

Mini-Symposium

“Impact of Water Quality and Water Treatment (pre- and postharvest) on the Safety of Fresh Produce”

Thursday 24th April 2014

Van der Valk Brussels Airport Hotel, Diegem, Belgium

**Organized by Association Ghent University (AUGent)
in the framework of EU FP7 Veg-i-Trade
in collaboration with Freshfel Europe**



Water, both in pre-harvest and post-harvest setting, is a potential source for microbial contamination of fresh produce. Various water sources and water treatment systems are in use in Europe. This is reflected in significant differences in water quality, water testing and monitoring regimes and overall water management strategies of both irrigation water and processing water in the fresh produce supply chain across Europe.

EU FP7 Veg-i-Trade partners at AUGent in Belgium, CEBAS-CSIC in Spain and NVI, NIVA in Norway have made considerable effort in data collection on water quality comparing various water treatment technologies and water sanitation strategies including chlorine, chlorine dioxide, peroxyacetic and lactic acids, hydrogen peroxide, UV disinfection, ultrasound etc. for their use both at primary production and in the fresh-cut industry.

The water quality is a key factor that may impact on the overall quality and safety of fresh produce, but the most relevant goal of water treatment technologies is to keep the water free from micro-organisms and to decrease the risk for cross-contamination rather than to reduce the microbial load on the produce or have a shelf-life extension effect.

Throughout the EU FP7 Veg-i-Trade research it became clear that

- the availability and scientific basis for guidelines on microbial water quality,
- the knowledge on appropriate selection and use of water treatment technologies,
- and the regulatory status of water treatment or sanitizing solutions, in the fresh produce supply chain is fragmented within various EU member states.

The mini-Symposium will present the impact of water use and water quality on the safety and quality of fresh produce and discuss the various approaches for water management and water treatment based upon experience from the EU P7 Veg-i-Trade project partners.

The programme of the mini-symposium is as follows:

9.30h : arrivals

10.00h : Mieke Uyttendaele (UGent, Be)

"Foodborne outbreaks linked to fresh produce: does water play a role?"

10.30h: Imca Sampers (HoWest-AUGent, Be)

"Microbial Status of Irrigation Water and Risk Factors for Transmission of Pathogens to Leafy Greens"

11.00h: Mabel Gil (CEBAS-CSIC, Spain)

"Water Sanitation in Postharvest Processes : Do No Harm"

11.30h: Ingun Tryland (NIVA, Norway)

"The Potential of Water Treatment involving UV, Chlorine Dioxide and Hydrogen Peroxide"

12.00h: discussion – Q&A

12.30h: sandwich lunch

13.30h: Imca Sampers (HoWest-AUGent, Be)

"The Do's and Don'ts of water disinfection techniques in fresh produce supply chain: lessons learnt from EU FP7 Veg-i-Trade"

14.00h: Frank Devlieghere (UGent, Be)

"Use of Peracetic Acid to Guarantee Microbial Quality of Minimal Processed Vegetables"

14.30 h: Liesbeth Jaxsens (UGent, Be)

"Setting Science Based Criteria on Water Quality: The Use of Microbial Risk Assessment"

15. 00h: Discussion session

Including feedback from **European Commission, national competent authorities, fresh produce industry, the Veg-i-Trade team**

16.00h: closing of the meeting and farewell drink (until max. 17.00h)

Registrations are free (no fee) – participants should sent the registration form to Steffi.vervaet@UGent.be before April 10th 2014. The number of participants is restricted to 60 (first come, first served).

More info on meeting location:

Van der Valk Hotel Brussels Airport, Culliganlaan 4b, 1831 Diegem (Brussels)

Tel: +32 (0) 2 277 20 00, E-mail: info@brussels.valk.com, www.valk.com/brussels

A free shuttle service from and to the airport is available (schedule available upon request)

More info on Veg-i-Trade project and its activities, reports, posters: www.Veg-i-Trade.org

In collaboration with

