

**Title** Quality standards for fresh produce in Southeast Asia (ASEAN GAP)

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### **Abstract**

South East Asia is undergoing a major development that will have a large economic impact on the 10 countries that make up the ASEAN trade block as well as neighboring countries that impact fruit and vegetables from ASEAN countries. The ASEAN economic community will be a regional trade block of over half a billion people with a growing GDP per capita and this common market has the potential to develop into a force larger than any other common market in the world. ASEAN comprises of 10 member countries that include Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam and Lao PDR. The ASEAN Secretariat based in Jakarta has been working in establishing harmonized standards across the ASEAN region in order to prepare for economic integration. The agricultural sector has figured prominently in this standard implementation exercise. This is because at least of 6 of the 10 countries have nominated their agricultural sectors as being the most important sectors that they depend on for economic development particularly in the rural areas. Harmonized standards have been developed across all areas of agriculture. In the horticultural area the ASEAN secretariat in conjunction with the Australian donor agency AusAid have developed ASEAN GAP, a good agricultural practice standard for the ASEAN region. This standard has been mandated by the ASEAN secretariat to be implemented across the 10 countries.

ASEAN GAP is unique in that it comprises of 4 modules, a Food safety module that covers food safety issues at on farm and packing level and included chemical, microbiological and physical contaminant management and minimization. The quality module, a unique module in GAP, ASEAN GAP is the only GAP with a prominent quality module. Worker's health and safety module and a comprehensive environmental module. This presentation will discuss the implementation of country GAP's based on ASEAN GAP.