



Federal Ministry
of Food
and Agriculture

Horticulture – Made in Germany



Preface



Dear Readers,

German horticulture is distinguished by its tradition, performance and innovative strength. And much more!

German horticulture is unique in its diversity and in the quality of its products. German fruit and vegetables are synonymous with a safe and healthy diet, whilst ornamental plants and woody plants are used to create attractive parks, gardens and indoor spaces. When buying German horticultural products, consumers also benefit from the high German and European food and consumer standards of protection.

Gardens have always been a driving force behind cultural and economic exchange all over the world. Whereas people used to be particularly fascinated by exotic plants and fruits, they are now especially interested in global horticultural trends such as urban gardening and the sustainable and eco-friendly production of horticultural products. The trends clearly demonstrate that there is a growing interest in joining forces to overcome the global challenges of our time in horticulture as well. I see this as a positive development, and greatly welcome this, as horticulture especially can play an important role in securing balanced and healthy food for people worldwide, and in protecting our climate and our environment. To this end urban gardening is creating green infrastructure in our ever-growing cities, which improves the quality of life in them and also helps to ensure that important foods can be produced locally.

Germany is particularly promoting research into and development of innovation for sustainable and resource-efficient horticulture. Our Initiative for Developing Low-Energy Greenhouses (ZINEG) shows one of many ways in which we are actively involved in this area.

We invite you to discover for yourself „Horticulture - Made in Germany“!

Yours

Christian Schmidt, Member of the Bundestag

Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture

Table of contents

Preface.....	3
1 German Horticulture - High-performing and innovative	5
2 Fruit and vegetables – Culinary delights from Germany.....	7
3 Ornamental plants - Bright and beautiful.....	10
4 Trees and bushes - making your life greener	12
5 Innovations in Horticulture	14
6 Contact.....	16

1 German Horticulture - High-performing and innovative



German Horticulture - High-performing and innovative

Horticulture has a very long tradition in Germany. This tradition provides the basis for the sector's proficiency and versatility today. The range of German horticulture production includes vegetables, fruit, bedding plants, balcony plants, potted plants, cut flowers, woody plants, perennials and raw materials for medicines and spices. At the heart of German horticulture are long-standing, small and medium-sized family businesses that guarantee the quality and value of their products and have highly skilled horticulturists. Horticulture offers competitive production and sales structures. However, most importantly: with its products and services horticulture contributes to our quality of life. Every

January many horticulturists from all around the world are drawn to Essen in Germany to attend the leading trade fair in horticulture, the International Plant Trade Fair (IPM). Shortly after this, all attention is focussed on global trade of fruit and vegetables at the Fruit Logistica trade fair in Berlin. The organic farming market gathers in February in Nuremberg at the Biofach, the leading world trade fair for organic food.

Discover for yourself „Horticulture – Made in Germany“!

High-quality training - Made in Germany

German horticultural enterprises employ highly-qualified staff. Qualifying as a horticulturist normally takes three years and involves dual vocational education and training: practical training in recognised training enterprises is supplemented with vocational school classes. Every year approx. 10,000 young people undergo horticultural training. Master craftsmen, technicians and engineers head production at business level, conduct plant breeding and develop new products. The German Länder have testing sites that support quick knowledge transfer in practice. Well-connected higher education institutes and research centres train young scientists and conduct research to promote innovative horticulture.



2 Fruit and vegetables – Culinary delights from Germany



Fruit and vegetables – Culinary delights from Germany

Germany is a fruit and vegetable garden right in the middle of Europe. Due to the climatic conditions and the resultant variations in temperature, German apples, for instance, contain just the right amount of sugar to give the perfect taste. The Lake Constance region, the Altes Land area near Hamburg, Saxony and the Rhineland are the best known areas for growing apples and

pears. The range of varieties grown distinguishes Germany from the rest of Europe. Currently there are over 60 varieties of commercially grown apples. Whether apples, pears, sour and sweet cherries, plums, strawberries, blueberries, currants, blackberries and raspberries, with this amount of choice there's something for everyone.

High standards for the quality of fruit and vegetables

Germany is known as the land of engineering, strict regulations and sound environment. Fruit and vegetables are produced to the highest quality standards as both statutory regulations and critical German consumers call for high-quality products. Thanks to the use of state-of-the-art crop, storage and transport engineering, customers can rely on consistent and good quality. These quality and freshness standards apply to vegetables as well as to fruit. Highly efficient producer organisations bring together the harvests of horticultural enterprises and are able to meet high demand with top-quality produce.



