies must have a comprehensible system in place for separating QS produce from non-QS produce. It must be guaranteed that QS produce and non-QS produce are clearly labelled and separated into batches. If no QS produce exists within the company (e.g. during initial audit), the goods separation procedure must be demonstrated in a suitable manner.

QS produce must be clearly identifiable within the company at all times. It must be ensured that there is no possibility of confusion.

4.1.3 [K.O.] Traceability check (A)

The traceability of all goods is to be checked using an example from production or outgoing goods in accordance with **REG (EC) No. 178/2002**. This also applies to spices and – in accordance with **REG (EC) 1935/2004** (on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food), – to packaging.

The system must be tested at least once a year (approx. every 12 months). All relevant commodity flows must be taken into account. The test must be documented and the findings presented in a comprehensible manner.

Traceability system test

4.1.4 [K.O.] Reconciliation of incoming goods with outgoing goods (A)

There must be a plausible relation between the quantity of goods purchased and marketed or the quantity of goods stored and delivered.

Incoming goods documents (e.g. delivery notes, incoming goods inspection) and outgoing goods documents as well as quantity of goods in cold/frozen storage rooms

4.1.5 [K.O.] Check on QS eligibility of delivery (A)

***Note**: For service providers who do not become the owner of the goods (e.g. packing stations), the requirement is not relevant, as the verification of the eligibility of delivery has to be carried out by the ordering company.*

A documented procedure must be in place to ensure the following:

Suppliers/delivering companies
All suppliers/companies delivering QS produce must be clearly identified in the QS database as a location with eligibility of delivery for the corresponding production scope and at the stage production additionally for the corresponding crop at the time of handing over the goods. This also applies to agencies and to companies that handle products but do not own the goods.

Receiving companies
If the goods are labelled with the QS certification mark on the label or outer packaging, the location of the consignee/recipient of the goods must be identified in the QS database for the corresponding production scope eligible to deliver.

Process for checking QS eligibility of delivery

5 Definitions

5.1 Explanation of symbols

K.O. criteria are marked with **[K.O.]**.

References to related documents are highlighted in **bold text**.

This symbol means: A written confirmation must be provided. Next to this symbol, there is also a list of documents that can be used as proof. All control and documentation systems (including digital) that prove the requirements are met, can be used.

References to other sections of the guideline are indicated by ⇒.

Notes are identified by ***Note*** *in italics*.

Requirements that are relevant to agencies are identified by "(A)".

5.2 Abbreviations

CCP	Critical Control Point
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
FEFO	First Expired – First Out
FIFO	First In – First Out
GGN	GLOBALG.A.P. number
GHP	Good Hygiene Practice
GLN	Global location number
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practice
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
K.O.	Knock out
QUID	Quantitative Ingredient Declaration

5.3 Terms and definitions

- Agency

  In the QS sense, agencies are companies that exclusively carry out trading and/or marketing activities, without having any direct (physical) contact with the goods. They either own the purchased goods or they buy the goods on commission for resale.

- Agent

  In the QS sense, agents for fruit, vegetables and potatoes act purely as an intermediary between suppliers and recipients. They neither own nor possess the goods.

- Cross-check

  Cross-stage and cross-audit delivery note checks, on the basis of which the QS requirements for traceability and goods identity are checked. Basic information and details on the implementation of the cross-checks can be found in the document "Cross-Checks Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes".

- First-line merchant

  First-line merchants are companies that purchase goods directly from producers and bring the goods to market for the first time.

- HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point)

  A system that identifies, evaluates and monitors hazards that are significant in terms of food safety.

- HACCP concept

  Documentation in compliance with HACCP principles to ensure the monitoring of hazards relevant to food safety.

- Labelling

  Labelling is the method of identifying QS produce on delivery documents (e.g. delivery notes, shipping notifications, weighing slips, invoices, credit notes . Goods that have been produced on a QS-certified farm in accordance with the QS scheme requirements but are not labelled as such on the delivery note, lose their status as QS produce and may not be marketed as QS produce.

