



Your preferred quality assurance partner



PRODUCT CONTROL FOR AGRICULTURE



## Why inspections?

The South African government is adamant that consumers are entitled to quality fresh produce and stakeholders in the fresh produce industry are consequently obliged to play their part in ensuring the demand for good quality fresh produce is met at all levels within the industry.

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## Who is PROKON?

To make sure and assist the fresh produce industry stakeholders in meeting its obligation, Prokon, officially appointed assignee of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, in accordance with the Agricultural Product Standards Act, No. 119 of 1990, will conduct inspections on all regulated fresh produce intended for sale in South Africa. The inspections will be inclusive of local and imported fresh produce.

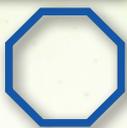
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## What is PROKON's mandate?

Prokon, an independent quality assurance company, was established in 1993 to conduct inspections on potatoes at fresh produce markets only and has since been appointed as the official assignee of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to also render a quality assurance service on regulated locally produced and imported fresh fruits and vegetables. Prokon conducts inspections of all regulated fresh produce at fresh produce markets, distribution centres, wholesalers and retail outlets as well as at ports of entry in the near future.

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## ISO 17020

Prokon is in the process of obtaining ISO 17020 accreditation from the International Standardization Organization. Once accredited PROKON will internationally be recognised as an inspection body which inspections comply with international standards that apply in more than 130 countries worldwide.



# PROKON

ADDING VALUE TO THE FRESH  
PRODUCE INDUSTRY



## What PROKON can offer fresh produce supply chain stakeholders?

- Prokon's inspection service protects your business by ensuring that your products comply with the minimum quality standards. This will lead to a premium price received as well as a good quality product that is in high demand.
- A reliable fresh produce quality control system with a comprehensive database, fulfilling in the needs of the intended market.
- Creating a reliable quality assurance and grading platform, enabling larger retailers to purchase from markets.
- Creating a uniform quality assurance platform to the industry regarding quality, packing and grading requirements and standards.
- Fresh produce inspected and classified in its correct class will create an accurate price structure within the various classes of fresh produce and thereby adding value to quality products and consequently increase return on investment.
- Strengthen and protect the brand and image of products supplied.
- Provide a quality system to protect farmers, consumers and buyers.
- Provide basic technical support to increase demand and reduce product loss.
- Provide an alert system, identifying problematic products, and providing a product management platform, minimizing financial losses.
- Prokon has 18 strategically situated offices throughout the country of which three are mobile offices and are staffed by quality assurance inspectors who are suitably skilled and qualified and in an ideal position to render a fast and cost effective quality assurance service to stakeholders in all major business hubs.
- As Prokon operates on a cost recovery basis, it means stakeholders are charged a fair inspection fee for the service they receive.
- Prokon can assist with training pack house personnel and quality controllers.



# What Inspectors will check for?

 **Marking requirement conformity**  
Misleading, traceability and product information

 **External quality check**  
Colour, shape, cosmetic

 **Internal quality check**  
Condition

 **Size check**  
Weight and diameter

 **Ripeness and firmness of products**  
Brix and pressure

## Products that are inspected and relevant inspection fees

Prokon will inspect all regulated fresh produce in accordance with the Agricultural Products Standards Act, No. 119 of 1990 and relevant regulations.

The inspections apply to all regulated fresh produce, locally produced and imported, intended for sale in South Africa. The fees applicable to potatoes were published in Government Notice No. 968 dated 9 October 2015 and that applicable to all other regulated fruits and vegetables in Government Notice No. 1 dated 6 January 2017. The list of the latter fruits and vegetables are subject to the official inspections.

The government notices are available on Prokon's website [www.prokonsa.co.za](http://www.prokonsa.co.za).

## Are the inspections and payment of the related fees obligatory?

Yes. In terms of the relevant government notices promulgated in accordance with the Agricultural Product Standards Act, No. 119 of 1990 the inspections and payment of the related fees are obligatory. Prokon operates on a cost recovery basis and consequently endeavours to keep the inspection fee as low as possible.



# Quality assurance

the stakeholders' key to providing quality fresh fruit and vegetables and ensuring customer satisfaction as well as minimising costly mistakes

## Producers

- The quality of your produce is confirmed by an independent quality assurance company which means that it differentiates itself from other consignments in respect of quality and price.
- Quality products fetch a premium price on the market floor and are normally sold first.
- The content corresponds with the information on the packaging which instills consumer trust in your products.
- Guarantees correct and reliable product information, e.g. class and price, and which is available to the farmer in order to take informed business decisions.
- Act on your behalf as mediator in disputes.
  - Reduces the risk of returns from buyers.

