

**Title** Implementation of food safety standards in fruits and vegetables cooperation  
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**Citation** ISHS Acta Horticulturae 741:25-29. 2007.  
**Keywords** food safety standards; quality management systems; good agricultural practices (GAP)

### **Abstract**

Mechelen Auction is the largest fruit and vegetables cooperation in Europe. Up to 2500 members of the cooperation are producing some 285.000 ton of fresh produce a year. Since 1995 Mechelen Auction is working with a local GAP scheme called FLANDRIA which is mandatory for the vast majority of the production (over 80%). Following the break through of international GAP standards such as EUREPGAP, the local standard and the international one are merged into a single control system. The so called FLANDRIAGAP scheme. Operating under "option 2" quality management system the quality and GAP control points are controlled at least once a year; the external control is organised via an accredited CB. The merging of several GAP schemes is very cost effective for the grower as well as for the PMO since this induces "the one stop check" policy on farm level. Furthermore the merged system allows to implement and control multiple goals under the same umbrella. GAP control points are included on the same level as produce quality control, calibration, food safety monitoring programmes and standardised packing. The FLANDRIAGAP family extended in the past 10 years to more than 50 produce specific manuals. In conclusion: large cooperation is in a good position to introduce, support and maintain high standards of food quality.