

# For sustainable fruit and vegetable sector development in ACP countries

COLEACP has been defending the collective interests of ACP growers and exporters and European importers for the past 40 years

COLEACP (the Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee) is an inter-professional network that aims to defend the interests of producers/exporters in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific and EU importers of horticultural products. Its 354 members account for 85% of ACP fruit and vegetable exports to Europe. Growers, exporters and importers are joined by associate members (advisers, service providers, etc.) who contribute their analysis of the situation in the horticultural value chains. "COLEACP was a forerunner of today's cooperation policies", emphasized Guy Stinglhamber, the COLEACP Brussels office director. "Increasingly, these are asking the private sector to take part in the development of southern countries. That is what COLEACP does, as our objective is to facilitate trade in order to support social and economic development in the emerging countries of the south".

## Technical assistance and training

COLEACP has been managing European Development Fund-endowed programmes since 2001 (PIP since 2001 and EDES since 2009). These programmes have provided the ACP horticultural sectors with 100 million euro's



Guy Stinglhamber, the COLEACP Brussels office director

worth of technical assistance and training. "Initially, the aim was to help ACP growers and exporters to meet the demands of EU

regulations and supermarket standards regarding food safety, MRLs, traceability, hygiene, etc.", explained Guy Stinglhamber. As

a result, COLEACP developed 40 technical itineraries for different fruits and vegetables. COLEACP is also involved in training, whether provided directly on the companies' premises or through seminars and also, recently, on the Internet. "We have had training courses on CD for the past 6 years", the COLEACP director pointed out. "Since 2012 the training modules have been available on line, multiplying the number of trainees who can access them". Food safety and hygiene have been joined by topics concerning the environment, corporate social responsibility and ethical trade. "Increasingly, access to markets entails sustainable conditions", noted Guy Stinglhamber, and COLEACP's latest initiatives are insistent that the progress made by the farming for export sector should also benefit the local market and make it possible to modernize subsistence farming. In March 2013 PIP's 100th memorandum of understanding was signed with AREXMA, the Ivory Coast's regional association of mango growers and exporters, which has a membership of 14 companies and 1000 small-scale producers. The aim is to strengthen the sector through training courses, technical training for producers, market information and actions to assist the organization of the association.

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COLEACP at Fruit Logistica



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