



**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR  
PRODUCE STANDARDS  
PRICE LOOK-UP (PLU) CODE  
ASSIGNMENT CRITERIA**

*Updated July 2015*

Please be sure you have thoroughly read through the criteria below and have attached the necessary documentation before submitting your application to the International Federation for Produce Standards (IFPS). Before you proceed, please refer to the PLU codes database, [www.IFPSGlobal.com](http://www.IFPSGlobal.com), to verify that a code does not already exist for the product. In order to give the IFPS sufficient time to consider the application and assign a new number, please refer to the review schedule below when making your decision to submit an application.

<u>Submission Deadline of Application</u>	<u>Decision Date</u>
November 1	January 31
February 1	April 30
May 1	July 31
August 1	October 31

**A non-refundable processing fee is required for each new application considered by the IFPS.** The fee is \$1000 USD for a member of any IFPS Member Organization (refer to Appendix B) or \$2000 USD for non-members (e.g., if the applicant is a member of PMA, FPC, etc., the fee is \$1000 USD). If an applicant is unsure of their status as a member, please contact the corresponding organization in Appendix B. A separate application will be required for each new code requested. Please submit payment in the form of a check or credit card; see bottom of application for payment processing information. All fees will be payable at the time of application by the filing organization.

Fees will be payable to PMA, the IFPS Secretariat. Applicants must be the grower or marketer of the item. Applications will be reviewed at regional and national levels, including commodity specific and retail review, before advancing to the IFPS for final assessment.

The primary objective of a PLU code is to facilitate effective and efficient price integrity outcomes at the retail point of sale. Additional value added opportunities include:

- The capacity to offer for sale various varieties of an item, simultaneously and at different price points (e.g. apple varieties).
- Enhanced understanding of shopper behaviour to assist in category management and promotions, etc.
- The means to identify unique varieties with high demand and/or low availability which capture a premium price at retail and are sold through the supply chain at a price reflective of that premium.

**CRITERIA FOR CODE ASSIGNMENTS**

**VERY IMPORTANT:** No application will be considered unless the following criteria are met and the proper documentation is attached. If any of these criteria are not relevant to the application, please indicate this on the application. Please be sure to complete the application thoroughly and have all the supporting evidence required.

**1. Commodity:** Product must be:

- a fresh fruit or vegetable, loose or bunched,
- sold by weight or by the unit,
- in an unprocessed form and
- sold at retail stores.

**Note:** Peeled or pre-cut fruits and vegetables are considered processed product, and, as such, will not be assigned a PLU code for use in the

fresh fruit & vegetable department. The commodity name must be the name under which the product is grown; e.g. apples or mangoes.

**2. Variety:** In order for a PLU code to be granted, the product in question must be a unique variety and:

- the product must meet the variety criteria of the International Union For The Protection Of New Varieties Of Plants ([www.upov.int](http://www.upov.int)) or a country-specific equivalent organization – please see Appendix A for further information.

Having achieved a trademark for a strain of an existing variety is not sufficient enough reason to be granted a PLU code.

Separate codes are assigned to varieties to allow items to be sold at different prices. This should be the growing name or variety if different from the marketing name if the marketing name is trademarked; e.g. Cripps Pink is the variety for the trademarked / product brand Pink Lady®. A PLU code will not be granted to a trademarked or branded name.

**Note:** If the item you are requesting a new code for is similar to an item that is currently assigned a code (e.g., you are requesting a new code for Round Eggplant and Eggplant is currently assigned a code), please attach an explanation of why your item is unique from the item that already has been assigned a code.

**3. Item Size:** If a size break is necessary, indicate the product size (e.g. small/ medium /large /extra-large) that must be in compliance with the standard usage within the industry. Size information can be found in the FAQ section of the website, [www.IFPSGlobal.com](http://www.IFPSGlobal.com) or by selecting the 'More Info' section next to the corresponding PLU code for the specific commodity on the website. In most situations,

there will be a North America and Rest of World size break.

**4. Distribution/Marketing:** The product must be available to the entire global produce industry and available from more than one marketer. The name and contact information of two or more marketers including your own must be provided. If you are currently the only marketer of the item, documentation from the breeder, or IP owner if not the breeder, is required to state that the item is available to other marketers. A requirement that a specific product brand (commercial name), in addition to the varietal name, be used in the marketing of the product is acceptable.

