

QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Title of the evaluation:

**EVALUATION OF THE SYSTEM OF ENTRY PRICES AND EXPORT REFUNDS
IN THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES SECTOR**

DG/Unit: DG AGRI, Unit G4

- Official(s) managing the evaluation: Jana Klimova

Evaluator/contractor: Agrosynergie GEIE

Assessment carried out by:

- Steering group with the active participation of DG AGRI (units C-2, D-2 and G-4), TRADE and TAXUD.

Date of the Quality Assessment: March 2008

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the evaluation respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The evaluation well covers both intervention schemes in question: entry price scheme and export refund scheme. However, due to the lack of data, the export refund scheme for processed fruit and vegetable products is not examined in all evaluation questions. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that this scheme is only of a marginal relevance for answering the evaluation questions focused on the stability of the EU market.

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the design of the evaluation adequate for obtaining the results needed to answer the evaluation questions?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The methodology design is clearly presented. It is based mainly on quantitative analyses and modelling, which are appropriate tools for dealing with the scope of this evaluation, and which were adapted, taking into account the available data, for filling the pre-defined indicators and judgement criteria. As concerns the qualitative part of the analysis, it is based on the opinion of stakeholders collected during interviews. Also the global context influencing the development of the trade in fruit and vegetable products was considered, but only in its broad lines, which presents a limitation factor for the analyses carried out for individual products.

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring:

The contractor had access to data provided by the Commission services, which were treated correctly and well presented. These data were completed by data from international databases. Thus, the contractor had at its disposal a huge set data, which required an extensive treatment.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS

Are data systematically analysed to answer evaluation questions and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good X	Very Good	Excellent
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Arguments for scoring:

The analysis is very well developed in quantitative terms. Due to the complexity of the subject the quantitative analysis was not always able to deliver clear answers, as other intervening factors play an important role. In this respect, it is regrettable that the qualitative analysis stayed rather limited.

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good X	Very Good	Excellent
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Arguments for scoring:

The findings of the evaluation are supported by the evidence originating from the sound analysis. Stakeholders opinions were considered, when appropriate and in an unbiased way.

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory X	Good	Very Good	Excellent
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Arguments for scoring:

The conclusions are substantiated by evaluation findings, they are well-ordered and detailed. On the other hand, a great extent of details fogs the key conclusions, which could be drawn from this evaluation.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory X	Good	Very Good	Excellent
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Arguments for scoring:

The recommendations are brief, clear and unbiased. They are helpful as they point out the concrete actions to be taken in order to improve the effectiveness of the entry price scheme. However, they stay rather limited as they address only operational issues.

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

The report is well-structured and balanced. The unnecessary repetitions have been avoided and the length of the report, including the annexes, is adequate. However, the written style and presentation is not always fully clear and is not adapted to different target readers.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Is the overall quality of the report adequate, in particular:

- Does the evaluation fulfil contractual conditions?

Clearly and fully.

- Are the findings and conclusions of the report reliable, and are there any specific limitations to their validity and completeness?

Despite the fact that the findings and conclusions do not provide sufficiently clear answers to the effectiveness and the efficiency of the entry price and export refunds schemes, they are reliable, because they are based on sound, mainly quantitative, analysis.

- Is the information in the report potentially useful for designing intervention, setting priorities, allocating resources or improving interventions?

The report contains a huge and valuable set of information about the functioning of the entry price and export refund schemes.

Given the contextual and contractual constraints encountered:

- What lessons can be learned from the evaluation process?

Even in the cases, where the design of the evaluation clearly favours the quantitative analysis, the qualitative analysis cannot be neglected, as it can provide necessary contextual and qualitative inputs for interpreting the results of the quantitative analysis.