Cabbage is a typical German vegetable. The largest continuous area of land for growing cabbage in Europe is in Dithmarschen in North Germany. Primarily headed cabbages are grown in this area. The fresh North Sea air and the marshland allow the cabbage to thrive. Another large cabbage-growing area is the Palatinate region. Cabbage varieties that prefer warmer conditions, like cauliflower and broccoli, tend to be grown here. Cabbage vegetables such as white and red cabbage, cauliflower and Brussel sprouts are delivered to countries such as Sweden, Poland, Italy and the Netherlands.

German asparagus is a delicacy and is also known as the „Queen of vegetables“. This asparagus develops its typical flavour only in appropriate soil conditions and climatic conditions and is therefore different to varieties from other regions around the world. The value of asparagus exports has nearly doubled in the last ten years.

Other German vegetable specialities include onions, shallots, carrots, lettuce and cucumber.

Inspections, monitoring and the exchange of information make German fruit and vegetables safer

A key component for ensuring the safety of food in Germany is the official food monitoring system. All places where food is produced, processed or placed on the market are regularly monitored by the competent authorities. If irregularities are suspected samples are taken and analysed in official laboratories. In Germany this task is performed by the Länder authorities. The Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL) develops coordinated monitoring programmes, which are then put into action by the Länder. The Länder coordinate the monitoring of the municipal testing authorities, which in turn monitor enterprises, take samples and test these in laboratories. This is where substances are analysed and tested for harmful germs, residues of plant protection products and heavy metals. If enterprises violate the existing regulations they are generally re-tested in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved. Products that constitute a risk for human health must be removed from the market. In the case of grave violations fines may be imposed or criminal proceedings initiated.



3 Ornamental plants – Bright and beautiful



Ornamental plants – Bright and beautiful

German gardeners produce in one of the largest ornamental plant markets in the world (approx. € 8.6 Bn. at retail prices) That speaks for Germans' affection for flowers and plants. Full competition and strong competitors have always required ornamental plant enterprises to focus strictly on customer wishes and quality. Of the total ornamental plants bought nearly 50% are produced domestically. This proportion is highest (approx. 76%) for bedding and balcony plants. The very high market significance of bedding and balcony plants may well distinguish Germany from the rest of Europe. Annually, ornamental horticulture in Germany produces approx. 1.5 Bn. bedding and balcony plants as well as herbaceous perennials and 270 million houseplants. The species and varietal diversity is almost infinite. Perennial gardeners, for instance, have over 1,300 different species and varieties on average. German breeding and nursery plant enterprises for ornamental plants play an important role at global level. „Made in Germany“ also stands for quality and innovation in plant breeding and nursery plant products.

In the ornamental plant sector, **the quality associated with „Made in Germany“** refers primarily to the strict quality and health management of plants, in particular for nursery plants and seed production Enterprises producing seed focus on high germination capacity and germinal force as well as healthiness and varietal purity. Cutting production takes place under strict health monitoring in accordance with European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization standards and International Plant Protection Convention standards. It is monitored in cooperation with the national plant protection services.

The high proficiency of our ornamental plant breeders and the progress in breeding made in connection with this are reflected i.a. in the extensive range of the breeding enterprises and in the approved requests for European plant variety protection. For example around 800 pelargonium and approx. 120 poinsettia varieties are amongst the current varieties on the market offered by German breeders. Even small enterprises distribute their products and varieties worldwide, with Europe and North America representing the main markets. Some enterprises from Germany have the largest market share in varieties of certain plant species. For some species, such as geraniums, tuberous begonia and cut roses, some ornamental plant breeders are even world market leaders. It is estimated that over 60% of cut rose varieties worldwide have their origins in the breeding activities of German enterprises.

The ten largest German breeding and nursery plant enterprises produce roughly around 3 billion cuttings per year. These are primarily produced in countries which, due to their climatic conditions and geographical location, guarantee a particularly high plant quality. However, the headquarters of the enterprises, along with the breeding and commercial operations, are mostly located in Germany. Production sites for stock plants can be found all over the world, for instance in Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Egypt, Israel as well as in the Central American countries Costa Rica, Guatemala and El Salvador. Here, enterprises not only contribute to economic development, they also invest in environmental and social standards for their employees.