Codes will not be assigned for product that is controlled by one grower/marketer or by multiple growers/marketers that are controlled by a single entity.

The definition of “marketer”:

- A separate and unique company with rights, including fee based rights, to sell the product without any restrictions to the company brand under which the product is marketed and sold.
- Product brand is a particular name given to the product by an individual company, to achieve consumer recognition. The product brand name may not necessarily be the same as the company name.

Example:

- Sun World International is the patent owner of the SUGRATHIRTEEN variety of grape. Sun World International uses the product brand name of “MIDNIGHT BEAUTY®” for this variety of grape.
- Sun World International will license companies around the world to grow and market the SUGRATHIRTEEN variety of grapes.
- A condition Sun World imposes on licensing companies to grow and market the SUGRATHIRTEEN variety is that the

product must have the product brand name “MIDNIGHT BEAUTY®” on the packaging if the grape meets prescribed quality standards.

- The company brand name that the grape is sold under is not mandated.
- Sun World International will license companies like Capespan Company to grow and market the SUGRATHIRTEEN grape. Under the Capespan Brand, Capespan Company will market the SUGRATHIRTEEN grape using the product brand name MIDNIGHT BEAUTY® on the packaging when the quality meets the requirements of the MIDNIGHT BEAUTY® specification. The company brand name in this example is Capespan.
- A PLU Code in this example would be issued to SUGRATHIRTEEN.

When this criteria cannot be met, there are blocks of codes called Retailer Assigned Codes within the IFPS PLU system which are reserved for use by retailers to enable grower/shippers to uniquely identify product in that special circumstance. The United Kingdom, Norway and Australia have chosen to coordinate usage of retailer assigned codes at a national level. In these countries, please contact your national IFPS representative for guidance. For more information, visit [www.IFPSGlobal.com](http://www.IFPSGlobal.com).

**5. Production/Sales Volumes:** Current annual and 5 year projected volumes are required for both actual production and sales. The source of these volumes must also be noted (e.g., commission or association data, internal estimates, etc.).

**6. Countries of production:** The product must be available to be grown in more than one country.

**7. Product Photo** – Photos of the product for which the application is being made must be provided with the completed application. Photos

can be provided electronically in a JPG 300 DPI format or on paper (minimum size 10 x 15 cm/4 x 6 inches).

***Please Note: By submitting images (photos) in support of your application, you confirm and guarantee that there is no third party copyright to the work presented and that you assume full responsibility for any infringement of third party copyright. All images submitted become the property of IFPS.***

**8. Retail Support Letters:** Support letters are required from at least three different retailers, each operating 25 or more stores. Retailers signing the support letter must be utilizing IFPS PLU codes in their retail operations. (Support letters signed by a retailer not using PLU codes within their store retail systems will be disallowed and the applicant will be asked to provide additional letters to support their application.) Please note: only authorized signers should sign support letters. Authorized signers must be senior produce management at the company level. Companies providing support must be marketing the item for a minimum of 1 year and must provide a 5 year projection of sales.

**9. Intellectual Property (trademarks and patents):** Supporting evidence regarding the uniqueness of the variety is required. This can be provided through a patent copy, breeder documentation or other proof from any of the organizations listed in Appendix A. The product can be called a number of names, but will only have one PLU code. For example, if you take the Pinova apple, which is marketed under the Pinova, Pinata, Evelina, and Corail trademark names, all use the same PLU code. If the item is trademarked, a common varietal name is required since PLU codes are not assigned to trademarked items.

All requests for a new PLU code should be submitted using the attached form. Please note the deadlines for quarterly submissions at top of application. Applications and associated documents can be sent electronically to [plu@ifpsglobal.com](mailto:plu@ifpsglobal.com) or mailed to the address on the application. If sending electronically, please be sure that the files are in PDF format and any pictures attached are in JPG format. Regardless of the outcome, every applicant will receive a written response detailing the decision, and, if approved, the new PLU code assigned. Once a code is assigned, it will be posted to the PLU codes database on the IFPS web site, [www.ifpsglobal.com](http://www.ifpsglobal.com). If the application is declined, applicants can resubmit their application only if new evidence or additional information is included. If denied a second time, the applicant must wait two years before applying for the same item. Please refer to the PLU Application Review Process on the last page of the application for further details on the steps for application consideration.

Any questions?

