

IN THIS ISSUE

- Amendment To Control Of Plants (Plant Importation) Rules 2005
- Export Of Floriculture Products, 2004
- Vegetable & Orchid Production, 2004
- Vegetable Farms Continue To Observe GAP

Amendment To The Control Of Plants (Plant Importation) Rules 2005



The Control of Plants (Plant Importation) Rules have been amended and the revised Rules were in force on 25 April 2005. The amendment has brought the Rules up to date and be consistent with the principles of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures. This also ensured that our import health requirements are transparent and science based.

Under the amended Rules, any person who imports plants, plant products or regulated materials listed in the Rules must obtain a permit from the Director-General of the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) of Singapore. Permit will only be issued when the applicant has complied with the import health requirements such as having the necessary phytosanitary certificate or equivalent documents issued by the authorised government agency of the exporting country.

The imported plants, plant products and regulated materials are also subjected to inspection and treatment, where necessary, by AVA. An import permit fee of \$11 will be levied on the importer.

The list of import health requirements for the import of plants, plant products and regulated materials can be obtained from AVA's website at (www.ava.gov.sg/javascript/module3/web-prb-2003.htm).

There are some exemptions for plants, seeds and foliages brought in from Peninsular Malaysia through the Woodlands and Tuas Checkpoints. The following quantities are allowed to be brought in without permit and phytosanitary certificate:

- Plants – 3 numbers/pots per person
- Seeds – 250 grams per person
- Foliages – 10 numbers per person

Any quantity in excess would be detained by the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers on arrival.

Export Of Floriculture Products, 2004

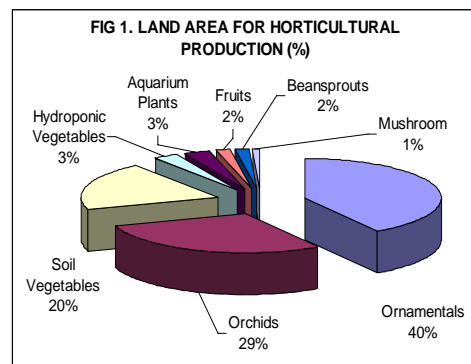
Economic recovery saw a 23.6% increase in annual export of floriculture products in 2004 (\$55.84mil) over 2003 (\$45.17mil). Total export of fresh orchids, orchid plants and cuttings was \$29.09mil; for top destinations like Japan (\$17.84mil), Australia (\$5.81mil) and United States (\$1.46mil). After orchids, aquarium plants, worth \$13.74 mil, were the second largest export product, destined to markets in Germany (\$3.87mil), Japan (\$3.41mil) and United Kingdom (\$2.81mil). Foliages, branches, other flowers and plant parts accounted for the remaining exports of some \$13.01mil.

Product	2003 (\$'000)	2004 (\$'000)
Orchids (Fresh)	25,508	28,838
Orchid Plants	65	109
Orchid Plants including cuttings	1,211	138
Other Flowers & Buds (Fresh)	2,348	4,169
Other Flowers & Buds Dried, Dyed Etc	437	3,990
Foliage Branches & Other Parts	2,704	4,846
Other Unrooted Cuttings & Slips	14	9
Aquarium Plants	12,882	13,737
Total	45,169	55,837

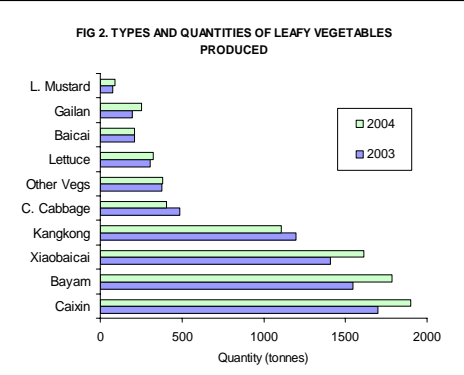
Source: IE StatLink (<http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/markets/index>)

Horticulture Production 2004

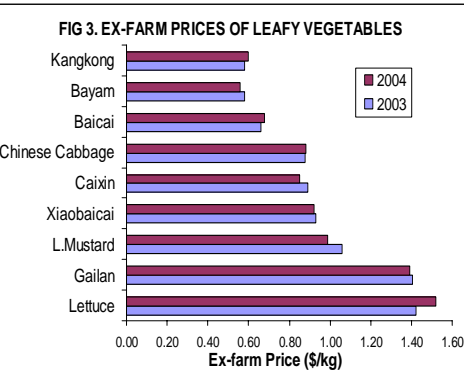
Singapore has 149 farms, occupying an area of 428 hectare (ha), licensed for horticulture activities, of which 116 ha are for vegetable and foodcrop production and the remaining 312 ha are for the orchid and ornamental production. The percentage area of land used for each type of horticultural production is shown in FIG 1.



