

Contribution from Freshfel to the Call for proposals for regulatory cooperation activities in the Regulatory Cooperation Forum (RCF) under CETA

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute ideas to the setup of the Regulatory Cooperation Forum, to improve the implementation of CETA.

Freshfel is the European Umbrella organisation of the European Fruit and Vegetable industry and is representing more than 150 companies around the supply chain. The export to Canada has been relatively stable over the past 3 years at a level around 80.000 T with Spain (in particular), Italy and the Netherlands being the biggest exporters to the Canadian market. As the Canadian market is a big global import market, there is much potential for further growth and development within towards the Canadian market.

We have consulted with our membership with regard to your consultation on ideas for improved regulatory cooperation in the area of plant health, food safety and food policy, and received feedback, that there is a need on improved dialogue on Maximum Residue Levels (MRL's) applied on certain fruit and vegetables. The discrepancy of levels between Canada and the EU, e.g. on citrus products from Spain and pears from Belgium is challenging trade from the EU to Canada, even though having a free trade agreement in place. Acknowledging, that this matter is very sensitive, we believe, the Regulatory Cooperation Forum could be a good platform on a first dialogue on this matter. This could moreover be an opportunity, where Canada and the EU could move closer together and work together in international fora.

We have attached you the document on the differences in MRL's received from our members, to illustrate the challenges and remain available for follow-up questions at any time.