

Guidance

Exporting fresh capsicum to the European Union

AN INTRODUCTION TO
EU PHYTOSANITARY
REQUIREMENTS

January 2025



Funded by
the European Union



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1. BACKGROUND

Since January 2018, imports of fresh capsicum into the European Union (EU) have been subject to additional plant health measures. In response to historically high levels of interceptions at EU border controls, EU Implementing Directive [2017/1279](#) first applied special measures to address false codling moth (FCM, *Thaumatotibia leucotreta*) in capsicum, some citrus species, and *Prunus persica* exported from Africa, Cabo Verde, Madagascar, La Réunion, Mauritius, and Israel, where this pest is widespread.

In December 2019, a new EU plant health regulatory regime came into force to tackle the spread of harmful pests and diseases. This brought in stricter measures to target crops and harmful organisms that are a known pathway into the EU of serious pests that could damage EU agriculture or the environment. Capsicum has subsequently been subject to more and progressively stricter controls, in part because it is associated with several pests that have since been classified as serious, but also because interceptions of imports have continued (including of FCM) despite the application of more rigorous measures.

This document has been prepared for national authorities and capsicum export sectors to explain these evolving EU phytosanitary import requirements. While focused on capsicum, it can also serve as a reference for other fruit and vegetable exports that are subject to similar special measures.

The various EU plant health measures now in place for capsicum are described here, along with the steps that stakeholders in exporting countries need to take.

In this report “capsicum” refers to bell peppers, chilli peppers, and other varieties of peppers. “Fresh capsicum” refers to raw, unprocessed fruit of capsicum that has not been processed in any way, including by drying, trimming, canning, or freezing.

Key messages

- Meeting EU plant health requirements involves concerted action from **all stakeholders in the value chain**, including producers and exporters, as well as public authorities – particularly National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs). Experience has shown that dialogue and engagement between **public and private sectors** is critical. All stakeholders must agree on what is needed to ensure that exported produce is free from the designated pests. This means identifying and agreeing on actions to be taken by private sector operators at all stages, from production to export. It also means agreeing on the responsibilities of the NPPO.
- Repeated interceptions of imported produce at EU border controls due to the presence of pests will likely lead to the imposition of **more stringent measures and controls** on the crops and countries concerned. COLEAD recommends the establishment of national stakeholder platforms that bring together all major stakeholders to develop, and oversee the implementation of, a **National Capsicum Action Plan**. This must be appropriate to the local context, and usable by the range of different producers and exporters concerned (large and small).



2. NEW EU PLANT HEALTH REGIME

In December 2019, the new EU Plant Health Law (Regulation [2016/2031](#)) came into force, introducing more stringent rules to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful pests and diseases in the EU.

A number of plant pests and diseases are classified as “quarantine organisms”. These are pests that are mainly or entirely absent from the region, but which could potentially have a serious economic, environmental, or social impact if they were introduced into the EU. The Regulation classifies all plant pests according to the following three categories:

- **Union quarantine pests:** These are not present at all in the EU territory, or are present very locally and under official controls. Strict measures must be taken to prevent their entry or further spread within the EU, and they have to be eradicated immediately if detected.
- **Protected zone quarantine pests:** These are present in most parts of the EU, but absent in certain areas called “protected zones”. Measures must be taken to prevent the introduction of these pests into the protected zones, or to eradicate them if they are found to be present.
- **Regulated non-quarantine pests:** These are more widely present in the EU, but are known to have a negative impact on plant quality. To reduce impact, plant reproductive material on the market should be guaranteed free or almost free from the pest.

The Plant Health Law also introduced the concept of “**priority pests**”, which are Union quarantine pests with the most severe potential impacts in the EU. These are listed under Regulation [2019/1702](#), and are subject to enhanced measures within the EU.

Lists of pests, commodities, and additional plant health requirements

Regulation [2019/2072](#) lists the species that are currently classified as quarantine pests, and specifies additional measures that must be put in place for certain plants, plant products, and other objects before they can be imported into the EU. Those most relevant to agri-food imports from non-EU countries are given in the following Annexes to this Regulation:

- **Annex II:** Union quarantine pests
- **Annex VI:** plants, plant products, and other objects whose introduction into the Union from certain non-EU countries is prohibited
- **Annex VII:** plants, plant products, and other objects originating from certain non-EU countries, where there are special requirements for their introduction into the Union due to the high risk they pose.

Capsicum is listed under Annex VII of the Regulation, and is subject to special measures for a number of regulated pests.

Regulated plants and phytosanitary certificates

Under the new Plant Health Law, in order to enter the EU, all living plant material (including entire plants, parts of plants, fruits, cut flowers, seeds, etc.) must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate that confirms its compliance with EU legislation. A small number of (low-risk) commodities are exempt from this requirement, and can continue to be exported without a certificate (Annex XI of Regulation [2019/2072](#)).



Regulatory Framework

Under the new framework, the Plant Health section of the European Commission's [Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed](#) reviews the plant health situation on an ongoing basis, and new EU measures are periodically introduced to control the introduction and spread of harmful organisms. Decisions are influenced by information on changing pest distributions, new trade flows, and the impacts of climate change, all of which may increase the risks of pests becoming established in the EU. Notifications of pests found in import consignments during border controls are also very important as they highlight the pathways of critical pests into the EU.

The EU plant health regime is aligned with the [International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures](#) (ISPMs). ISPMs are globally agreed-upon guidelines developed by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to ensure the safe trade of plants and plant products by preventing the spread and introduction of pests. These standards establish uniform practices for pest risk analysis, inspection, certification, and other phytosanitary measures, facilitating international trade while safeguarding plant health.

