



INFORMATION BROCHURE FOR WORKERS IN VEGETABLE CULTIVATION- PLANTING SEASON FOR VEGETABLES IN THE GROUND

(INFORMATION FOR VDAB EURES)

ACTIVITY: PLANTING VEGETABLES IN THE GROUND

Vegetables are planted in the open air.

Harvesting and market preparation = sorting based on size and quality.

REGION IN FLANDERS

Vegetable cultivation in the open air is mainly located in West Flanders.

The vast majority of the vegetable area is devoted to the cultivation of vegetables in the open air (e.g. carrots, cauliflower and leeks).

Tomatoes, lettuces and bell peppers are the main crops cultivated in greenhouses.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

- No prior knowledge or studies required.
- Being flexible and motivated.
- Suitability for (often) repetitive physical work: a good physical condition is required, especially when picking from the ground.
- A sense of accuracy: an eye for quality and safety.
- Stick to rules and agreements - follow work instructions.
- Working in a team.
- Working with people from other origins/countries.
- The work is done in the open air or in a greenhouse.

PICKING ACTIVITY AND PERIOD OF WORK (ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR)

Type of vegetable	Cultivation concentration	Description of tasks	Activities throughout the year
Courgettes	West Flanders	Planting, harvesting and market preparation	Planting: April/May Harvesting: June to August/September
Cauliflowers (1st fruit)	West Flanders	Planting, covering and harvesting	Planting: April/May Covering: end of May/June Harvesting: June/July
Cauliflowers (2nd fruit)	West Flanders	Planting, covering and harvesting	Planting: June/July Covering: September/October Harvesting: end of September to end of November
Cabbages (white/red)	West Flanders	Planting, harvesting and market preparation	Planting: May Harvesting: October/November Market preparation: October/November
Leeks (summer)	West Flanders	Planting, harvesting and market preparation	Planting: February/March Harvesting: July/August
Leeks (autumn)	West Flanders	Planting, harvesting and market preparation	Planting: April/May Harvesting: September to November
Leeks (winter)	West Flanders	Planting, harvesting and market preparation	Planting: May/June Harvesting: December to April
Brussels sprouts	West Flanders	Planting, maintenance harvesting and sorting	Planting: May Topping: September/October Harvesting: November/December
Chicory	West Flanders and Flemish Brabant	Planting of carrots, harvesting and market preparation	Peak around the holiday periods (mainly October to March)
Asparagus	Limburg	Harvesting (removing from the ground)	Starts in early/mid-April Peak around May/June

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

- This concerns employment as a seasonal worker (SW).
- In 2022, 100 working days are allowed for SW.
- This concerns day contracts.
- The minimum hourly wage in 2022: € 9.69 gross/hour.

It is very important to carefully follow the producer's instructions!

A wage calculation is made per month. There is a tax deduction of 18.725%. No additional tax will be payable on this amount afterwards.

As a seasonal worker, you receive a copy of the wage calculation (every month).

Note: if you have earned more than 70% of your total professional income (earned in Belgium and in your home country) in Belgium, it is in your interest to file a tax return in Belgium the following year. You will then receive a partial refund of the taxes.

- If a worker has worked more than 50 days, a year-end bonus of € 190 is paid by the Waarborg - en Sociaal Fonds voor het Tuinbouwbedrijf (Social Guarantee Fund for Horticultural Enterprises). This bonus is paid in the year following the season. Provide your address in your home country.
- If a worker has worked more than 30 days for the same employer, a loyalty premium of € 0.50 per day is paid by the Waarborg - en Sociaal Fonds voor het Tuinbouwbedrijf (Social Guarantee Fund for Horticultural Enterprises). This premium is paid in the year following the season. Provide your address in your home country.

WORKING HOURS

Working hours in the horticultural sector are normally 38 hours/week.

Seasonal workers work with day contracts.

More hours can be worked in season: up to 11 hours /day and up to 50 hours /week.

All hours worked are paid at the normal hourly wage.

SEASONAL WORK FORM

There is a seasonal work form for seasonal workers on which the days of seasonal work are noted. Seasonal workers can keep this form during the season.

LODGING

In many cases, the employer provides accommodation. The accommodation must meet certain standards (floor space, heating, sanitary facilities, etc.).

The employer may charge a monthly rent for the stay in the lodging.

Agreements on this should be made at the start of the season.

The rent could be around € 100-150 per month.

REGISTRATION WITH THE MUNICIPALITY

You must be registered as a seasonal worker with the municipality where you are staying. The municipality will issue you with a residence document.

You will also get a social security ID number in Belgium.

SOCIAL SECURITY DECLARATION

The benefits are declared quarterly to the social security authorities in Belgium.

HEALTHCARE

Information related to healthcare in Belgium can be found on the website: www.cm.be, www.kcgs.be, www.vdab.be, ...

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON VEGETABLE CULTIVATION IN BELGIUM

Companies involved with vegetable cultivation in the open air often have several different crops per year for which seasonal workers are used.

COMPOSITION OF THE CROPS IN 2021:

Fresh courgettes:	West Flanders	188.56 ha
	Antwerp	60.29 ha
	Flemish Brabant	20.43 ha
Fresh cauliflower:	West Flanders	257.60 ha
	Antwerp	178.93 ha
	Flemish Brabant	25.76 ha
Fresh leeks:	West Flanders	1,457.53 ha
	Antwerp	188.23 ha
	East Flanders	182.43 ha
	Limburg	53.84 ha
	Flemish Brabant	47.14 ha
Fresh Brussels sprouts:	West Flanders	228.56 ha
	Flemish Brabant	111.82 ha
	Antwerp	39.63 ha
Fresh chicory:	Flemish Brabant	38.35 ha
	West Flanders	19.83 ha
	Antwerp	11.07 ha
Asparagus:	Limburg	310.91 ha
	Antwerp	119.09 ha
	Flemish Brabant	28.05 ha
	West Flanders	26.66 ha
	East Flanders	25.06 ha