

# DIDACTIC BROCHURE

- FOOD SAFETY -

## GOOD PEPPER RETTING PRACTICES (WHITE PEPPER)



COLEACP



This publication has been translated in English by COLEACP under its Fit For Market SPS programme.

The Fit For Market SPS programme is funded by the European Union (EU) and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

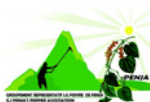
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## HOW TO USE THE BROCHURE

COLEACP, within the framework of its Fit For Market SPS programme, is making this brochure available in English to the direct players of the Penja pepper sector who are involved in white pepper retting operations.

This brochure contains messages and instructions on Good Practices to be implemented by the sector's players, in order to facilitate the compliance of practices and products with a view to respecting the SPS regulatory requirements of the destination market (national, regional or export).

The instructions illustrated in the following pages are intended for operators, retting supervisors and quality managers wishing to comply with the Penja Pepper Good Retting Practices.

This brochure first presents the bad retting practices which lead to a pepper of bad quality implying peppercorns of different colour (green, orange, black, white grey), impurities, long drying times and the presence of moulds.

The second part of the brochure is presented in the form of key messages and illustrations. It focuses on the recommended sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) systems that operators should follow to obtain good quality white pepper.

The main key messages covered in this brochure are staff hygiene, equipment hygiene, reception, checking of water quality, bagging of the berries and soaking, renewal of the water, processing, washing and logging of the retting and washing operations.

To make best use of the brochure, operators should carefully observe the illustrations on bad practices to identify and highlight any non-recommended practices that may result in poor quality pepper.

Good practices are then presented in the form of key messages and illustrations as a reminder of the instructions to follow when retting pepper. These should be understood and memorised.

Specifically, references are made to the manuals designed by COLEACP on the general principles of hygiene and the key principles of traceability to enable operators to deepen the key messages on the hygiene of staff, equipment and traceability.

Manuals on diseases and pests and control methods, harvesting, drying, processing of white and black pepper, storage, packaging, transport and marketing are also available to build on the overall SPS good practice recommendations for Penja pepper.

All the brochures are available on the COLEACP websites (<http://www.coleacp.org>).

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## INTRODUCTION

It is the responsibility of each player within the pepper production, processing, storage, packaging and distribution chain to take all necessary measures to ensure that the product placed on the market does not come with any health risk to consumers.

During retting operations, the pepper may be of poor quality if the recommended sanitary and phytosanitary measures have not been respected by the operators. This results in peppercorns of several colours, a longer drying time and the presence of moulds. This represents a health risk for the consumer.

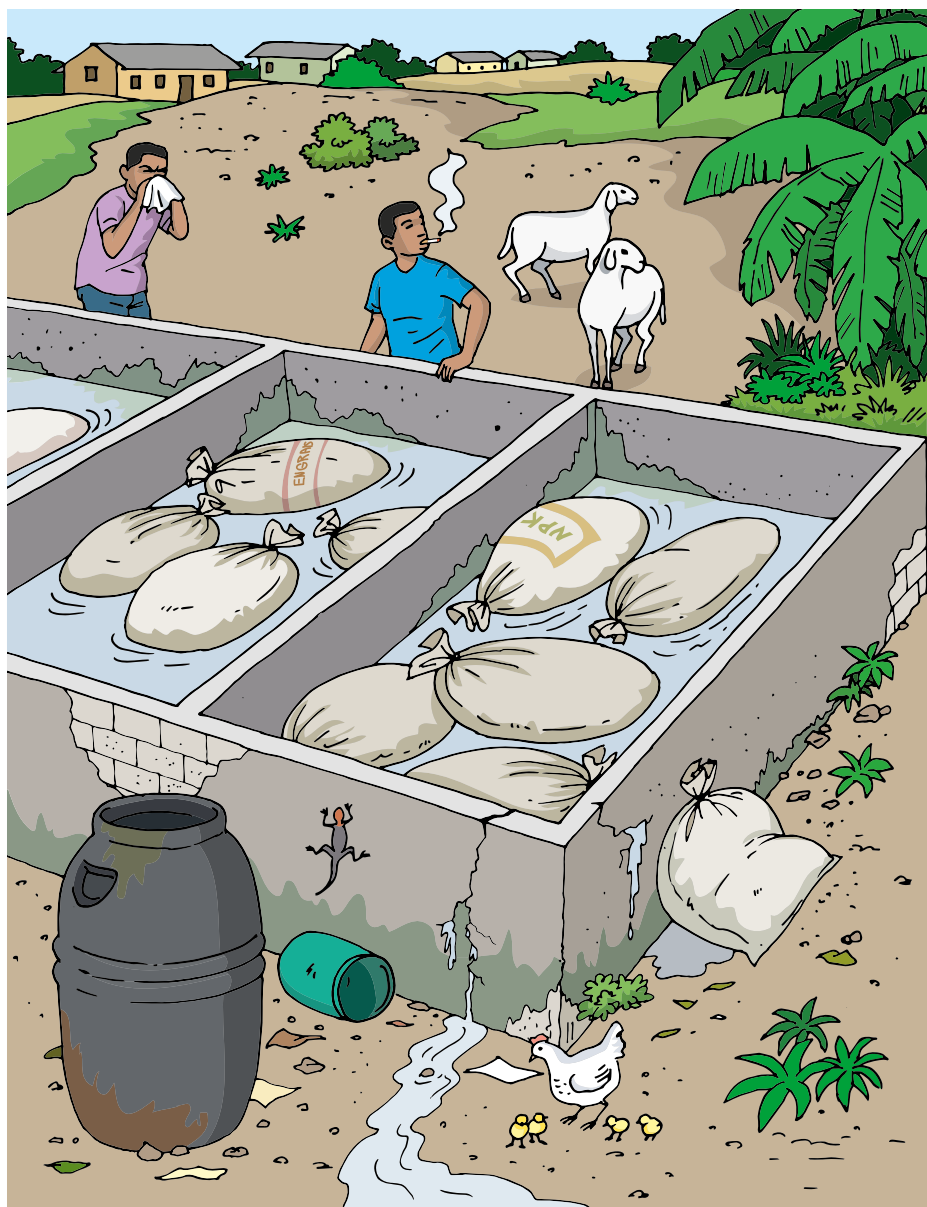
It is easy for each company to considerably limit the risk by adopting good practices. To this end, operators should implement the good practices recommended in this brochure and thus avoid food safety risks by bringing high quality pepper onto the market.