The EU ensures consistency with international trade rules by aligning with ISPMs, but also addresses its unique phytosanitary challenges by introducing additional requirements specific to the EU.

For more information, and updates on the latest changes to EU plant health legislation, see the [AGRINFO platform](#):

- [EU Plant Health Law explained](#)
- [Provisional list of high risk plants explained](#)
- [Provisional listing of pests, commodities and additional plant health requirements](#)



3. OVERVIEW OF EU PLANT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR CAPSICUM

Additional plant health measures have been in place since January 2018 stipulating conditions that exporting countries must meet before exports of capsicum to the EU are allowed. The first (Directive [2017/1279](#)) addressed false codling moth (FCM) exported from Africa, Cabo Verde, Madagascar, La Réunion, Mauritius, and Israel. In April 2022 the rules for capsicum were strengthened (Regulation [2021/2285](#)), again addressing FCM, and also tomato fruit borer (*Neoleucinodes elegantalis*), fall armyworm (FAW, *Spodoptera frugiperda*), and some fruit flies of the *Tephritidae* group (including *Bactrocera latifrons*), all of which must be managed using special measures outlined in the Regulation.

In July 2022, a second item of legislation (Regulation [2022/959](#)) amended the rules concerning FCM. While this was already listed as a priority pest and subject to additional measures, continued interceptions on several host plants during EU border controls led to stricter rules being introduced.

Subsequent amendments to Regulation [2019/2072](#) (Annex VII) have added bud midge (*Prodiplosis longifila*) and pepper weevil (*Anthonomus eugenii*) as pests that are relevant to capsicum. In addition, in response to its continuing global spread, the EU set specific rules for FAW under Regulation [2023/1134](#), with comprehensive measures to prevent its introduction, establishment, and spread within the EU.

The additional measures concerning capsicum are specific to the pests listed, but also to certain countries where these pests are present and where there is a known pathway into the EU. Table 1 gives an overview of the pests and countries that are affected by special measures for the export of capsicum to the EU.

Some of the special measures included in these Regulations refer to International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs). Exporting countries must consult the relevant ISPMs to fully understand and comply with the EU regulatory requirements.



Table 1: Pests and countries affected by special plant health measures for the export of fresh capsicum to the EU according to Annex VII of Regulation (EU) 2019/2072

Pest species	America & Caribbean	Africa	Asia	Oceania
False codling moth (<i>Thaumatotibia leucotreta</i>)		African continent, Cabo Verde, Saint Helena, Madagascar, La Réunion, Mauritius	Israel	
Solanum fruit fly (<i>Bactrocera latifrons</i>)		All 54 African countries ¹	All Asian countries ² (49), including specific regions in Russia ³	
Tomato fruit borer (<i>Neoleucinodes elegantalis</i>)	All	All ²	All ³	All
Fall armyworm (<i>Spodoptera frugiperda</i>)	All	All ²	All ³	All
Bud midge (<i>Prodiplosis longifila</i>)	Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, USA			
Pepper weevil (<i>Anthonomus eugenii</i>)	Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Puerto Rico, USA			French Polynesia

¹ Algeria, Angola, Benin Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mayotte, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia Niger, Nigeria, Réunion, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

² Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen.

³ The following regions of Russia: Far Eastern Federal District (Dalnevostochny federalny okrug), Siberian Federal District (Sibirsky federalny okrug), and Ural Federal District (Uralsky federalny okrug).



Regulated pests

Detailed individual requirements and guidance for each capsicum regulated pest are given at the end of this Guidance:

- Fruit fly – *Bactrocera latifrons* (Appendix 1)
- False codling moth (Appendix 2)
- Full armyworm (Appendix 3)
- Tomato fruit borer (Appendix 4)
- Bud midge (Appendix 5)
- Pepper weevil (Appendix 6).

Note that this document does not provide an exhaustive list of pests, and there are other Union quarantine pests relevant to capsicum. It is therefore essential to monitor to avoid the presence of *any* quarantine pest in fresh capsicum for export. However, while their introduction into the EU is prohibited, no additional special measures or declarations in the phytosanitary certificate are currently required for these other pests.⁴

Phytosanitary certificates

Every capsicum export must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. This certificate must clearly mention the regulated pests relevant to the country of export, and the actions the exporting country has taken to manage them. For guidance on completing the phytosanitary certificate, see section 5.

Communication with the EU

Some special measures for capsicum require NPPOs to communicate with the EU in advance. A written dossier providing the required details must be given to the EU, and accepted, in order to receive an authorisation to export fresh capsicum. If a country exports before receiving this authorisation, the consignments will be intercepted at EU borders and the goods cannot be placed on the EU market.

Once a dossier has been sent to the EU, its status (received, accepted, etc.) can be checked via the EU's webpage on declarations of pest status from non-EU countries: [Declarations – non-EU](#).

Phytosanitary mitigation measures

In the case of some pests, the special measures include options for mitigation measures, typically ranging from options a to d. Exporting countries must select the option most appropriate to their circumstances to ensure that exported consignments are pest free.

Pest presence and surveillance

Section 4 provides detailed guidance on the types of pest free status mentioned in Table 2. Before deciding which mitigation measures to adopt, countries must first determine whether the targeted pests are present or absent within their territories or production areas. Collecting and analysing accurate data is crucial for making well-informed decisions.

Continuous surveillance plays a vital role in monitoring existing pest populations and detecting new threats. By taking a proactive approach, countries can stay informed and adjust their strategies as needed.

