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By Nina Pullman

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Audit costs to be slashed by tie-ups

New partnerships between GlobalGAP and LEAF, Univeg and Rewe to enable combined audits and reduce costs



Producers and growers will benefit from a raft of new formal partnerships between sustainability certification body GlobalGAP and several key players in the produce industry.

Formal tie-ups with UK audit scheme LEAF, fresh produce giant Univeg and German retailer Rewe will help slash audit fatigue among producers, and is part of a move by GlobalGAP to reduce the cost of certification by enabling combined audits and connecting databases.

The organisation, which made the announcement at its annual news conference at Fruit Logistica this week, has also launched a joint sustainability initiative in the UAE – known as the Declaration of Abu Dhabi – and partnered with the Rainforest Alliance and the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN).

“There is still far too much duplication of audit standards on fruit and vegetable farms. Collaboration is the fastest way to

reduce them,” said GlobalGAP chairman Guy Callebaut.

“We are proud to present today a number of organisations with whom we were able to create sustainable, mutually advantageous partnerships that also benefit farmers.

“We will increase our efforts and extend our invitation to cooperate with more global and local systems as well as market players looking for efficient and effective mainstream solutions.

He added that GlobalGAP has “no ambition of competing with consumer-facing labels, downstream supply chain partners, or government audit systems”.

LEAF commercial manager Jeremy Boxall said the new partnership will create lots of opportunities to reduce the cost to the growers.

“The collaboration with GlobalGAP enables us to operate the LEAF certification as a true add-on, without duplication of the GlobalGAP audit.”

GlobalGAP and the Rainforest Alliance/SAN are also exploring the possibility of a combined audit checklist for their farm certification audits.

The two standards will remain independent of each other but the move would reduce auditing costs at farm level.

“We understand the need for reducing costs of certification,” said Andre de Freitas, executive director of SAN. “This approach will not only reduce the time auditors need to spend on farms, but also minimise duplication for farmers preparing for certification of the two standards.”

Data sharing is the focus of the partnership with fresh produce giant Univeg, as part of the company’s Intelligent Traceability Strategy.

“Collaboration lies at the heart of Univeg’s Intelligent Traceability Strategy,” said Ben Horsbrugh, director of quality management. “As a company we believe that working in strategic

partnerships with selected IT companies –

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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