



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



2836 (MJB) ECD/10/24

INSTRUCTIONS N°OF...../...../ 2024 FOR EXPORTATION OF AVOCADOS FROM RWANDA

Pursuant to the law of n°14/04/2017 Establishing the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) and determining its mission, organization, and functioning, especially article 5 and Rwanda Standard: RS EAS 19: 2017 standard of Fresh avocado specification (RSB, 2018). The National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) has set these instructions which establish the minimum requirements for the exportation of avocados from Rwanda to regional and international markets and communicates them to the public and all avocado value chain stakeholders.

Hereby issues the following instructions

Article One: Purpose

The purpose of setting these instructions is to introduce a practical mechanism that builds and ensures the quality, safety, and compliance of Rwandan avocados with international standards, thereby fostering trade relationships, safeguarding consumer health, and increasing its revenue. The adherence to these standards enhances Rwanda's reputation as a reliable supplier of high-quality avocados globally. It also facilitates sector coordination and enhances this commodity's national, regional, and international competitiveness.

Article 2: Scope

These instructions apply to avocado farms, individual farmers, cooperatives, companies, exporting companies, aggregators, government institutions, and partners involved in all activities from farm to market for Rwandan fresh, unripened, and ripened avocados destined for regional and international markets.

Article 3: Definition of terms

As used in this instruction, the following terms have the meanings ascribed to them below:



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



- i) **Foreign matter:** any organic or inorganic substances that affect the appearance and typical smell of the avocado fruit.
- ii) **Diseased avocados:** avocados having an unhealthy condition caused by fungi, bacteria, viruses, or pests.
- iii) **injury:** any defect that affects the physical appearance or internal parts of avocado fruit.
- iv) **sound:** not overripe, not soft and free from disease or insect damage; bruising or physical injuries affecting keeping quality of the fruit.
- v) **Safety:** state of being "safe", the condition of being protected from harm or other danger to the consumer.
- vi) **Packhouse:** Facility where fruits are received and processed before distribution to market.
- vii) **Traceability:** a process of having information about a product along its supply chain, across production, processing, and distribution.
- viii) **Aggregator:** a person or a group or an organization that collects avocado produce from different sources and gathers them in a consignment.
- ix) **Farmer:** a person or farmer group or cooperative or a company that grows avocado fruit trees.
- x) **A farm:** is an area of land that is used for growing avocado fruit trees.
- xi) **Exporter:** A business firm/company registered in Rwanda that sends avocados to another country for sale.

Article 4: Objective of these instructions

These instructions aim at organizing the supply chain system; quality, safety, and market requirements including traceability system compliance of Rwandan avocados for sale.

Article 5: The minimum physical requirements for Rwandan avocados

All classes of fresh avocados supplied for export shall comply with the following minimum requirements:



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



- i) Intact and sound
- ii) Clean, practically free from any foreign matter,
- iii) Free from damage caused by low (chilly injury) and/or high temperatures
- iv) Having a stalk not longer than 1cm
- v) Free from external moisture (free from water)
- vi) Free from any smell and /or taste (When tasted, the ripe fruit shall be free from the bitter taste) and it shall not be fibrous)
- vii) Free from pests and disease damage
- viii) Free from mechanical damage/physical injuries
- ix) Appropriate size (10 to 30)
- x) Free from deformation

Article 6: Maturity criteria

Maturity requirements for avocado classes are based on UNECE Standard FFV-42 and Codex Standards (UNECE, 2017) and RS EAS 19: 2017 standard of fresh avocado specification (RSB, 2018).

6.1. Sensory maturity

- i) Free from bitterness
- ii) Less shiny
- iii) For Fuerte the skin turns Yellow-greenish while the stalk turns yellow
- iv) The bottom of the fruit turns to be sickened

6.2. Physiological maturity

The development and state of maturity of the avocados shall be such as to enable them to continue their ripening process and to reach a satisfactory degree of ripeness. The fruit should have a minimum dry matter content at the harvest according to the variety, to be measured by drying to constant weight as below stated in reference to RS EAS 19: 2017 standard of fresh avocado specification (RSB, 2018):



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



- a) 21 % for the variety of Hass; and
- b) 20 % for the varieties Torres, Fuerte, Pinkerton, Edranol, and Reed.
- c) other varieties including Antillean/West Indian/Guatemalan may show a lower dry matter content.

Note: Other considerations of physiological maturity shall be based on importing country requirements.

Article 7: Food safety compliance

7.1. Pesticide Residue Limits

Avocados shall adhere to established pesticide residue limits as per importing country requirements. Regular testing and documentation of residue levels are required.

7.2. Hygienic requirements

Avocado shall be cleaned and/or protected with an acceptable product such as a sanitizer antimicrobial agent based on importing country requirements. Other practices for protective purposes should be used such as waxing and others as long as they are in line with importing country requirements.

Article 8: Traceability and Documentation

8.1. Traceability

- i) All avocado farms (sites grouping different farms, individual or company farms) for export shall obtain a registration code from a Competent Authority
- ii) Avocado farms shall source their planting materials from certified nurseries (sources).
- iii) A robust traceability system shall be in place to track and trace avocados from the registered farm to the market. All batches shall be identifiable, and records shall be maintained for a minimum time of two years.
- iv) In case there is an aggregator between farmers and exporters, the exporter shall register him/her.



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



- v) Each packhouse handling avocados for export shall have a unique code allocated by Competent Authority.
- vi) Packing material used for avocados packing shall have the label owned by exporter

8.2. Documentation

Each consignment shall be accompanied by accurate documentation including a certificate of origin, phytosanitary certificates, invoices, and packing list. Any additional documents would be provided depending on customer requirements in agreement with the exporter.