The IPPC website provides information on [Surveillance](#).

⁴ For example, *Bemisia tabaci* (non-European populations), a known virus vector, is a Union quarantine pest. Each year there are several interceptions of imported capsicum where this pest is detected, and the consignment is detained at EU border controls.



Table 2: Standard mitigation measures available to exporting countries

Option		Related International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures	Communication in advance from NPPO?
a	Pest free country (PFC)	ISPM 4: Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas ISPM 26: Establishment of pest free areas for fruit flies (Tephritidae)	YES – official letter from NPPO
b	Pest free area (PFA)	ISPM 4: Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas ISPM 10: Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites ISPM 26: Establishment of pest free areas for fruit flies (Tephritidae)	YES – official letter from NPPO
c	Pest free place of production (PFPP)/ Pest free site of production (PFSP)	ISPM 10: Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites ISPM 26: Establishment of pest free areas for fruit flies (Tephritidae)	Only for FCM, official letter from NPPO is required (with list of PFPP codes)
d	Systems approach/ post-harvest treatment	ISPM 14: The use of integrated measures in a systems approach for pest risk management ISPM 28: Phytosanitary treatments for regulated pests	YES – dossier outlining systems approach sent by NPPO for approval (except for FAW)

Selecting and implementing appropriate mitigation options

The EU provides various pest management options (outlined in Table 2) to ensure exported products are pest free. The suitability of these options often depends on the presence, prevalence, and distribution of the pest in question within the exporting country.

For pests that are widespread, options demanding pest free zones may not be practical. Conversely, for very localised or absent pests, overly strict measures could be unnecessary and economically challenging.

Countries should strike a balance between ensuring pest free exports and choosing an economically viable and sustainable mitigation method.

COLEAD recommends the creation of committees or task forces that involve all key stakeholders. Their role is to formulate (and oversee) a National Capsicum Action Plan, which includes selecting the best mitigation options and ensuring compliance with phytosanitary measures. For this plan to be effective, it should be tailored to the local context and cater to a diverse range of producers and exporters, both large and small. It is crucial for all stakeholders to endorse and execute the National Action Plan. **If even one exporter sends infested shipments to the EU, it could jeopardise the country's entire export sector.**



4. PEST FREE STATUS

Options a, b, and c are related to pest free status. The International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) describe what must be done for an area, country, place of production, or production site to be officially recognised as pest free. In each case the process must be led by, or be under the authority of, the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO), and it must closely follow the method outlined.

Pest free countries and areas (options a, b)

If a pest has not been detected in a country or region (e.g. tomato fruit borer in Africa), securing pest free country status can be reasonably straightforward. Once this is recognised by the EU, capsicum exports can proceed without the additional measures specified in the Regulations. However, this pest free status must be explicitly mentioned in the Additional Declaration of the phytosanitary certificate.

In the case of pests such as false codling moth (FCM) or fall armyworm (FAW), achieving pest free area or pest free country status can be challenging, as the high mobility and widespread distribution of these pests make containment difficult.

The pest free area option is most viable in regions that are geographically distinct or isolated from primary pest distribution zones. Where national capacity and resources permit, establishing an area with low pest prevalence is more feasible and can be incorporated into a systems approach (see ISPM 22: [Requirements for the establishment of areas of low pest prevalence](#)).

Pest or disease free area:	An area in which a specific pest is absent, as demonstrated by scientific evidence, and in which (where appropriate) this condition is being officially maintained
Area of low pest or disease prevalence:	An area (all of a country, part of a country, or all or parts of several countries) in which a specific pest or disease occurs at low levels and is subject to effective surveillance, control, or eradication measures

There are three main stages to establishing and maintaining a pest free area:

- **systems** to establish pest free area
- **phytosanitary measures** to maintain pest free area
- **checks** to verify the pest free area has been maintained.



The work needed in each case varies according to factors including the biology of the pest, the characteristics of the pest free area, and the level of phytosanitary security required. It is detailed and time consuming, and involves:

- **data collection** (pest surveys for delimiting, detection, monitoring)
- **regulatory controls** (protective measures against introduction into the country, including listing as a quarantine pest)
- **audits** (reviews and evaluation)
- **documentation** (reports, work plans).

The following documents from IPPC/FAO provide further information:

- ISPM 4: [Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas](#)
- [Guide for establishing and maintaining pest free areas](#)

Pest free place of production and production site

Place of production in which a specific pest does not occur (as demonstrated by scientific evidence) and in which, where appropriate, this condition is officially maintained for a defined period

Pest free place of production: A **place of production** is “any premises or collection of fields operated as a single production or farming unit”

Pest free production site: A **production site** is “a defined part of a place of production that is managed as a separate unit for phytosanitary purposes”

Only the NPPO can designate a place of production as pest free. Surveillance and inspections are required, and must be conducted according to international guidelines. Some countries have adopted the pest free production site option by using insect-proof screenhouses. Where resources are available this can be an effective option, but high infrastructure costs mean that it is out of reach of some producers, especially small-scale producers.

Producers growing capsicum in screenhouses must use an appropriate design so that it is insect proof, and ideally with an entry lobby. Strict biosecurity measures must be established and maintained, particularly when people or goods move in or out of the screenhouse, to prevent pest entry.

