



GPC Expansion to Horticultural Sector FAQs

Updated: Jun-2015

INTRODUCTION

Below is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the expansion of GS1's Global Product Classification (GPC) to the Horticultural Sector. This document highlights the proposal behind this expansion, global taxonomy, and a number of other topics specific to developing classification in the horticultural sector.

WHY CHOOSE BOTANICAL TAXONOMY AS THE BASIS FOR THE GPC STRUCTURE?

Botanical taxonomy is the most common and widely accepted way to classify living beings. Botanists around the world already agree on the division in Genus and Species, based on the work of the Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus. This is supported by modern DNA research. Taxonomy is also used in commercial processes and therefore an important addition to GS1 GPC standards.

WHAT WAS THE BASIC IDEA BEHIND THIS PROPOSAL TO EXPAND GPC?

The GPC Standards Maintenance Group (SMG) developed new families, classes and bricks to reflect a more accurate and useful classification of horticultural products (plants and flowers). The proposal identified the following hierarchies:

- Segment: **Horticulture**
- Families: **Cut Flowers, Cut Greens, Live Plants (Genus A-G & H-Z)** based on genus-species information
Families: **Trees/Shrubs, Bulbs, Vegetables/Funghi, Seeds** - to be detailed in the future
- Class: **Genus**
- Brick: **Species**
- Attributes: **Feature Type & Value**

CAN THE SAME BRICK FOR A SPECIFIC GENUS/SPECIES COMBINATION EXIST IN TWO DIFFERENT FAMILIES?

Yes, since some products can be sold in multiple ways (for instance, as cut flowers and as potted plants) the same genus/species combination may be present in more than one family. Also some species names can be the same under different genera.

WAS THIS PROPOSAL BASED ON INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES?

Yes, this structure was proposed by the horticulture industry in the Netherlands, but it is based on globally-applicable taxonomical principles. It has been aligned with other international requirements to ensure its applicability is global. The proposal was based on the Taxonomy used by the International Society for Horticultural Science's Commission on Nomenclature and Cultivar Registration, which coordinates the international cooperation and appoints all International Cultivar Registration Authorities.

WHAT ABOUT CULTIVARS? WHY THEY ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE GPC STRUCTURE?

A cultivar (English synonym: variety) is the basic category of cultivated plants whose nomenclature is governed by an international code; published by the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS). It is an assemblage of plants that (a) has been selected for a particular character or combination of characters, (b) is distinct, uniform, and stable in these characters, and (c) when propagated by appropriate means, retains those characters.

In the Netherlands alone there are some 23,000 different varieties of cultivars most of which are only slightly different from each other. Furthermore new varieties occur every day. The number of genus and species combinations is small (compared to cultivars) and rather stable. Given the huge variation that cultivars represent, they have been left out from the classification structure. Cultivars do not necessarily represent a difference based on genus and species and are not relevant for sourcing activities in the supply chain.

IS THE FINAL LEVEL OF BRICK ATTRIBUTE TYPES AND ATTRIBUTE VALUES THE SAME FOR ALL CUT FLOWERS OR ALL PLANTS?

No, the characteristics of each genus and species may differ and were determined by the business needs of end-users along the supply chain. However, for most flowers (and plants with flowers) the colour may be a crucial part of the GPC structure. Brick attribute values may also be a classification of different characteristics (e.g. not all colours from the RHS colour scheme but a classification in common colours like, red, yellow and blue). In the Netherlands the horticulture industry has developed conversion tables between RHS codes, RGB values, Common Colours, Pantone and RAL colour codes.

WHEN WAS THE GPC HORTICULTURE CLASSIFICATION DELIVERED?

The GPC SMG delivered the Horticulture bricks into the GPC in the Jun-2014 Publication, and deprecated the pre-existing bricks on the GPC Dec-2014 Publication (for more information see: <http://www.gs1.org/access-gpc-standards>).

WILL GPC HORTICULTURE CODES REPLACE ANY EXISTING CODE SYSTEM CURRENTLY IN USE?

No, the other local classification systems used in a country by the local horticulture industry will continue to exist. GPC codes can also be expanded with additional local information depending on implementation. However, having global standard classifications for this industry will support international commerce and the flow and supply chain management across different regions.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO IF I HAVE A REQUEST FOR AN NEW GPC CODE OR BRICKCODE FOR A HORTICULTURAL PRODUCT?

In order to make any changes or additions to any part of the current GPC standards, a work request must be entered in the GSMP's system for the GPC SMG. More information about entering work requests can be found on: <http://www.gs1.org/standards-development/get-involved>.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PROJECT?

For more information please feel free to contact:

- Marjo van der Sman, Floricode m.vandersman@floricode.com
- Mike Mowad, GS1 Global Office michael.mowad@gs1.org
- Reinier Prenger, GS1 Netherlands reinier.prenger@gs1.nl

