

Procurement flexibility in horticultural supply chains

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Abstract

Today's horticultural supply chains are faced with intense pressure regarding food safety, food integrity, supply risk, quality and trust. Competitive pressures increase with increasing consumer demand as well as increased competition. As part of sustaining the supply chain from its source, a conceptual framework of procurement flexibility is suggested. As procurement occurs at every entity along a supply chain, this framework can be used for streamlining and optimisation. Strategic procurement flexibility becomes critical when the internal and external business environments change rapidly. This concept of strategic procurement flexibility enables the rapid modification of sourcing and transport operations, which are critical for perishable products. This concept is reviewed through the literature and matched with current issues of food safety, integrity, supply risk, quality and trust to develop a sustainable and flexible horticultural procurement model. This model is expected to provide competitive advantage in operational flexibility for perishable horticultural products.