The following documents from IPPC/FAO provide further information:

- ISPM 10: [Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites](#)
- [Guide for establishing and maintaining pest free areas](#)



5. COMPLETING THE PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATE

Under the new Plant Health Law, in order to enter the EU, almost all living plant material (including entire plants, parts of plants, fruits, cut flowers, seeds, etc.) must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate that confirms its compliance with EU legislation. This section provides detailed guidance on how to complete the phytosanitary certificate, particularly where special measures are in place. Special measures generally mean that additional information is required, and must be provided following a strict, prescribed format.

Many countries now use the EU digital system [TRACES NT](#) to complete phytosanitary certificates. This simplifies what can be a complicated process by automatically suggesting the elements of Regulation [2019/2072](#) that are relevant to the country of origin, and simplifies the selection of options for each regulated pest.

Failure to complete the phytosanitary certificate correctly is classified as a documentary non-compliance and can result in consignments being blocked at EU border controls. Compulsory plant health checks are conducted on plants and plant products imported into the EU from non-EU countries. These include:

- a **review of the phytosanitary certificate** and associated documents to ensure that the consignment meets EU requirements – *compulsory on all consignments*
- an **identity check** to make sure that the consignment corresponds with the certificate – *on a sample of consignments*
- an **inspection of the produce** to ensure that it is free from harmful organisms – *on a sample of consignments*.

All capsicum exported to the EU must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate.

In addition, **specific information** is required from countries that are affected by special measures for regulated pests.

It is important to note the following:

- The phytosanitary certificate must include information on all the regulated pests of capsicum relevant to the exporting country (see Table 1). All required information related to these pests must be included in the **Additional Declaration** of the phytosanitary certificate.
- As there are several regulated pests in some countries, this may mean a considerable volume of text is required. When the space in the phytosanitary certificate is too small to fit all the necessary information (notably in the Additional Declaration), the remainder can be included in a separate document that is provided in attachment (according to [ISPM 12](#)). When this is the case:
 - Each page of the attachment must bear the number of the phytosanitary certificate and be dated, signed and stamped in the same manner as required for the phytosanitary certificate itself.
 - In the relevant section of the phytosanitary certificate, there must be a statement indicating that the information is continued in an attachment.
 - If an attachment has more than one page, the pages must be numbered, and the number of pages indicated on the phytosanitary certificate.



- For each regulated pest where there are special measures under Regulation (EU) 2019/2072 (Annex VII) or in very few cases, any other relevant regulations, specific information is needed in the **Additional Declaration**:
 - A reference must be made to Regulation (EU) 2019/2072, along with the point from Annex VII that is relevant to the pest or, in very few cases, to any other relevant point of other Regulations.
 - Reference must also be made to the option that has been selected by the NPPO as a mitigation measure for that pest (see Appendixes at the end of this Guidance). It is recommended that the **exact text** of the chosen sub-option (exactly as stated in the Regulation) is copied and pasted into the Additional Declaration. While this may seem cumbersome, it helps to prevent any potential errors or omissions.

The following examples illustrate how to complete the phytosanitary certificate for each of the four main options used for capsicum in Annex VII. Note that these are examples, and the information required in the Additional Declaration will vary depending on the country, pest, and selected option (mitigation measure).

Exporting under Option (a) – pest free country

Example: exporting tomato fruit borer from Africa

NPPOs must first notify the European Commission that they are a country free from tomato fruit borer (*Neoleucinodes elegantalis*) (see Appendix 5). Once the notification is done and accepted by the European authorities, capsicum can be exported.

The following wording must be written in the phytosanitary certificate in the Additional Declaration (highlighted text is an exact copy-paste from Annex VII):

The consignment complies with Option (a) of Annex VII, Point 68 of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2019/2072: “The fruit/consignment originates in a country recognised as being free from *Neoleucinodes elegantalis* (Guenée) in accordance with the relevant International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures, provided that this freedom status has been communicated in advance in writing to the Commission by the national plant protection organisation of the third country concerned.”



Exporting under Option (b) – pest free area

Example: fall armyworm

Pest free area status must be established in advance in order for this option to be used by an exporting country where fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) is present (see Appendix 3). The following information must be included in the phytosanitary certificate in the Additional Declaration (highlighted text is an exact copy-paste from Annex VII):

The consignment complies with the following conditions in accordance with **Option (b)** of **Article 10** of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1134: “they originate from an area free from the specified pest, as established by the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) concerned, in accordance with the International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures No 4; the name of that area shall be stated in the phytosanitary certificate under the rubric ‘place of origin’”

Information on traceability is also required: in the phytosanitary certificate, under the rubric ‘place of origin’, the name of the pre-established pest free area must be provided.

Exporting under Option (c) – pest free place of production

Example: pepper weevil

Exporting countries using Option (c) for the pepper weevil (*Anthonomus eugenii*) (Appendix 6) must include the following wording in the Additional Declaration (highlighted text is an exact copy-paste from Annex VII):

The consignment complies with **Option (c)** of Annex VII, Point **72** of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2019/2072: “The fruit/consignment originates from a place of production, established in the country of origin by the national plant protection organisation in that country, as being free from *Anthonomus eugenii* Cano, in accordance with the relevant International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures, and which is mentioned on the phytosanitary certificate referred to in Article 71 of Regulation (EU) No 2016/2031, under the rubric ‘Additional declaration’, and declared free from *Anthonomus eugenii* Cano on official inspections carried out at least monthly during the two months prior to export, at the place of production and its immediate vicinity”.



