

# the planting season of vegetables in the ground



A project by Boerenbond & Kenniscentrum  
Groene Sectoren with the support of Cera



## ACTIVITEIT

### Planting vegetables in the ground

The planting of vegetables takes place outdoors.

There are machines that can be used to plant the vegetables. The seasonal workers can usually take a seat on the machine used to plant the vegetables.

It is important to pay attention to working in safe conditions: see below.

### Region in flanders

Outdoor vegetable cultivation is mainly found in West Flanders.

The vast majority of the vegetable acreage is devoted to growing vegetables outdoors (such as carrots, cauliflower and leeks).

Tomatoes, head lettuce and peppers are the main crops grown under glass. There is a separate Information Leaflet for growing vegetables under glass.

### Job requirements

- No prior knowledge or study is required
- Being flexible and motivated
- Be fit to perform (often) repetitive physical labor: especially when planting in open ground, good physicality is required.

- Sense of accuracy: an eye for quality and safety
- Following rules and agreements - following work instructions
- Working in a team
- Working with persons from other origins/countries
- Work takes place outdoors or in a greenhouse

### Picking activity and period of work (activities throughout the year)

- Courgetts  
West Flanders  
Planting, harvesting and preparing for market  
Planting: April/May  
Harvest: June to August/September
- Cauliflowers (1st fruit)  
West Flanders  
Planting, covering and harvesting  
Planting: April/May Covering: late May/June  
Harvest: June/July
- Cauliflowers (2nd fruit)  
West Flanders  
Planting, covering and harvesting  
Planting: June/July  
Covering: September/October  
Harvest: late September to late November
- Closing coals (white/red)  
West Flanders  
Planting, harvesting and preparing for market  
Planting: May  
Harvesting: October/November  
Market preparation: October/November
- Leeks (summer)  
West Flanders  
Planting, harvesting and preparing for market  
Planting: February/March Harvesting: July/August
- Leeks (fall)  
West Flanders  
Planting, harvesting and preparing for market  
Planting: April/May - Harvesting: September to November
- Leeks (winter)  
West Flanders  
Planting, harvesting and preparing for market  
Planting: May/June - Harvesting: December to April
- Brussels sprouts  
West Flanders  
Planting, maintenance harvesting and sorting  
Planting: May  
budding: September/October harvesting: November/December

- Chicory  
West Flanders and Flemish Brabant  
Deploying the carrots, harvesting  
and preparing them for market  
Peak around the holidays (mainly  
October to March)
- Asparagus  
Limburg  
Harvesting (sticking out of the  
ground)  
Run-up early/mid-April Peak  
around May/June

## Working conditions

- It is about employment as a seasonal employee.
- By 2024, 100 working days are possible
- It's about day contracts.
- The minimum hourly wage in 2024 is : 12.20 euros gross/hour
- It is very important to carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions!

There is a payroll calculation per month. A deduction of 18.725% is made for taxes. This is the professional withholding tax. This withholding tax is in principle liberatory. This means that a tax return no longer needs to be filed in the year following the income year. The liberating nature of the withholding tax is linked to having a certificate of residence. In principle, no taxes have to be paid afterwards. Non-residents are not eligible for the application of a tax-free allowance.

For Kingdom residents, such as Belgians, the withholding tax is 11.11% and does require a tax return to be filed in the year following the income year. For national residents, however, there is a tax-free allowance.

As a seasonal employee, you will receive a copy of the wage calculation ( each month ). This will list all hours worked, total gross pay, withholding taxes and net pay.

There may be, by agreement with the employee, 65 euros per week paid in hand as an advance for 8 weeks per calendar year. An agreement must be drawn up in the employee's language and a discharge for receipt.

Note: if you have earned more than 75% 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 tax refund.

- If more than 50 days have been worked, an end-of-year premium and a purchasing power premium of 227.43 euros is paid the following year by the Guarantee and Social Fund for Horticulture. This premium is paid the year following the season. Please provide your address in your home country.
- If more than 30 days have been worked for the same employer, a loyalty premium of 0.5 euros per day is paid by the Guarantee and Social Fund for Horticulture. This premium is paid the year following the season. Please provide your address in your home country.

## Labor

Working hours in horticulture are normally 38h/week.

Seasonal employees work on daily contracts. The contract starts over every day.

In season, more hours can be worked: up to 11 hours /day and up to 50 hours /week  
All hours worked are paid at the normal hourly rate.

## Opportunity form

For seasonal employees, there is an occasional form where the days of seasonal work are recorded. The seasonal employee can keep this form during the season. The employer must initial the noted performance once a week or the employee's entries will be considered correct.

## Logement

In many cases, the employer provides housing. Housing must meet certain standards (area, heating, plumbing, etc.).

The employer may charge a monthly rent for lodging. Arrangements will be

made for this at the beginning of the season.

A written agreement should be signed with the employee in this case in a language he understands, stating the monthly rent.

Rent may be around 150 to 250 euros/month.

The agreed-upon rent can be deducted from net pay when calculating wages.

## Registration with the municipality

As seasonal workers, you must be registered with the municipality where you are staying. The municipality issues a residence document.

In most cases, a Schedule 3TER ( declaration of arrival) is issued. Often this is a 3TER seasonal labor. This document provides legal residency for as long as the seasonal work lasts ( maximum 100 days of performance per calendar year ).

You also get a National Register number ( or a bis number ) in Belgium.

## Declaration to social security

Benefits are declared quarterly to Social Security in Belgium .

## Health concerns

Information about health care in Belgium can be found on the website: [www.cm.be](http://www.cm.be), [www.kcgs.be](http://www.kcgs.be), [www.vdab.be](http://www.vdab.be), [www.boerenbond.be](http://www.boerenbond.be), [www.cera.coop](http://www.cera.coop) .

## Safe and healthy planting of vegetables outdoors

There is a separate information leaflet on the safe and healthy planting of vegetables outdoors.

See flyer: 2 - safe and healthy planting of vegetables outdoors.

## **Additional information on vegetable growing in belgium:**

Farms with outdoor vegetable production, often have several different crops per year for which seasonal workers are used.

### **Composition of crops in the year 2024:**

- Zucchini fresh:  
West Flanders Antwerp Flemish  
Brabant  
188.56 ha  
60.29 ha  
20.43 ha
- Cauliflower fresh:  
West Flanders Antwerp Flemish  
Brabant  
257.60 ha  
178.93 ha  
25.76 ha
- Leeks fresh:  
West Flanders Antwerp  
East Flanders Limburg  
Flemish Brabant  
1,457.53 ha  
188.23 ha  
182.43 ha  
53.84 ha  
47.14 ha
- Brussels sprouts fresh:  
West Flanders Flemish Brabant  
Antwerp  
228.56 ha  
111.82 ha  
39.63 ha
- Chicory fresh:  
Flemish Brabant West Flanders  
Antwerp  
38.35 ha  
19.83 ha  
11.07 ha
- Asparagus:  
Limburg Antwerp Flemish Brabant  
West Flanders  
East Flanders  
310.91 ha  
119.09 ha  
28.05 ha  
26.66 ha  
25.06 ha

