

Market Access for Developing Countries 'Partners in development'



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Status

Projects currently underway include raising awareness of food safety and sustainable shrimp production methods, research on possible contamination of palm oil, expert meeting on alternatives to prohibited antibiotics, and strengthening the Department of Phytopathology.

Facts and figures

- A 'Roadshow' is being staged in 14 different places in Indonesia to raise awareness in the shrimp sector.
- Approximately 5 workshops/ training courses on international aspects are organised for local participants.

Period

2003-2006. Relations established during this period may continue to exist thereafter.

Parties involved

The Department of International Affairs is ultimately responsible. Trade and Industry is involved specifically from the point of view of agribusiness. Also: other departments of LNV, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Development Cooperation), the business sector and civil society organisations.

More information

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agriculture, nature
and food quality

The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BuZa) are committed to making the European market more accessible to developing countries. The Netherlands works in partnership with these countries, providing the necessary support to enable them to meet the high quality requirements that apply to agricultural products within the EU. The objectives of this initiative are to contribute to sustainable economic, social and ecological development and to alleviate poverty.

Context

The origin of the initiative dates back to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. During this UN conference heads of government acknowledged the importance of trade and market mechanisms in sustainable development and in the alleviation of poverty. Countries can only hope to gain optimal benefit from trade if they meet the high quality requirements that apply to agricultural products. They fail to meet these requirements if, among other things, residues in products exceed the legally permitted levels and if production is harmful to nature and the environment. A number of countries have taken on the challenge of partnership. Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia are collaborating on horticulture. Indonesia and Malaysia are working on palm oil, shrimps, vegetables and fruit. Vietnam wishes to collaborate in the fish sector.

Effects

Intensive collaboration has resulted in concrete work programmes and led to mutual understanding of one another's motives, goals and concerns. Among other things, activities include training laboratory staff, research on contamination in the chain, providing support for 'smallholders', supporting phytosanitary services and raising awareness of food safety and sustainable production methods.

Particular aspects

The collaboration between local authorities, the business sector and civil society organisations within the countries in question is both unique and significant. This level of involvement is necessary given the often complex quality problems found in the trade chain. The various parties all have their own interest or special concern in addition to the common goal.

Challenges

Quality requirements in the European market tend to be set higher and higher. This can undermine the mutual trust between the partners involved in the collaboration. Solutions are to be found in transparency, improving communication, and joint investment in increasing capacity to meet the high quality requirements.

Compatibility with Ministry policy

LNV seeks to comply with international agreements regarding sustainable development and food safety policy. In view of the public-private element of the partnerships, Trade and Industry has a special role in involving agribusinesses. Relations between entrepreneurs, local authorities and civil society organisations are crucial in development cooperation and corporate social responsibility.

Benefits

Improved market access serves to stimulate international trade. Improved capacity and institutions to comply with quality requirements in trade. A network for dialogue and exchange of information and knowledge on quality requirements.