Exporting under Option (d) – systems approach

Example: false codling moth

If exporting countries are using Option (d) for an effective treatment/systems approach for false codling moth (*Thaumatotibia leucotreta*) (Appendix 2), they must first submit a dossier and the list of production site codes to the European Commission. Once this has been submitted and accepted, capsicum can be exported, and the following wording must be included in the phytosanitary certificate:

- In the **Treatment Box/section** write: “the treatment applied or Systems approach”.
- In the **Additional Declaration** write: “The consignment complies with Option (d) of Annex VII, Point 62 of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2019/2072.

“(i) the fruits have been produced in an approved site of production, which is included in the list of production site codes that has been communicated in advance in writing to the Commission by the national plant protection organisation of the country of origin,

and

(ii) have been subjected to an effective systems approach to ensure freedom from *T. leucotreta* (Meyrick), in accordance with the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures ISPM 14, or an effective stand-alone post-harvest treatment to ensure freedom from *T. leucotreta* (Meyrick), provided that the respective systems approach used or the post-harvest treatment, together with documentary evidence of its effectiveness, have been communicated in advance in writing to the Commission by the national plant protection organisation of the country of origin and that post-harvest treatment has been assessed by the European Food Safety Authority,

and

(iii) prior to export, have been subjected to official inspections for the presence of *T. leucotreta* (Meyrick), with an intensity to enable at least the detection of 2% level of infestation, with a level of confidence of 95% in accordance with the International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures ISPM 31 and including destructive sampling in case of symptoms,

and

(iv) are accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate that indicates the production site codes and mentions the details of the post-harvest treatment used, or the use of the systems approach”

Information on traceability must be provided. In the phytosanitary certificate, alongside the description of the product, you must write the unique identification number or name of the approved production site from which the produce was sourced.



6. PREPARING AND SUBMITTING A DOSSIER: EXAMPLE – FALSE CODLING MOTH

This example focuses on false codling moth (FCM, *Thaumatotibia leucotreta*). The principles and processes described here are also relevant in the case of other pests where the **systems approach** option is used.

An exporting country affected by FCM must select from one of the four options listed in Annex VII of Regulation [2019/2072](#). In many circumstances, Option (d) of point 62, “a systems approach”, is the most appropriate and is selected by several exporting countries in sub-Saharan Africa. To use Option (d), a dossier must be submitted in advance to the European Commission describing in detail the system that will be applied to ensure that all capsicum exported to the EU is free from FCM. **No exports will be received under Option (d) unless and until a dossier has been received and accepted by the European Commission.**

The system described in the dossier must then be followed by stakeholders involved in the capsicum export sector, including growers, private operators, and the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO). The dossier in effect becomes a National FCM Action Plan.

The NPPO of the exporting country has the responsibility for submitting the dossier to the European Commission. However, it is essential that the NPPO works hand-in-hand with the private sector to develop the content of the dossier, and subsequently to ensure that it is implemented effectively.

- If private sector operators are not involved in developing the dossier, and the NPPO does not secure their buy-in (agreement), it is less likely that they will understand its importance and implement it effectively.
- Feedback from the private sector is essential to ensure that the dossier is adapted to local conditions, and is appropriate and usable by the range of different producers and exporters concerned (large and small).

If, for example, an exporting country chooses Option (d) for both FCM and *Bactrocera latifrons* (e.g. in African countries where both requirements are relevant), the NPPO can prepare either two separate dossiers (one for each pest), or one dossier that combines both pests. A combined dossier could be organised with a common section (general information on the national capsicum sector), plus separate sections for the management of each pest species. However, COLEAD advises the preparation of separate dossiers.

The following steps are recommended for preparation and submission of the dossier.

Step 1: Set up a Technical Working Group

The Technical Working Group brings stakeholders (private and public sector) together to consider and agree the elements that should be included in the national capsicum FCM dossier.

The composition of the group may vary according to the local capsicum sector and competent authority structure. As a general rule, a small group will be more effective than a large one. As a minimum, it is important for the group to ensure that the membership:

- includes representatives of the NPPO with sound knowledge and experience in the relevant phytosanitary controls and enforcement
- is acceptable to organisations representing the private sector



- is representative of the export sector, including both large- and small-scale operators that have a sound knowledge of capsicum production and export
- includes members with sound scientific and technical expertise, essential to record in a clear and precise manner the phytosanitary measures that will be included in the dossier.

Step 2: Prepare the first draft of the dossier

The first draft of the dossier is prepared by the NPPO with the support and agreement of the Technical Working Group. The following can be used as a framework for the dossier; the contents of each section will be developed and customised according to local circumstances.

Section 1: National overview of capsicum export sector

Information for pest risk evaluation includes crop details, production zones, export volumes, climate conditions, and pest management data.

- **Crop details:** Capsicum varieties (including pest resistance), main production zones, and seasons.
- **Production and import/export data:** Includes destinations and shipment methods.
- **Pest presence:** Details on FCM distribution and host plants.

Section 2: Integrated pre-harvest and post-harvest measures

A **systems approach** ([ISPM 14](#)) integrates measures including surveillance, pest control, and inspection to reduce the risk of FCM presence in capsicum exports.

- **Pre-harvest measures:** Crop hygiene, daily surveillance using pheromone traps, intervention thresholds, and cultural control (e.g. crop rotation, fallowing).
- **Control methods:** Use of approved plant protection products, guided by national authorities, adhering to EU residue limits.
- **Post-harvest measures:** Sorting damaged fruit, using traceability systems, inspecting for FCM, refrigerated storage, and post-harvest treatments.

A [Decision Support for Systems Approach \(DSSA\)](#) tool has been developed to allow users in importing or exporting countries to identify potential options for pest risk management that could help with the formulation of pest risk management plans. The DSSA facilitates the evaluation and development of a systems approach to pest risk management, as defined in ISPM 14.

