

News from CMI Certification Summer 2007

CMI continues to expand its presence worldwide

Fruit Logistica in Berlin, which was so successful for CMI this year, is one of the many events around the world at which CMI has developed a solid presence. Involved in an increasing number of schemes in the fresh produce sector and taking more to accreditation than ever before, we now have a presence in over 46 countries across the global food-chain. International exhibitions and conferences are an important way to keep in touch with our customers and reinforce our presence on the world stage.

CMI has recently received accreditation for both the Assured Plant Propagation Scheme and Leaf Marque International, which Waitrose has just announced is now a key requirement for all its suppliers globally. We are also a considerable player in the agricultural sector, issuing over 19,000 certificates in the UK alone, along with an expanding food processing sector worldwide. We are also seeing a growing number of customers requesting their own specification in an effort to gain market share.

Demand for BRC and IFS continues to grow in countries as far afield as Brazil, Chile, Thailand, SE Asia and within



Steve Cox addressing the Re:Fresh conference

Europe generally, while our survey of the Produce sector (held during Fruit Logistica) demonstrates that EurepGAP continues to consolidate its importance worldwide.

Maintaining high standards by focusing on consistent audit delivery is at the heart of CMI's quest to provide best practice solutions across this expanding sector. Training is also at the forefront in our effort to keep all our partners up to date with the constant stream of new information on the changing demands of standards and standard owners in both existing and emerging countries. Pre-audits are becoming increasingly popular to help new countries understand

procedures needed to make the required standards to gain entry into the EU markets.

International Director for CMI Steve Cox talks in this edition about the new era of assurances for UK importers and their customers. He points out that while at one time voluntary schemes enabled companies to show the quality of their working practices, today certification is a vital requirement for consumer confidence in food safety and has a strong link with a company's reputation and shareholder value.

Producing food responsibly

This year's annual Re:Fresh conference in London tackled the issues that impact on the fresh produce industry and the environment.

Speaking at the Fresh Produce Footprint event in May was International Produce Director for CMI Certification, Stephen Cox, who outlined the challenges that lie ahead for growers around the world and examined the likely effect for UK importers and their customers in today's climate.

"We have moved a long way in the world of assurance over the past decade," says Mr Cox, who pointed out that concerns have changed – yesterday the story was all about good agricultural practice and crop management, due diligence, integrated pest

management and emerging environmental issues.

Today, he said, food safety concerns and confidence in regulatory agencies were at the top of political agendas. Due diligence was now a legal obligation and corporate social responsibilities, together with reducing risks were absolutely necessary to safeguard the reputation of companies.

"The story has developed and the industry leaders have moved from trading requirements being a necessity to developing in-house systems as a response to customers' requirements," said Mr Cox, adding that as globalisation of the fresh produce supply chain continues with retailers expanding worldwide, more questions need to be answered to satisfy the concerns of the consumer.

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Waitrose requests LEAF standards for all suppliers

CMI is now ready to audit for the LEAF scheme as Waitrose extends this programme to all its suppliers around the world.

Covering fresh produce and flowers, the retailer aims to get LEAF implemented by its suppliers by 2010 in an attempt to standardise growing methods and hence give consumers added confidence.

Julian Bott from CMI welcomes the move saying that auditors are fully trained and prepared for the task after extensive piloting of the scheme. CMI has an infrastructure ready in at least six countries and is now ready to roll out the LEAF Marque programme to these overseas growers.

"LEAF is already well established in the UK market and widely understood by consumers who shop at Waitrose," says Mr Bott. "This announcement is really an extension of

the work CMI already does with LEAF in the UK and we look forward to the challenges we face. We are well placed to work with this programme internationally as we are already out there worldwide auditing a variety of schemes for a number of different companies and organisations. Furthermore we will be able to offer composite audits for the growers who already subscribe to a scheme which we are responsible for – saving a lot of time and money and increasing efficiency."

CMI Certification is the UK's largest accredited certification body serving the food and farming industries, certifying over 30,000 farms to a range of crop and livestock standards such as Tesco Nature's Choice, EUREPGAP, Assured Produce Scheme, ABM Beef and Lamb Farm Scheme, BRC wholesale and distribution, BRC, IFS and ISO22000 in the processing sector.