The messages in this COLEACP brochure focus on good retting practices for white pepper and more specifically on:

1. Staff hygiene
2. Equipment hygiene
3. Reception
4. Checking of water quality
5. Bagging of the berries and soaking
6. Water renewal
7. Processing, washing
8. Logging of the retting and washing operations

## BAD RETTING PRACTICES

### BAD PRACTICES



## GOOD PRACTICES

### 1. GENERAL HYGIENE OF INFRASTRUCTURE, EQUIPMENT

The operator must:

- Be made aware of Good Practices for equipment and facilities
- Check that the wash basins and bowls have been washed and disinfected



*See Brochure 2 - General Principles of Hygiene: Hygiene measures for production sites and facilities*

*See Brochure 4 - General Principles of Hygiene: Managing product cleanliness and handling*



## 2. STAFF HYGIENE

The operator must:

- Be in good health
- Wash their hands and feet with the soap and water provided
- In the event of a break in activity for personal needs (toilet and food breaks, visits and others), of washing their hands and feet again before doing so
- Refrain from drinking, smoking or eating in the retting and washing area
- Wear clean, waterproof aprons
- Wear clean boots for trampling pepper in the tanks
- Boots should only be used in the tanks
- Be made aware of Good Staff Hygiene Practices

The pictograms on Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) must be visible at the entrance to the retting facility



*See Brochure 1 - General Principles of Hygiene: Staff hygiene measures*

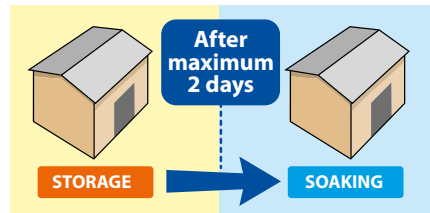




### 3. RECEPTION OF THE PEPPER

The operator must:

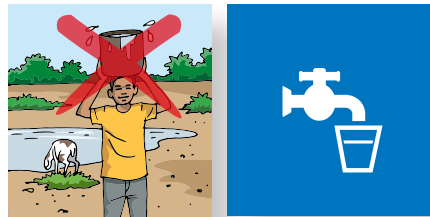
- Check that the pepper to be soaked is ripe enough (bunches with one or two orange or red berries)
- Check that the pepper is not stored for more than 2 days before the soaking phase



### 4. CHECKING WATER QUALITY

The operator must:

- Check that the water source to be used for soaking and washing is clean



## 5. BAGGING

The operator must:

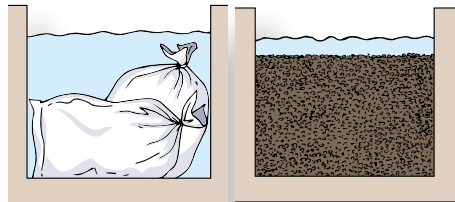
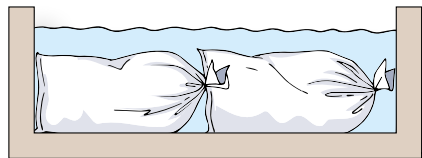
- Ensure that harvested pepper bunches/corns or berries are loosely packed in polypropylene bags
- Use only new or recycled bags.
- If bags are used that have previously contained foodstuffs (flour bags and others), the operator must ensure that they are properly emptied and washed.
- Refrain from using bags or other containers that have contained chemicals (fertilisers, etc.)