Studies have shown that integrating multiple strategies, such as combining cultural controls with selective chemical treatments and post-harvest practices, significantly lowers FCM infestation rates and mitigates the risk of pest resistance development.

Section 3: Inspection and certification system

The **NPPO** oversees regulatory compliance for capsicum exports to the EU, including the following.

- **Exporter and plantation registration:** Traceability systems for production sites.
- **Surveillance:** Ongoing monitoring of FCM using traps and data analysis.
- **Certification:** Document checks, physical inspections, and issuing phytosanitary certificates based on effective pest management measures.



Section 4: Quality management system

The private sector and the NPPO are responsible for the following.

- **Monitoring and auditing:** Ensuring compliance with plant health measures.
- **Training:** Continuous education for inspectors and operators.
- **Interception management:** Tracking notifications and communicating with stakeholders.

Section 5: Evidence of effectiveness

To align with EU regulations, the **NPPO** must present robust evidence proving the effectiveness of its integrated systems approach in managing FCM. This evidence should be based on comprehensive documentation and scientifically backed research.

The NPPO must provide the following.

- **Detailed records** of all measures implemented, supported by **scientific studies** and **field trial data** demonstrating the effectiveness of these strategies.
- Continuous FCM **monitoring and surveillance** to evidence the effectiveness of the overall systems approach.

Step 3: Validate the dossier with stakeholders

Consultation with the key public and private stakeholders is essential to ensure that the dossier is fit for purpose, locally appropriate, and accepted by all the major stakeholders that will be involved in implementing it.

This consultation will give the wider industry a chance to obtain clarification, and to recommend changes. The aim is to use feedback from the consultation to develop a final version of the dossier that is approved and recognised by all.

If resources are available, consultation is best achieved through the organisation of national workshops where the dossier can be presented and discussed with a large group. If this is not possible, the draft may be presented to smaller meetings/groups, or circulated via industry associations or other representative bodies.

Step 4: Submit the dossier to the European Commission

The dossier must be submitted to the European authorities by the **NPPO**. Only NPPOs are authorised to submit the official documentation to their counterparts in the European Union.

The dossier should be forwarded by the designated Contact Point at the NPPO to the following e-mail address: SANTE-G1-PLANT-HEALTH@ec.europa.eu.

Once the dossier is submitted, its acceptance or rejection by the European authorities can be checked via the EU's webpage on declarations of pest status from non-EU countries: [Declarations – non-EU](#).



APPENDIX 1: RULES ON *BACTROCERA LATIFRONS* FRUIT FLY

The fruit fly *Bactrocera latifrons* is known to occur in Asia and some African countries. The EPPO Global Database provides a comprehensive [distribution map](#) of this pest.

Regulation [2019/2072](#), Annex VII, Point 72.1 applies to **all fresh fruits of the genera *Capsicum* and *Solanum*** (including chilli, sweet bell peppers, tomato, and eggplants) exported to the EU from 54 countries in Africa, and 49 countries in Asia (including specific regions in Russia).

An Additional Declaration must be added to the phytosanitary certificate, stating that capsicum meets one of the following options.

Option	Additional Declaration	Conditions
Option (a)	Capsicum originates in a country recognised as being free from <i>Bactrocera latifrons</i>	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status to the European Commission in advance
Option (b)	Capsicum originates in an area recognised as being free from <i>Bactrocera latifrons</i>	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status of the area to the Commission in advance
Option (c)	No signs of <i>Bactrocera latifrons</i> have been observed at the place of production and in its immediate vicinity since the beginning of the last complete cycle of vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Official inspections carried out at least monthly during the 3 months prior to harvesting• None of the fruits under official examinations show signs of <i>B. latifrons</i>• Information on traceability provided
Option (d)	Capsicum has been subjected to an effective systems approach or an effective stand-alone post-harvest treatment to ensure freedom from <i>Bactrocera latifrons</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details of systems approach or post-harvest treatment provided in the certificate• Communication in advance by the exporting country NPPO of systems approach/treatment



APPENDIX 2: RULES ON FALSE CODLING MOTH

False codling moth (FCM, *Thaumatotibia leucotreta*) is known to occur mainly in African countries. The EPPO Global Database provides a comprehensive [distribution map](#) of this pest.

Regulation [2019/2072](#), Annex VII, point 62 applies to fruits of *Capsicum* (and several other crops) exported from countries of the African continent, Cabo Verde, Saint Helena, Madagascar, La Réunion, Mauritius, and Israel.

These countries must provide an Additional Declaration in the phytosanitary certificate that capsicum complies with one of the following options.

Option	Additional Declaration	Conditions
Option (a)	Capsicum originates in a country recognised as being free from <i>Thaumatotibia leucotreta</i>	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status to the European Commission in advance
Option (b)	Capsicum originates in an area recognised as being free from <i>Thaumatotibia leucotreta</i>	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status to the Commission in advance
Option (c)	Capsicum originates in a place of production established by exporting country NPPO as being free from <i>Thaumatotibia leucotreta</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place of production included in the list of place of production codes communicated by exporting country NPPO to the Commission in advance Has been subjected to official inspections during the growing season, including visual examination with an intensity to enable at least the detection of a 2% level of infestation, with a level of confidence of 95 (ISPM 31) including destructive sampling in case of symptoms, and have been found to be free from <i>T. leucotreta</i> Place of production codes included in phytosanitary certificate
Option (d)	Capsicum has been subjected to an effective systems approach or an effective stand-alone post-harvest treatment to ensure freedom from <i>Thaumatotibia leucotreta</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place of production included in the list of place of production codes communicated by exporting country NPPO to the Commission in advance Communication by the exporting country NPPO of systems approach/treatment in advance including documentary evidence of its effectiveness Post-harvest treatment has been assessed by the European Food Safety Authority Has been subjected to official inspections during the growing season, including visual examination with an intensity to enable at least the detection of a 2% level of infestation, with a level of confidence of 95 (ISPM 31) including destructive sampling in case of symptoms, and have been found to be free from <i>T. leucotreta</i> Production site codes and details of approach/post-harvest treatment included in phytosanitary certificate