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"Ethical trading for example, sustainable agriculture, and food safety need to be rigorously demonstrated," he warns.

"We need to produce an overall positive impact on society," stresses Mr Cox, who cites Fairtrade sourcing, worker welfare and energy utilisation as major considerations in today's environment.

Fitting the pieces of the assurance standards jigsaw together is a continuing process as more and more countries supply the UK market. This means that the various schemes which started off in the UK pre-2000 with the Assured Produce Scheme, Tesco Nature's Choice and the BRC (British Retailer Consortium) are now growing and developing across the world, to embrace all aspects of food assurance with the highest integrity and giving the utmost confidence to consumers.

Mr Cox commented that as retailers continue to refine their technical and now corporate requirements they will always make sure that the right level of assurance is in place to gain that competitive edge.

Focus on Greece

Greece is one of the countries that has grown enormously over the past few years for CMI. Covering mainly olives, citrus, grapes and kiwis, there are four assessors for EurepGAP with two that look after BRC and IFS plus Tesco Nature's Choice. Four years ago work expanded into Turkey where cherries and black figs are also audited by CMI which are supplied to the UK market.

Lazaros Karanikas, MD of QMS, the CMI Approved Service Provider in Greece believes that the country is taking standards very seriously as the demands in the whole food chain increase. "We have 6000 growers and Turkey has almost 4000, he says, adding that the EurepGAP scheme is growing at a pace. QMS offers a range of CMI services including EurepGAP, Tesco Nature's Choice, BRC, IFS in Greece and Turkey and also covers most East Mediterranean countries.

CMI has a fast expanding global network of in-country offices staffed by qualified and experienced personnel to meet the existing and emerging demands for certification,

training and technical services from clients within the supply chain.

All teams have local multi-lingual senior assessors to make sure that auditing standards in the in-country operations meet UKAS requirements.

They also have local knowledge and use the local language during the auditing process which is crucial to helping the producer or supplier understand the specifiers' technical protocols.



Lazaros Karanikas, CMI's partner in the Greece and Eastern Mediterranean Region

CMi's Label Check Clearing House

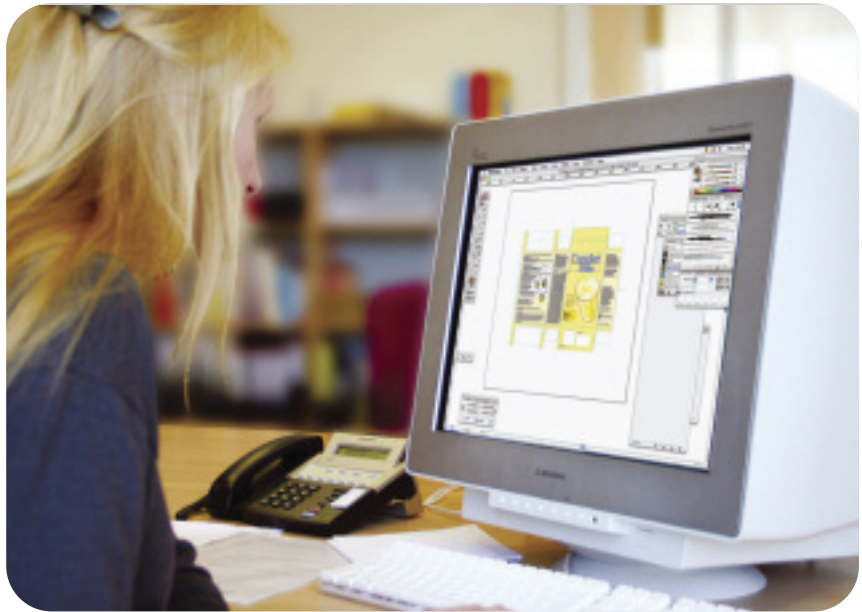
CMi has launched a new label checking service for suppliers to the major UK retailers. Aiming to provide a fail-safe approach to labelling requirements, CMi will check and approve all product specifications and artworks. It is a cost-effective 'right first time' service which will be attractive both to retailers and manufacturers, especially own label suppliers and in the last few months CMi has gained a number of prominent clients.

