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== Press Release ==

## **The Saint-Charles Quality Plan is renewed again.**

SNIFL, the French union of fruit and vegetable importers and exporters and the DGCCRF, the French General-Directorate for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control have extended their joint commitment by signing the sixth three-year agreement for the *Saint-Charles Quality Plan*.

**This unique and ambitious joint plan provides guarantees for consumers.**

**The agreement governing the *Saint-Charles Quality Approach* is one of a kind.** The aim of the Quality Approach, created in 2001, is to assist all its signatories - fruit and vegetable importers and exporters of all sizes - to achieve a level of excellence in HACCP management (*Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points*).

The unique *Saint-Charles Quality Approach* is a joint voluntary scheme based on regulations. **It guarantees customers and consumers that product specifications are regularly monitored and analysed.**

With the sixth renewal of this three-year plan, the momentum achieved by the Saint-Charles Quality Approach will continue to grow, **guaranteeing consumers even better food safety going forward.**

**Many committed partners.**

The three-year Saint-Charles Quality Approach agreement, endorsed by the DGCCRF for the period 2021 to 2024, is signed by 62 SNIFL member companies.

DIRECCTE Occitanie tracks this long-term engagement and receives regular updates. Two laboratories, Laboratoire Départemental d'Analyses (CAMP) and Laboratoire Phytocontrol, with the Centre Technique Interprofessionnel des Fruits et Légumes (CTIFL) are also involved in the approach.

**Signed at the DGCCRF in Paris.**

Denis Ginard, SNIFL Chairman and David Patte, Director signed the agreement at the DGCCRF in Paris, in the presence of Virginie Beaumeunier, CEO.

With their signatures, they pursue this important partnership initiated in 2001 between the public and private sectors. **The agreement boosts the competitive edge of participating companies and the appeal of the platform overall.**

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SNIFL representatives applauded the work by decentralised teams of the DDPP des Pyrénées-Orientales and the DREETS Occitanie for their assistance and involvement which have contributed to the success of the approach.

### Important progress since the agreement was last signed in 2018.

Recent progress includes:

- Certification of the SNIFL with a perfect score awarded by the international certifying body: SGS. This seal of approval validates challenges undertaken by the SNIFL via eight service-related commitments, described and monitored in the frame of reference established for the certification procedure.
- Definition of a new visual identity.
- Establishment of a training catalogue.
- Recruitment of a second Quality Officer to support the Saint-Charles Quality Approach with improved follow-up and assistance for signatory companies. That's twice as much support to help signatory companies apply the approach! This recruitment also provides additional support to the SNIFL training division.
- More consultancy, training and guidance for signatories requiring assistance with quality issues and more widely, other businesses in the sector who need help in this area.
- QUALIOPI certification in July 2021 which is compulsory from 1 January 2022 for all French training organisations.
- Creation of new training programmes with *Food Defense* and *Food Fraud*.

*"I am delighted with this commendable collaboration. I applaud the path taken and the constant progress made in procedures and protocols for the Saint-Charles Quality Approach."* Virginie Beaumeunier, Director General, DGCCRF

*"It has been a source of pleasure and satisfaction to work with the Saint-Charles team on this productive approach for three years. I insist on the tremendous leverage that such a dynamic plan represents for the sector overall."* Joël Bonaric, Director, CCRF & Métrologie Occitanie

**Saint Charles International** is the number-one European hub for marketing, transport, and logistics in the fresh fruit and vegetable industry. Based in Perpignan in the Pyrénées-Orientales department of France, a €1.95-billion market of 1,768,000 tonnes of fruit and vegetables is handled by 2,200 people employees. Production is concentrated mainly in the Mediterranean area.

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