APPENDIX 3: RULES ON FALL ARMYWORM

Regulation [2023/1134](#) sets out detailed measures to prevent the introduction, establishment, and spread of fall armyworm (FAW, *Spodoptera frugiperda*). This pest, previously not known to exist within the EU, has continued its rapid global spread, with its presence in Cyprus confirmed in January 2023. Due to this growing threat and high number of interceptions in non-compliant goods, stricter measures were applied.

Regulation 2023/1134 replaces the emergency measures introduced under Implementing Decision 2018/638. It targets plant species where FAW has previously been discovered during border controls, including the fruits of *Capsicum* species (and numerous other crops). The Regulation will apply until 31 December 2025, at which point it will be reviewed.

Fall armyworm is known to occur in many parts of the world. The EPPO Global Database provides a comprehensive [distribution map](#) of this pest.

Exporting countries must provide an Additional Declaration in the phytosanitary certificate that capsicum complies with one of the following options.

Option	Additional Declaration	Conditions
Option (a)	Capsicum originates in a country recognised as being free from FAW	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status to the European Commission in advance
Option (b)	Capsicum originates in an area recognised as being free from FAW	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status to the Commission in advance
Option (c)	Capsicum originates in a production site established by the exporting country NPPO as being free from FAW	Official inspection prior to export and found free from FAW, and originate from a site of production complying with the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. it is registered and supervised by the NPPO ii. official inspections during the last 3 months prior to export, and no presence of the FAW has been detected iii. it has physical isolation against the introduction of FAW iv. information ensuring traceability to that site of production has been ensured during their movement prior to export
Option (d)	Capsicum originates in a production site established by the exporting country NPPO as being free from FAW, and has been submitted to an effective treatment to ensure freedom from FAW	Official inspection prior to their export and found free from the specified pest, and they originate from a site of production complying with the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. it is registered and supervised by the NPPO ii. official inspections during the 3 months prior to export, and no presence of the FAW has been detected iii. the specified plants have been subjected to an effective treatment to ensure freedom from FAW iv. information ensuring the traceability of the specified plants to that site of production has been ensured during their movement prior to export
Option (e)	Capsicum has been subjected to an effective post-harvest treatment to ensure freedom from FAW	Effective post-harvest treatment to ensure freedom from FAW, and that treatment is indicated on the phytosanitary certificate



Applying Option (d): National Fall Armyworm Action Plan and the role of the NPPO

Option (d) from Article 10 of of Implementing Regulation [2023/1134](#) is the most suitable for many operators in countries where fall armyworm (FAW, *Spodoptera frugiperda*) is prevalent. However, there are notable distinctions compared to requirements associated with Option (d) for false codling moth (FCM) and the fruit fly *Bactrocera latifrons*, as follows.

While the term “**systems approach**” is not explicitly mentioned, the EU has confirmed that “**effective treatment**” covers any official procedure aimed at eradicating, inactivating, or removing pests, rendering them infertile, or achieving devitalisation, as defined in the [Glossary of phytosanitary terms](#) (ISPM 5). This definition also includes the systems approach as outlined in [The use of integrated measures in a systems approach for pest risk management](#) (ISPM 14).

- In the case of FAW, there is no requirement for a dossier to be submitted to the European Commission outlining the systems approach that will be used for the “effective treatment”. Nevertheless, a similar approach to that recommended for FCM is suggested, as it is critical to ensure that there is no risk of FAW being present in exported consignments.
- Specific actions must be taken by the NPPO for all production sites that supply capsicum for export to the EU. The NPPO must:
 - register and supervise all production sites
 - carry out official inspections at all production sites during the 3 months prior to export – exports can only be permitted if no FAW has been detected at the production site
 - conduct an official inspection prior to export – exports can only be permitted if the produce is found to be free from FAW.
- If there is a problem or interception, or if a country is subject to an audit by the EU authorities (DG Santé) at any stage, **the national authorities in the exporting country must be able to provide all the necessary documentation to demonstrate that the correct registration, supervision, and inspections have been conducted.**
- The NPPO must inspect all export consignments to ensure that there is full traceability covering all movements of capsicum from the place of production to the point of export.



APPENDIX 4: RULES ON TOMATO FRUIT BORER

The tomato fruit borer (*Neoleucinodes elegantalis*) is known to occur mainly in the Americas. The EPPO Global Database provides a comprehensive [distribution map](#) of this pest.

Regulation [2019/2072](#), Annex VII, Point 68 applies to a number of fresh products exported into the EU from any non-EU country including fruits of *Capsicum annum*.

Exporting countries must provide an Additional Declaration in the phytosanitary certificate that capsicum complies with one of the following options.