Call +1 (302) 738-7100 or e-mail [plu@ifpsglobal.com](mailto:plu@ifpsglobal.com)

International Federation for Produce Standards

c/o Produce Marketing Association

1500 Casho Mill Road

P.O. Box 6036

Newark, Delaware 19714-6036

Phone: +1 (302) 738-7100 Fax: +1 (302) 731-2409

[www.ifpsglobal.com](http://www.ifpsglobal.com)

\*\*\*\* PLEASE TYPE APPLICATION \*\*\*\*



## PLU CODE APPLICATION

International Federation for Produce Standards (IFPS)  
P.O. Box 6036, Newark, DE 19714-6036  
Phone: +1 (302) 738-7100 Fax: +1 (302) 731-2409 Email: [plu@ifpsglobal.com](mailto:plu@ifpsglobal.com)

The information requested below will be used to evaluate whether a new PLU code should be assigned to the fresh produce product(s) detailed by you, the applicant. All information you provide will be considered by the IFPS in making its decision. By completing this form, you agree to adhere to the rules and procedures established by the IFPS as outlined in the Assignment Criteria section above.

### PLEASE TYPE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Applicant & Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State /Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of IFPS Member Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Please be sure you have read the attached **Assignment Criteria** section before completing the application form. If you have any questions, contact your local IFPS member (a list of members can be found at [www.ifpsglobal.com](http://www.ifpsglobal.com)). Also verify at [www.IFPSGlobal.com](http://www.IFPSGlobal.com) that the product being applied for has not already been assigned. ***You must use a separate copy of this form for each individual code for which you are applying. Complete each section of this application. If a section is not applicable to your product, simply write (N/A) in the space provided. Please include all required (\*) information. If you need additional space, please attach a separate piece of paper.***

\*Commodity (Growing name of the fresh fruit or vegetable - must be provided in English. Example: apple)

\_\_\_\_\_

Variety (Variety, if applicable, must be provided in English. Example: Cripps Pink) **MUST BE A NEW UNIQUE VARIETY**

\_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms and/or common name(s) (including brand or trademarked name. Example: Pink Lady)

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Latin/Botanical Name of Variety

\_\_\_\_\_

Name in other languages (If known)

\_\_\_\_\_

Parentage of Variety

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Is the item the result of the work of a breeding program?

\*Is the product the subject of Intellectual Property (IP)?

*If yes, please note that PLU codes are used in the global produce industry and will not be issued to products that are subject to proprietary ownership (i.e. where the product cannot be marketed by more than one company). Please complete the PLU Code Intellectual Property Acknowledgement form (attached) to support granting this item a PLU code.*

Item Size (If applicable) Select One  
Sm Med Large X-Large Any Size

Sold at Retail By Each: \_\_\_\_\_  
By Weight/Bulk: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Countries where marketed

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Global Production/Sales Volume (in lbs/kg):

Current Annual Production Volume:

# of Cartons \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

5 Year Production Projections:

# of Cartons \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Current Annual Sales Volume:

# of Cartons \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

5 Year Projection of Sales Volume:

# of Cartons \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Current # of Cartons/Country

\_\_\_\_\_ (country) \_\_\_\_\_ (#) \_\_\_\_\_ (weight)

\_\_\_\_\_ (country) \_\_\_\_\_ (#) \_\_\_\_\_ (weight)

\_\_\_\_\_ (country) \_\_\_\_\_ (#) \_\_\_\_\_ (weight)

\*Source of Volume

Commission \_\_\_\_\_  
Government Data \_\_\_\_\_  
Internal Research \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please identify)





## PLU CODE RETAIL SUPPORT LETTER

To: International Federation for Produce Standards (IFPS) c/o PMA  
P.O. Box 6036, Newark, DE 19714-6036  
Phone: +1 (302) 738-7100 Fax: +1 (302) 731-2409 Email: [plu@ifpsglobal.com](mailto:plu@ifpsglobal.com)

REMEMBER: A minimum of 3 retail support letters are required for consideration.

### PLEASE TYPE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

I am writing on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Retailer)

Retailer Headquarters Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number of Stores Operated: \_\_\_\_\_

We support the assignment by the IFPS of a new standardized Price Look-Up code for the following item(s):  
\_\_\_\_\_

We have marketed the above item for \_\_\_\_\_ years currently purchasing a volume of \_\_\_\_\_ cartons. We project to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ cartons in 5 years. Cartons each weigh \_\_\_\_\_ lbs/kgs.

