SIFAV BASKET OF WATER STANDARDS

The Basket of Water Standards is developed by the Sustainability Initiative Fruit and Vegetables (SIFAV) to promote and mainstream the verification of good water management on farms in high water risk regions.

SIFAV regards water as a priority topic that needs to be acted on to realize its ambition of a more sustainable fresh produce sector.

The joint adoption of this basket of water standards is a credible first step to move towards a destination of improving shared water challenges in high water risk regions.

SIFAV Commitment

The SIFAV partners have committed to jointly implement approved good water management standards to at least 70% of volumes coming from high water risk regions by 2025. To achieve this ambition, SIFAV has developed the Basket of Water Standards as well as a list of regions that are considered high water risk.

Benchmarks

By setting up a basket of water standards through a benchmarking process, SIFAV aims to promote transparency and comparability, drive harmonization and support the alignment of market requirements based on best practice.

SIFAV commissioned the development of a benchmarking framework that assesses standards on inclusion of critical criteria on legal compliance and on-farm monitoring of water quantity and quality. In addition, the standards are scored on their inclusion of four key areas for water and agriculture: catchment, ecosystems, stakeholders and water sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Standards that meet the benchmark are accepted in the approved 'Basket of Water Standards'.

Providing choice through this "basket of standards" approach helps to increase efficiency, reduce audit duplications and costs for producers and offers a flexible pathway towards stronger performance.

The standards within the basket vary in their depth and focus of coverage of water issues, which enables farmers to select a standard that adequately matches their capacity and that best addresses the specific situation and challenges in their farm and catchment, such as water quantity, quality, or ecosystem preservation.

High water risk regions

SIFAV implements the Basket of Water Standards in regions in which the water risk is considered as high. The list of high water risk regions is based on the water risk filter of WWF. It takes the overall risk score of the central location of each region and includes all regions in the list with a score of 3.0 and higher (high risk and very high risk). The overall risk score is based on WWFs default weighting framework that takes physical risk (quantity and quality), regulatory risk and reputational risk into account. The list can be downloaded on the SIFAV website.

BASKET OF WATER STANDARDS

Below standards are included in the Basket of Water Standards:

- Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) Standard V 2.0
- BioSuisse
- CAEE + GlobalG.A.P. combined audit
- Fairtrade Standard (Small-scale Producer Organizations and Hired Labour)
- GlobalG.A.P. + SAI Farm Sustainably Assessment (FSA) Add-on
- GlobalG.A.P. + SIZA Environmental Standard Add-on
- GlobalG.A.P. + SPRING Add-on
- Leaf Marque
- Naturland
- On the Way to Planet Proof + GlobalG.A.P. combined audit
- Rainforest Alliance Agriculture Standard 2020
- SAI Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA) V 3.0
- SIZA Environmental Standard
- Sustainably Grown V 3.0

How to use the baskets?

As a retailer or trader, you ask your suppliers to source fruits and vegetables from producers that are audited / certified with one of the standards accepted under the SIFAV Basket of Water Standards when they are located in a high water risk region.

As a producer located in a high water risk region, your farm(s) need to comply with at least one of the standards included in the SIFAV Basket of Water Standards to be considered a sustainable source. It is strongly advised to select a standard that adequately matches your farm's capacity and that best addresses the specific situation and challenges in your farm and catchment, such as water quantity, quality, or ecosystem preservation.

SIFAV 2025

The Sustainability Initiative Fruit and Vegetables (SIFAV) aims to actively contribute to a more sustainable fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain. Its purpose is to create impact at scale by aligning policies, targets, and collaborative action. SIFAV is coordinated by IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative. SIFAV is a pan-European initiative representing more than 40 partners, among them retailers, brands, traders, civil society organizations and other supporting parties. In 2021, SIFAV launched its new 2025 strategy, with a clear focus on reducing the environmental footprint across the supply chain, improving working conditions, wages and incomes, and strengthening due diligence reporting and transparency.

Get in touch!

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