## 6. SOAKING THE PEPPER

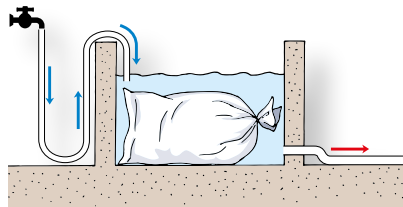
The operator must:

- Ensure that the bags are fully immersed in water (tank device) for 8 to 14 days
- Fully immerse the pepper bags or bunches in the tanks to facilitate the detachment of the seed coat



N.B.: "Retting can be done by direct immersion of pepper berries in pans, provided there is sufficient density of corns to allow the fermentation process to take place"

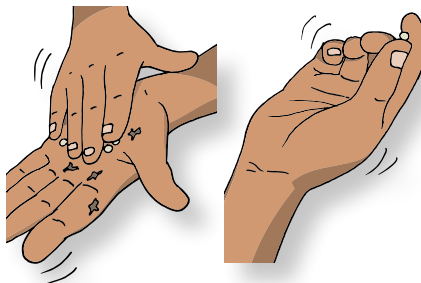
- Renew the water contained in the tanks every 2 days: that is to say 4 to 7 times during the retting period of between 08 and 14 days



- Check that when the water is changed, the pepper is trampled to separate the corns from the pericarp, plant debris and other impurities. The tank is emptied of its water content



- Regularly check the level of degradation of the pericarp
- From the 8th day, rub the pepper samples between the fingers to ensure that the washing operation can be carried out



## 7. WASHING THE PEPPER

The operator must:

- Apply good staff hygiene practices during the washing operation (clean gloves and boots)



- Trample the closed bags to remove the berries from the tips and debris of the pericarp
- Before washing, check that the pericarp is easily removed from the corn



- Wash the pepper at the end of soaking: from day 8



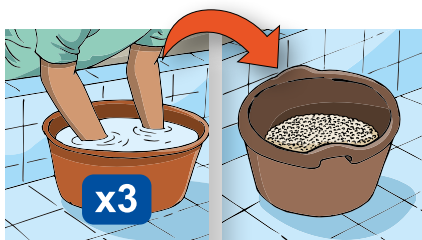
- Wash the pepper at the edge of the tanks, in the spaces provided for this purpose
- Use drinking water for washing the pepper



- Wash the pepper in clean plastic containers



- Wash thoroughly several times until the pepper is pulverized and free of plant debris



## 8. LOGGING OF THE RETTING OPERATIONS

The operator must:

- Operator (code)
- Soaking date
- N° of the Tank /Barrel/other retting devices
- Product references: (Harvesting batch)
- Soaked weights (kg)
- Water renewal dates
- Number of days of soaking
- Retting Batch no.
- Name of the operators
- Stamp of the Retting Supervisor



## 9. LOGGING OF THE WASHING OPERATIONS

The operator must:

- Operator (code)
- Washing date
- Product references (Retting batch)
- Weight (kg)
- Water renewal frequency
- Washing batch n°
- Name of the operators
- Stamp of the Retting Supervisor



*See Brochure - Key principles of traceability*

*See Penja Pepper Good Practices Guide*

- *FE9: Logging of the retting operations*
- *FE10: Logging of washing*
- *FE19: Logging of training courses*
- *FE20: Health register*



#### NOTE

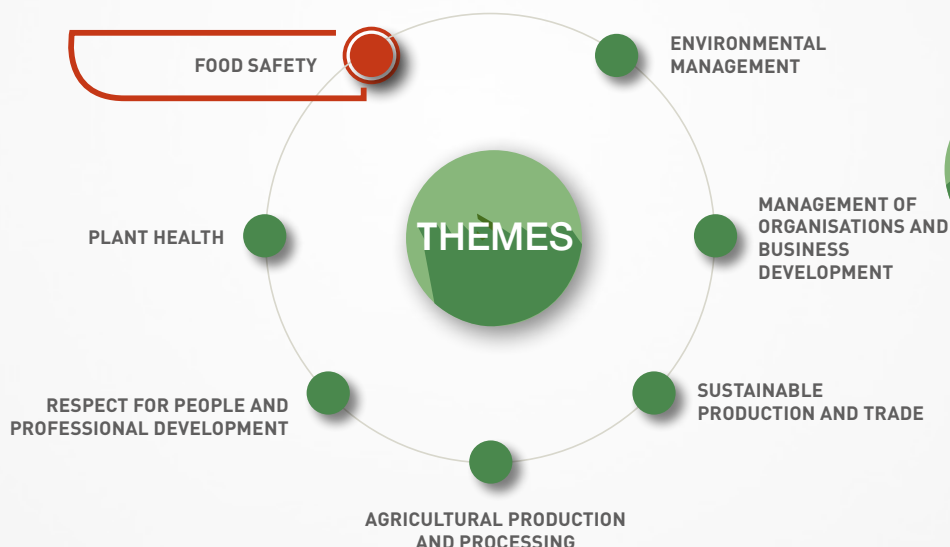
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GOOD PEPPER  
HARVESTING PRACTICES

GOOD PEPPER  
RETTING PRACTICES  
(WHITE PEPPER)