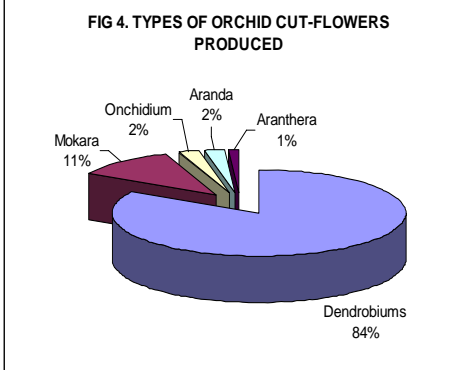
In year 2004, a total of 17,191 tonnes of vegetables and foodcrops with ex-farm value of \$14.38 million were produced. These consisted mainly of 8,863 tonnes of beansprouts (52%) and 8,328 tonnes of leafy vegetables (48%). Similar to last year, caixin, bayam, xiaobaicai, and kangkong accounted for 79% of the total quantity of leafy vegetables produced (FIG 2.).



Ex-farm prices of leafy vegetables were slightly lower in year 2004 than in year 2003, particularly for caixin and xiaobaicai, the two most popular vegetables produced in Singapore. Ex-farm prices for these 2 types of vegetables were lower by about 5%, year on year. (FIG 3.).



Local farms produced approximately 10.63 million stalks of orchid cut-flowers with an ex-farm value of \$3.04 million. Some 1.62 million ornamental plants with a value of \$13.12 million and 22.8 million aquarium plants with ex-farm value of \$3.69 million were also produced. Orchids belonging to the *Dendrobium* genus contributed to 84% of cut-flowers produced in Singapore (FIG 4.).



Vegetable Farms Continue To Observe GAP



AVA encourages vegetable farms to adopt Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) as a food safety assurance system in vegetable production. It has introduced a voluntary certification scheme for Good Agricultural Practice for Vegetable Farming (GAP-VF) in Feb 2004 to recognize farms, which have implemented the system to ensure safe vegetable production in their farms. In 2005, nine vegetable farms had their GAP-VF certificates renewed for another year for their continual efforts in up-keeping the GAP system on the farms.

The interest to renew the GAP-VF Certificate membership has sent a strong indication that certification for GAP-VF is of great value to farms as it enhances their competitiveness. This has further cemented the findings of a farm survey in Aug/Sep 2004 that the GAP-VF Certification has helped the farms in monitoring their operation and has provided them with the basis for "branding" their produce that are sold in retail markets.

The survey findings indicated that the GAP certification scheme also brought about other benefits such as increase in produce's price (10%), volume of sales and buyer's (supermarket) confidence in the safety and quality of GAP-VF certified farm produce.

Besides local vegetable farmers, vegetable suppliers like the importers and retailers too recognized the value of such an industry code in their vegetable supply business. With the global shift towards adopting GAP in vegetable production and approaching food safety assurance based on farm-to-fork concept, the vegetable suppliers see the importance of GAP certification as an added assessment tool for evaluating and assuring premium quality vegetables for domestic consumption.

The Fruit and Vegetable Business Cluster's concurrence on the importance of GAP's concept in vegetable sourcing, is an encouraging sign that the industry is moving towards self-regulating as it takes up the responsibility in ensuring that the vegetable is safe for consumption and hence assuring the consumers that they are purchasing safe and quality greens in Singapore.

For farm owners who require assistance to implement GAP-VF, please contact officers from Horticulture Service Centre at Tel: 67519822 or Email: AVA_HSC@ava.gov.sg.

For application to GAP-VF Certification, please contact officer at 63257680/100 or download the application form from <http://www.ava.gov.sg/javascript/m4-option14.html>.



Plant Bulletin is published biannually by the **Horticulture Working Group, Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority**, Sembawang Research Station, 17km Sembawang Road, Singapore 769194.

The aim of this bulletin is to disseminate horticulture and plant health information to plant growers, exporters and importers in Singapore. If you have any suggestions, comments or enquiries, please contact us at :

Tel : 67519822 Fax : 67521244 (Horticulture Branch)

Email : AVA_HSC@ava.gov.sg

Editorial Team : Mrs Lam-Chan Lee Tiang, Miss Poh Bee Ling, Miss Fadhlna Suhaimi.

Contributors : Miss Ong Ai Kim, Mr Thomas Tan, Mr Wang Cheow Phen, Miss Khoo Gek Hoon

Reference to a trademark, proprietary product, or company name does not imply product endorsement or recommendation to the exclusion of others that may also be suitable.