We understand that:

- The IFPS must receive requests from at least three retailers before it can consider this application. Companies signing this letter must be utilizing IFPS PLU codes in their retail operations and have a minimum of 25 store locations.
- Companies signing this letter have been marketing the item for at least one year and will provide sales projections for five years.
- My signature on this letter of support signifies that my operation is selling the item noted on this application and that it is being sold at a different price point than other similar items.
- I may receive calls from the IFPS and/or its committees regarding this application and my reason for supporting.
- The IFPS has the final authority to approve or decline any applications for new codes based on its stated criteria.
- The IFPS staff will notify the applicant with the IFPS's final decision. It is the responsibility of the applicant to advise his/her retail buyers once the code is approved.
- All standardized PLU codes will be posted at [www.ifpsglobal.com](http://www.ifpsglobal.com).

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Fax \_\_\_\_\_



## PLU CODE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

PLU codes are issued by the IFPS for use by all global industry participants as a means of accurately and quickly identifying the price of products correctly at point of sale. The product must be available to more than one marketer. As such, PLU codes will not be issued to products that are subject to any intellectual property ownership which restrict growth and sale of the item.

To provide the IFPS with relevant information regarding your PLU application containing a patent or trademark, please complete the following:

- Is this item available to multiple marketers? \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, a PLU code will not be issued.)
  - Provide contact information for additional marketers on separate sheet of paper.
  - If currently sole marketer, provide proof from breeder/IP owner that the item is available in other markets.
  
- Name of patented item: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Is the tree, the item, or both patented? \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please attach copy of the patent.*
  
- Name of trademarked item: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Name of item for which PLU code is being applied: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Patent and/or Trademark Number: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Date of Issuance: \_\_\_\_\_ Country of Issuance: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parentage of item: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Acknowledgement: The undersigned fully understands and agrees that should a new PLU code be issued for this product under this application that it will be under the name commonly used in the industry and not under the trademarked name or description. I further acknowledge that this PLU code will be made available to the global produce industry on [www.ifpsglobal.com](http://www.ifpsglobal.com).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Application Review Process**

The PLU Assignment Committee staff liaison reviews the application for completeness and accuracy of data. Proof of variety uniqueness and marketability will be confirmed. Retail support will also be validated.

The application is then forwarded to the IFPS members to complete their country/member review of all information. The IFPS member country representatives determine and conduct their review process for their own country. To learn more about your country's specific review process, please contact your IFPS member organization.

In the U.S. there is an extensive and robust review process involving all segments of the supply chain and this information is provided to the IFPS members as additional information when considering applications.

The IFPS members review all materials and make the final decision on whether to approve or deny the application.

Votes are communicated to the staff liaison to assign an available code, if approved. The staff liaison communicates the approval or denial to the applicant via letter delivered electronically via email within one week of receipt of the vote.

This entire process takes approximately 12 weeks.

## APPENDIX A

### Acceptable Agencies for Unique Variety Verification\*

- UPOV – [www.upov.int](http://www.upov.int)
- Plant Variety Protection Program - <http://www.ams.usda.gov/>
- U. S. Patent and Trademark Office - <http://www.uspto.gov/>
- New Zealand Intellectual Property Office <http://www.iponz.govt.nz>
- CFIA Plant Breeders' Rights Office - <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/plants/plant-breeders-rights/varieties/eng/1300463863953/1300463978655>
- EU – CPVO - [http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant\\_property\\_rights/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_property_rights/index_en.htm)
- Australia Plant Breeder's Rights - <http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/get-the-right-ip/plant-breeders-rights/>

*\*Please note this list is not exhaustive – if the applicant has achieved unique variety designation from another body, please note this on your application.*

## APPENDIX B

### IFPS Member Organizations

- Asociacion de Exportadores de Chile
- Canadian Horticultural Council
- Canadian Produce Marketing Association
- Fresh Produce Consortium (UK)
- Frug I Com (Netherlands)
- Fruit South Africa
- Horticulture Australia Ltd
- Norges Frukt-og Gronnsaksgrossisters Forbund (Norway)
- Produce Marketing Association (US)
- Produce Marketing Association Australia-New Zealand
- Shaffe (Belgium)
- United Fresh (New Zealand)
- United Fresh Produce Association (US)