The first client, one of the big names in UK retailing, is using the service with all its suppliers to verify its specification labelling work. The project has involved CMi working with the retailer to establish Best Practice standards and methodologies. Following on from this,

CMi has won the contract to ensure that product specifications are produced according to all the retailer and legal requirements in regard to pack label copy and composition.

The service is designed so that it can be used as a comprehensive service by retail clients for their suppliers or alternatively can be a voluntary service adopted by suppliers as a clear demonstration of technical competence to their customers. As such the scheme offers suppliers a potential competitive advantage in the market place.

For more information contact Glyn Scott on +44 (0) 7801 039029



Accurate and compliant labels - fast

Tesco adds Organic to its Nature's Choice

After four days of training in May, CMi is now ready and prepared to carry out the first TNC organic audits following the announcement that Organics are being added to the Tesco Nature's Choice scheme.

Organics are now a growing part of Tesco's produce sales, and the retailer wants all its organic suppliers to be growing produce to the same level of Good Agricultural Practice as the conventional produce.

The specific organic criteria will be bolted onto the existing scheme, as one would expect, says Julian Bott from CMi, but the depth of coverage in the conventional scheme is extremely comprehensive and organic growers are expected to have to pass these as well as the specific organic questions.

This will mean that topics such as worker health and safety, the permitted products of plant protection, and the storage, handling and usage of these products will come under the

same scrutiny as that of conventional growers supplying Tesco.

There are also questions covering the impact on the environment in terms of pollution and recycling, and a specific packing and packhouse section.

This will be the first time that many organic growers will have had such scrutiny, says Julian Bott, as existing Organic certification audits do not cover these topics.

He went on to say that this audit is for 'Certified' organic growers who supply organic produce to Tesco, and is not an 'Organic' audit; in fact, there is very little overlap between the growers' Organic audit, and the TNC audit.

CMi who already administrate Tesco Nature's Choice will be involved in the administration of this standard and the global roll out programme which is over the next three years and started on April 1st 2007.



News in brief

Three new appointments for CMi



CMi is pleased to welcome Rob Evans to his new role working as part of the CMi International team, where he will be reviewing audits and making certification decisions

for clients and in-country partners alike. Having already worked with CMi over the past nine years on the various farm schemes including EUREPGAP, APS, TNC and BRC, he also has a strong background in the food industry. Rob has worked since 2002 with the International team auditing customers and training auditors for the CMi International network.



CMi also welcomes Wouter Conradie who on 1st June became the new General Manager for South Africa. Wouter is already very well

versed in certification issues in the country and has a wealth of experience talking with producers and auditors plus the key retail suppliers that produce for the UK markets.



Henry Van Rooyen also joined CMi at the beginning of June as the new Processing Manager for South Africa. With a strong history of auditing in the

certification field, Henry will be working with both BRC and Processing clients in South Africa to continue to build on the service that is offered.

CMi at Thaifex

CMi Certification, in conjunction with their Approved Service Provider, 'Thai Food Certification', had a strong presence at the International Thaifex Exhibition held in Bangkok (23 to 25 May). With an increasingly international focus, Thaifex exhibitors and visitors from the whole region feel that the event is going from strength to strength.

The increasing importance of standards, whether generic such as HACCP or customer specific, eg BRC, IFS and EurepGAP, was underlined with seminars on the requirements of the Australian and European Markets. CMi services in a broad range of sectors, including Poultry, Seafood, Fruit and Vegetables and general Processing proved to be of considerable interest to attendees.



Some of the CMi team at Thaifex

Farewell to Mike Wilson



Mike Wilson

This month we are saying goodbye to Mike Wilson, General Manager of our South African office. Mike has had a long association with CMi, working for us both in the UK and his native South Africa. He is leaving us to explore pastures new and with our very best wishes to him and his family for the future.

Winner at Fruit Logistica

At Fruit Logistica, held in Berlin in February, CMi ran a popular survey and prize draw to highlight our presence there. The lucky winner of vouchers worth 1000 euros to spend in Marriott hotels worldwide is Melissa Jones, Technical Manager at British & Brazilian, a major produce importing and packing company. Melissa is pictured here receiving her prize from Julian Bott, CMi International Produce Manager.



For details of all our international offices got to www.cmi-plc.com and look under Contacts/International