- Logistics company

  Within the scope of this guideline, logistics companies are companies that logistically handle – i.e. transport, ship, load and unload, store, pick, etc. – fresh and processed fruit, vegetables and potatoes. This incorporates all activities during delivery via lorry (road transport), short-term storage for the purpose of

goods movement during delivery, long-term storage and picking. Logistics companies that also pack, handle and/or prepare/process goods are classed as a wholesaler (first-line merchant or trading partner) or food preparation/processing company.

- QS produce

  Goods that are produced resp. marketed/handled in accordance with the requirements of the QS scheme only by companies with QS eligibility of delivery. QS produce is clearly labelled as QS produce in the accompanying documents.

- Service provider

  In the QS sense, service providers are companies that carry out activities within the realms of wholesale, such as storage, sorting and packaging, without becoming the owner of the goods.

- Traceability

  Ability to track a product through all stages of production, preparation/processing and distribution.

- Trading partner

  Trading partners are companies that operate within the market between first-line merchants and food retailers, which means that they purchase their goods exclusively from upstream companies. If the company purchases goods directly from producers in addition to other sources, it is classed as a first-line merchant.

- Use of QS certification mark

  Use of QS certification mark describes how the QS certification mark is represented on goods.

A list of general terms and definitions can be found in the **Guideline General Regulations**.

Revision Information Version 01.01.2026

Criterion	Changes	Date of change
2.1.3 Incident and crisis management (A)	**Clarification:** Each scheme participant must maintain a documentation structure for reporting incidents, for example the QS paper of incident, to enable them to pass on any required information in the appropriate format if an incident occurs.	01.01.2026
2.1.10 Commissioning of logistics companies/subcontractors (A)	**Editorial revision** **New:** Logistics companies that are commissioned sporadically and are not QS eligible to deliver must be required by the client to allow inspections by the client's certification body and/or by QS in individual cases.	01.01.2026
3.1.7 Labelling of purchased QS produce (A)	**Editorial revision** **Clarification:** QS goods must be clearly identified as such in the delivery documents (e.g. delivery notes, shipping notifications, weighing slips, invoices, credit notes). This applies to the physical shipment of goods as well as marketing through an agency. **Clarification:** Information about the QS status of the goods must be available at the time of physical receipt of the goods or during the outgoing goods inspection. In the case of marketing through an agency, it must be possible to trace the information on the QS status of the physically delivered goods at the agency. **New:** As an alternative to labelling QS goods in the (digital) delivery documents, producers, • who are members of a producer organisation with a contractual delivery obligation, or • who are closely associated with the buyer of the goods in terms of organisation and company law (e.g. producer also operates a wholesale company; same ownership structure) may agree general terms with the buyer, provided that • the QS crops entitled to be delivered are marketed to the customer as QS goods without exception, and • the procedure is documented by the producer and the customer, is known to the employees concerned and can be traced in the audit. **Deletion:** The use of general rules between scheme participants at the wholesale and/or processing stages is no longer applicable (transitional period expired).	01.01.2026

Criterion	Changes	Date of change
3.6.6 Labelling of marketed QS produce (A)	**Editorial revision** **Clarification:** QS goods must be clearly identified as such in the delivery documents (e.g. delivery notes, shipping notifications, weighing slips, invoices, credit notes). This applies to the physical shipment of goods as well as marketing through an agency. **Clarification:** Information about the QS status of the goods must be available at the time of physical receipt of the goods or during the outgoing goods inspection. In the case of marketing through an agency, it must be possible to trace the information on the QS status of the physically delivered goods at the agency. **Deletion:** The use of general rules between scheme participants at the wholesale and/or processing stages is no longer applicable (transitional period expired).	01.01.2026

Guideline
Wholesale
Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes

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