Article 9: Transportation and packaging

Avocados shall be transported and stored under suitable temperatures to maintain quality and prevent spoilage.

9.1. Transport

- i) Vehicles, crates (wooden/plastic), and boxes shall be clean, in good condition, well-ventilated (use of a cold truck is encouraged), and free from foreign matter and smell.
- ii) Packages or batches in crates or the case of presentation of the product in bulk in a transport vehicle shall be free of all foreign matter.

9.2. Packaging

- i) The avocados shall be packaged in plastic crates from the farm to ensure adequate protection of the product during transport and handling including compression from overhead weight of stacked materials, impact and vibration during transportation, loading and offloading.
- ii) Ventilated boxes and/appropriate trays shall be used for avocado products
- iii) The use of materials like paper or stamps bearing trade specifications is allowed and shall be of non-toxic ink or glue (food grade products).



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



9.3. Labeling/Marking of products

Each package shall bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and visible from the outside of each package.

- i) Packer and/or shipper/exporter details
- ii) Name and address of exporter (e.g., street/city/region/postal code, and country if different from the country of origin)
- iii) Product name,
- iv) Name of the variety
- v) A brand name (if applicable).
- vi) Mixed packed varieties: in the case of a mixture of distinctly different varieties or species, names of the different varieties or species shall be indicated (eg. Mixture of Hass, Fuerte and Ettinger varieties »).
- vii) If the produce is not visible from the outside of the package, the above information i, ii, iii and IV shall be included on the package label.
- viii) The storage conditions (T^0) shall be indicated on label
- ix) Batch number with complete information from the source to market shall be included.
- x) Country or area of origin:
 - Class/grade of the product
 - Calibre/size
 - Official control mark (optional) in applicable
- xi) When stickers are used, individually affixed sticker to the products shall be such that it does not leave any visible traces of glue or damage the skin when removed.
- xii) When laser printing is used, on individually presented fruit it shall not cause defects to the flesh or skin.
- xiii) When QR Code is used, the information (above information) shall be complete and accessible.



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



Article 10: Cold Chain Management and postharvest handling

10.1. Harvesting and delivery to packing area

- i) All fruits to be harvested shall meet the above-mentioned criteria in article five and six
- ii) All harvests shall be kept in harvesting shade for to avoid sunburn and other foreign matters
- iii) All produce shall be carried in plastic crates, loaded preferably in a cold truck

10.2. Reception

- i. The pack house shall have a procedure for receiving avocados from farm(s)
- ii. The fruits shall be received, weighed, and offloaded from the trucks within a reasonable time (Maximum 1hr)
- iii. Reception staff at the packhouse shall verify the crates and the condition of the fruits received.
- iv. Received fruits at the packhouse would be transferred immediately to a cool shaded area inside the packhouse.
- v. Receiving staff shall conduct a quality assessment of fruit on arrival and records shall be kept for at least one year.

10.3. Pre-cooling

Thorough cooling of the avocado fruit is highly recommended following harvest to remove the field heat as much as possible. Received avocados shall be precooled up to 7-10°C after reception.

10.4. Sorting and Grading

- i) Fruits delivered to the packhouse shall be sorted and graded according to the mentioned quality criteria.
- ii) Fresh avocados shall be stored under temperatures ranging between 4 to 8°C.



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



iii) Chemicals used in sorting and grading fruits shall be food graded products (bactericides, fungicides, chlorine-based products or any other market acceptable treatment).

iv) In case of organic products, use organic approved treatment

10.5. Packing

Avocados shall be packed in acceptable packing materials (refer to 6.2) according customer requirements.

10.6. Palletizing

i) Wooden pallets used for holding avocado boxes shall be treated against pests and diseases and marked or stamped as treated.

ii) The avocado palletized skids shall be strong enough to prevent the collapse of the avocado boxes.

10.7. Final products cooling

The packed avocados shall be stored in a cold room at a temperature of between 5.5.-7°C

10.8. Fumigation

In cases where fumigation shall be done to control phytosanitary pests, the fumigation agents, dosage and exposure levels shall be approved by a competent authority. The fumigation shall be done under the supervision of a competent authority.

Article 11: Inspection and Certification

11.1. Quality Inspection

Avocado shipments shall undergo quality inspection by the competent institution to verify compliance with the instructions.



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



11.2. Phytosanitary inspection

All avocados for export shall be inspected by the competent Institution, only avocados meeting the established phytosanitary requirements shall receive a phytosanitary certificate for export.

Article 12: Exporter performance behavior and compliance with regulatory requirements

- i) Every export shall declare the real pricing value to the concerned competent Authority
- ii) In case the exporter has out growers, both shall have and honor the supply contract
- iii) Every exporter shall honor any committed agreement
- iv) Every Exporter shall be registered by NAEB with a valid export operation license

Article 13: Enforcement

13.1. Enforcement and follow up

Relevant institutions (NAEB, RICA, RRA, RAB, Districts, Rwanda National Police, and other concerned institutions) will enforce these instructions.

13.2. Administrative measures

The administrative measures shall apply for non-compliance with these instructions, including:

- i) rejection of the consignment,
- ii) suspension of export license for one month after getting notification,
- iii) cancelation of export license in case there is persistent failure to comply with these instructions.

Article 14: Review and Amendments

14.1. Validity

Based on the NAEB Mandate, these instructions will be in use until there is a review or the new regulations are set to replace these instructions to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.



Republic of Rwanda

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



14.2. Amendments:

Amendments to these Instructions may be made to align with changes in standards or to address emerging issues or relevant requests in writing by stakeholders or customers.

Article 15: Commencement

These instructions shall enter into force on the date of their signature.

Date: /28./10./2024



Claude BIZIMANA
Chief Executive Officer