## Fresh produce markets

- Creates a transparent and trustworthy trading platform for all clients in respect of quality
- Offers a comprehensive database and reports

## Market agents

- Provides a technical support system between agents and farmers
- Act as mediator in the event of disputes
- Can offer buyers products that comply with official standards

# Benefits of a quality assurance system

## Buyers

- Can purchase products with confidence
- Can deliver quality products to their clients

## Importers

- Creates transparency between role players in the case of quality disputes and claims

## Consumers

- Meets customer expectations and creates customer confidence and satisfaction

## Price

- Creates a true price discovery platform

## Distribution centres, retailers and wholesalers

- Inspections are conducted by an independent quality assurance service provider
- Allows for evidence based decision making and communication
- Ensures consistent delivery of quality products
  - Improves customer satisfaction
- Promotes position as preferred product provider
  - Acts as mediator in the case of disputes
  - Reduces cost





**Who is the board of directors?**  
 The board of directors of Prokon is representative of the industries that are affected by the inspection service.

**Can products be re-inspected?**  
 Yes. All products that are intended for sale in South Africa must at all times comply with the regulations published under the Agricultural Product Standards Act, No. 119 of 1990. As all fresh produce are perishable Prokon is obliged to conduct re-inspections to confirm that the quality of the product has not changed.

**How were the inspection fees determined?**  
 Fees were determined by calculating the number of inspectors needed to conduct inspections at the various inspection points in South Africa and basing it on the complexity of the inspection on a cost recovery basis.

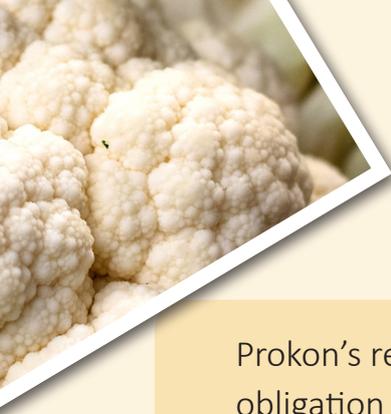
**Frequent questions asked**

**How do I deal with an appeal?**  
 Disputes and/or appeals must be directed to Prokon by means of the complaint form available on the website. Should the complainant not be satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, an appeal may be lodged with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. Any dispute or appeal must be lodged within 24 hours.

**Does Prokon have operating procedures?**  
 Prokon has a full range of standard operating procedures in place to address all aspects of the inspection process and is currently in the process of obtaining ISO 17020 accreditation.

**What if I have an official audit system in place?**  
 Although you could have a due diligence / audit system in place and comply with various international certification systems, all regulated fresh fruit and vegetables intended for sale in South Africa will still be subjected to a local market quality control inspection.





# PROKON

Prokon's responsibility and obligation as assignee versus your responsibility and obligation as owner and/or seller of the product in terms of the Agricultural Product Standards Act, No. 119 of 1990

## Prokon: responsibilities and obligations



- Carry out inspections, grading and sampling of regulated products for quality control purposes.
- Downgrade products that are found to be non-conforming.
- Issue a directive if the product does not comply with the applicable standards.
- Draw any relevant inspection sample if required to do so to conduct further tests of a product, both internally and externally.
- Issue a seizure of the product under exceptional circumstances because of repeated non-compliance of the relevant product.
- Use accredited facilities or institutions for carrying-out applicable test (DNA, MRL), if required.
- Inspectors must at all times identify themselves using their inspector ID cards at any inspection point.
- Apply the Act in a consistent manner on all products and at all inspection points.
- Charge and provide an invoice for inspections conducted together with a detailed inspection report. Reports are available on request.

## Owner / seller: responsibilities and obligations



- No product may be presented for sale in South Africa if the product does not comply with the prescribed regulations pertaining to the various regulated fresh produce.
- The inspector may not be obstructed or interfered with whilst exercising his duties.
- The seller of the regulated product shall for all intents and purposes, be regarded as the owner of such product.
- The owner and/or seller may not obstruct an inspector from removing an inspection sample if any further testing is required.
- The owner and/or seller shall provide the inspector with any documentation required to assist with the inspection of a product.
- In certain circumstances the risk will fall on seller to seek out the true owner of the regulated product and to see to it that the obligations emanating from the Act are fulfilled. Examples are compliance with the directions issued and the payment of the inspection fee.



# PROKON

VALUE ADDED TO THE FRESH PRODUCE INDUSTRY



## PRODUCT CONTROL FOR AGRICULTURE



### INFORMATION

Prokon accepts the importance of communicating with the fresh produce industry stakeholders in order to convey relevant information when required. Should you require any information, wish to report poor quality products, make suggestions or would like to know more about our services please contact us directly at:

Report poor quality products via our website – [www.prokonsa.co.za](http://www.prokonsa.co.za)

Make suggestions using our website – [www.prokonsa.co.za](http://www.prokonsa.co.za)

Engage with us via email, fax or phone

Email: [admin@prokonsa.co.za](mailto:admin@prokonsa.co.za)

Phone: 012 325 4578/9

Fax: 012 325 4585