Option	Additional Declaration	Conditions
Option (a)	Capsicum originates in a country recognised as being free from <i>Neoleucinodes elegantalis</i>	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status to the European Commission in advance
Option (b)	Capsicum originates in an area recognised as being free from <i>Neoleucinodes elegantalis</i>	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status of the area to the Commission in advance
Option (c)	Capsicum originates in a place of production free from <i>Neoleucinodes elegantalis</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place of production established by the NPPO of the country of origin as being free from <i>N. elegantalis</i> Official inspections have been carried out in the place of production at appropriate times during the growing season to detect the presence of the pest, including an examination on representative samples of fruit, shown to be free from <i>N. elegantalis</i> Information on traceability is included in the phytosanitary certificate
Option (d)	Capsicum originates in sites of production free from <i>Neoleucinodes elegantalis</i>	Pest free site of production, established by the NPPO in the country of origin Official inspections and surveys carried out during the 3 months prior to export Information on traceability is included in the phytosanitary certificate



APPENDIX 5: RULES ON BUD MIDGE

Bud midge (*Prodiplosis longifila*) is known to occur only in the Americas. The EPPO Global Database provides a comprehensive [distribution map](#) of this pest.

Regulation [2019/2072](#), Annex VII, Point 68.1 applies to fresh fruits of *Capsicum annum* and tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*) exported to the EU from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and United States. An Additional Declaration in the phytosanitary certificate must be completed if fruits of capsicum originate from one of these countries. No Additional Declaration is needed for exports from Africa, Asia, or Oceania.

These countries must provide an Additional Declaration in the phytosanitary certificate that capsicum complies with one of the following options.

Option	Additional Declaration	Conditions
Option (a)	Capsicum originates in an area established by the NPPO in the country of origin as being free from <i>Prodiplosis longifila</i>	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status to the European Commission in advance
Option (b)	Capsicum originates in a place of production established by the NPPO in the country of origin as being free from <i>Prodiplosis longifila</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place of production established by the NPPO of the country of origin as being free from <i>P. longifila</i> Official inspections have been carried out in the place of production at appropriate times during the growing season to detect the presence of the pest, including an examination on representative samples of fruit, shown to be free from <i>P. longifila</i> Information on traceability is included in the phytosanitary certificate
Option (c)	Capsicum originates in sites of production free from <i>Prodiplosis longifila</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pest free site of production (PFSP) established by the NPPO in the country of origin PFSP with physical isolation against the introduction of the pest Official inspections and surveys carried out during the 2 months prior to export Information on traceability is included in the phytosanitary certificate
Option (d)	Capsicum has been subjected to an effective systems approach or an effective post-harvest treatment to ensure freedom from <i>Prodiplosis longifila</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of systems approach/post-harvest treatment and information on traceability provided in the certificate Communication by the exporting country NPPO of systems approach/treatment in advance to the EU



APPENDIX 6: RULES ON PEPPER WEEVIL

Pepper weevil (*Anthonomus eugenii*) is known to occur only in the Americas. The EPPO Global Database provides a comprehensive [distribution map](#) of this pest.

Regulation [2019/2072](#), Annex VII, Point 72 applies to fresh fruits of *Capsicum annum* exported into the EU from Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Puerto Rico, United States, and French Polynesia where *Anthonomus eugenii* Cano is known to occur.

These countries must provide an Additional Declaration in the phytosanitary certificate that capsicum complies with one of the following options.

Option	Additional Declaration	Conditions
Option (a)	Capsicum originates in a country recognised as being free from <i>Anthonomus eugenii</i>	Communication by the exporting country NPPO of pest free status to the European Commission in advance
Option (b)	Capsicum originates in a place of production free from <i>Anthonomus eugenii</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place of production established by the NPPO of the country of origin as being free from of <i>A. eugenii</i>• Official inspections have been carried out at least monthly during the 2 months prior to export in the place of production and its immediate vicinity• Information on traceability is included in the phytosanitary certificate



APPENDIX 7: RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

The [International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures](#) (ISPMs) are globally agreed-upon guidelines developed by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

ISPM	Topic	Status
ISPM 1	Phytosanitary principles for the protection of plants and the application of phytosanitary measures in international trade	Adopted 1993, revised 2006
ISPM 4	Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas	Adopted 1995
ISPM 5	Glossary of phytosanitary terms	Updated as needed
ISPM 6	Surveillance	Adopted 1997, revised 2018
ISPM 7	Phytosanitary certification system	Adopted 1997, revised 2011
ISPM 10	Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites	Adopted 1999
ISPM 12	Phytosanitary certificates	Adopted 2001, revised 2011 and 2022
ISPM 14	The use of integrated measures in a systems approach for pest risk management	Adopted 2002
ISPM 22	Requirements for the establishment of areas of low pest prevalence	Adopted 2005
ISPM 23	Guidelines for inspection	Adopted 2005
ISPM 26	Establishment of pest free areas for fruit flies (Tephritidae)	Adopted 2006, revised 2014 and 2015
ISPM 28	Phytosanitary treatments for regulated pests	Adopted 2021
ISPM 29	Recognition of pest free areas and areas of low pest prevalence	Adopted 2007
ISPM 30	Revoked. Establishment of areas of low pest prevalence for fruit flies (Tephritidae)	Adopted 2008. Incorporated as an Annex to ISPM 35 in 2018
ISPM 31	Methodologies for sampling of consignments	Adopted 2008
ISPM 35	Systems approach for pest risk management of fruit flies (Tephritidae)	Adopted 2017
ISPM 45	Requirements for national plant protection organisations if authorising entities to perform phytosanitary actions	Adopted 2021
ISPM 46	Commodity-specific standards for phytosanitary measures	Adopted 2022
ISPM 47	Audit in the phytosanitary context	Adopted 2022



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