Specialities from Germany - e.g. Heather Plants

Heather - Erica species and Calluna vulgaris- are a cornerstone of Autumn trading in Germany and an important German export product. Distribution companies traditionally export large amounts to Scandinavia - exports to Switzerland, Austria, France and Italy have risen strongly. There are always new breeds being added to the diverse range. These first need to stand the test in practice, as our gardeners have high quality standards.

They require that the plants reproduce well and are particularly durable. Varieties should also be resistant to diseases and be able to be produced in an environmentally-friendly way using few inputs. The retail sector and consumers also want plants that are in keeping with current trends, e.g. blossoms in current colours.

4 Trees and bushes – making your life greener



Trees and bushes – making your life greener

In tree nurseries very diverse sorts of deciduous and coniferous trees are cultivated and propagated. These include avenue and park trees, flowering and fruit plants, ornamental bushes, ground cover plants, roses, hedging and climbing plants. Most tree nurseries are long-standing family enterprises. A lot of time, experience and specialist knowledge is required for cultivating trees and bushes. This is attained thanks to expertise of well-trained staff, the use of modern machinery and equipment, optimal cultivation and breeding methods and the correct variety selection. This not only results in better quality but also helps to conserve the environment and nature. For instance closed irrigation systems or mechanical weed control equipment are used.

Healthy Plants

Plant health plays a key role here. In order to ensure that the phytosanitary and quality standards set out by the European Union (EU) are met, tree nurseries are registered by official phytosanitary services and their stocks are regularly monitored. They are required to undergo internal monitoring of the quality, health and varietal identity of plants and propagative material. Additionally, for pome and stone fruit varieties in Germany, there is an official certification system for particularly high-quality, virus-tested and true-to-type plant material. During the intra-Community movement of plants and plant products in the EU, the plant passport confirms that the goods are free from quarantine pests and have been kept in observance of quality requirements. For exportation to non-EU countries, the official phytosanitary service issues a phytosanitary certificate if the import requirements of the importing country are fulfilled.

Continually improving shipping methods and shipping materials guarantee that the plants arrive at their destination undamaged and without loss of quality. Furthermore, due to the climatic conditions, woody plants in Germany are able to harden off and ripen well in order to successfully develop further in their final location. High-quality plants and trees are the most important success factor for exports. The value of tree nursery exports more than doubled due to the high demand in the period between 2005 and 2013.

Avenue trees from Germany can be found on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, on the Zwetnoj Bulvar in Moscow and in the city of London. German trees and plants decorate and contribute to the greenery of very many public and private international squares, e.g. the Piazza della Scala in Milan, Italy, the Esplanade in Bad Ischl, Austria, as well as many historic castles and gardens such as the Parc de Versailles in France.

Diversity of Plants

The entire range of products in the German tree nursery sector amounts to a good 300,000 items - with approx. 17,000 plant species and varieties of various shapes and sizes. Of course not all of the over 1,800 tree nurseries can have all of the articles in stock, yet private, commercial and public customers will find a wide range of plants at most enterprises. Enterprises are specialised in retail, wholesale and/or exports whereas others have moved to focus on production only. In order to meet all customer wishes, German tree nurseries cultivate deciduous, wild, coniferous, fruit and forest groves on nearly 24,000 hectares of land.

5 Innovations in Horticulture



Innovations in Horticulture

Producing quality plants is decisively influenced by technology and the production methods available. German enterprises in the horticulture supplier industry develop and deliver reliable, practical industry solutions in compliance with recognised quality standards. Besides high performance good-quality products, finding new, innovative processes for improving efficiency and conserving the environment is considered a high priority.

Our horticultural enterprises attach great importance to providing professional advice, taking into account new technological developments, and also to offering a good range of services. Enterprises also wish to take the practical knowledge they have gained on domestic markets and use it on international markets in order to be accepted as a competent point of contact.

German enterprises providing industrial products for horticultural purposes maintain intense contact with science and research and are committed to a sustainable and resource-efficient future for the horticultural sector. In the field of greenhouse construction and greenhouse crop engineering they offer complete construction of greenhouse complexes including all technical equipment and interior fittings. Much attention is given to individual technical advice on the application of pesticides and fertilisers as well as special substrates for horticultural purposes and horticultural commodities, tailored to the individual customer requirements.



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