

- Small-scale farmer marketing series •

English

Packaging and labeling of fresh produce



agriculture

Department:
Agriculture
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Why package and label your produce?

Grading and packaging can be done on the farm to add value to the product.

- Protect and preserve the product from damages e.g. bruising
- Convenient unit for distribution
- Makes your product attractive to the customer
- Carries the label and makes the product recognizable

Different types of packaging material

Sacks and nets

Advantages

- Cheap
- Reusable
- Save space

Disadvantages are considerable

- Difficult to clean and sterilize. Allows the build-up of decaying organisms (e.g. bacteria and fungi) during multiple uses
- Lacks rigidity and can not protect the produce against damage during handling and transport



Baskets

Advantage

- Relatively cheap

Disadvantage

- Offers extremely little protection to the produce when several baskets or other containers are stacked on top of each other



Wooden crates

Advantages

- Relatively resistant to different weather conditions
- Offers good ventilation

Disadvantages

- Untreated wood can easily become contaminated with decaying organisms (e.g. bacteria and fungi)
- May be difficult to wash effectively and keep clean.
- The rough surface of the wood may injure the produce



Fireboard carton

Advantages

- Light to carry, clean and smooth surfaced
- Allows for easy printed application of labels

Disadvantages

- Not reusable
- Easily damaged by water and rough handling unless impregnated with wax at extra cost



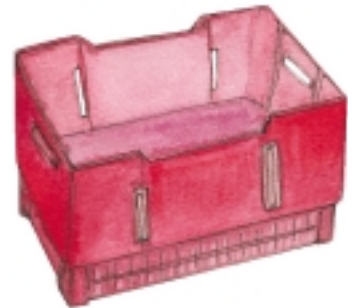
Plastic crates

Advantage

- Long lifespan allowing their use on a return basis for many journeys

Disadvantage

- Expensive



Paper and plastic film

Advantages

- Helps prevent produce rubbing together or against the package walls

Disadvantage

- Expensive



Cucumbers should be wrapped in plastic film.

Plastic bags

Advantage

- Relatively cheap and widely available

Disadvantage

- If produce in plastic bags sweats this can give rise to perfect bacterial and fungal rot conditions



Packaging requirements

Each container

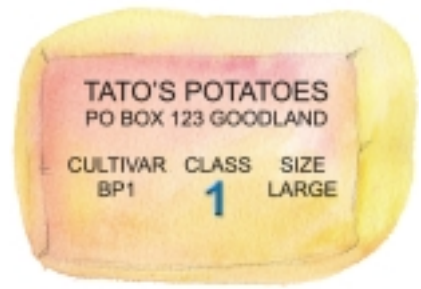
- Must be filled with the produce to full capacity
- Must contain produce of the same class and size group



Markings and labeling

All packages must be marked with the following:

- Name and address of owner
- Class
- Size group of the fresh fruit or vegetable
- Net mass of the contents
- Name of the product if the contents are not visible
- Producers 'code or packhouse code



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List of distributors of fresh produce packaging material

Sakpro

Tel: (011) 692 1658

Vegetable bags

Crown Bag

Tel : (058) 468 1309

Manufacture paper bags for potatoes etc

Rand Plastics (PTY) LTD

Tel: (011) 626 2630/5

Vegetable crates, strawberry punnets

Mondipak

Tel: (011) 647 0600 Fresh produce packaging

ILIP Packaging (Pty) Ltd

Tel (012) 790 2365 Punnets & trays for fruit and vegetables

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