

Open webinar

RUCIP 2025: Simplifying potato trade disputes in Europe

17 October 2025, Online



Welcome

Antitrust statement

RUCIP meetings need to be conducted in accordance with the relevant competition and antitrust laws.

→ You are therefore reminded that you will at all times refrain from discussing any information which is confidential to your company and/or which is likely to affect the commercial strategy or activities of your company. *You are in the best position to judge what is, and what is not, commercially sensitive or confidential and so responsibility lies with you in the first place.*

→ You are also reminded not to discuss topics outside the previously circulated and reviewed agenda. *Failure to follow these guidelines may bring with it serious consequences for you as an individual, your companies and the trade association itself. Such consequences include heavy fines and in certain cases, under national laws, the imposition of criminal penalties and sentences.*

Agenda

- 1. Welcome & Introduction (5 min)**
- 2. What is RUCIP and who can use it? (5 min)**
- 3. New RUCIP 2025: what's new? (10 min)**
- 4. How RUCIP works in practice (15 min)**
- 5. Feedback from RUCIP users (10 min)**
- 6. Q&A (10 min)**
- 7. Wrap-up and closing (5 min)**

2. What is RUCIP and who can use it?

History and context



RUCIP
RULES & PRACTICES
OF THE INTER-EUROPEAN
TRADE IN POTATOES

- **RUCIP = Rules and Practices of the Inter-European Trade in Potatoes**
- First established in 1956 and revised several times along history
- **Defines professional practices and sets up a simple and efficient procedure for expert assessments and arbitration**
- Owned by the European RUCIP Committee, composed by:
 - Europatat (European Potato Trade Association)
 - EUPPA (European Potato Processors' Association)



RUCIP

RULES & PRACTICES
OF THE INTER-EUROPEAN
TRADE IN POTATOES

EUROPEAN COMMITTEE



EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT

administered by Europatat

EUROPEAN DELEGATE OFFICE

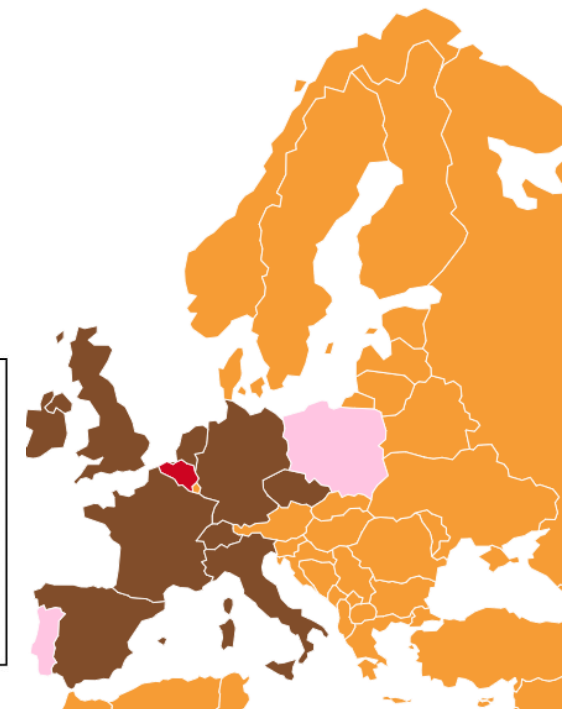
administered by
European Delegate

NATIONAL OFFICES

administered by
National Delegates



Cristina Pohlmann, German Potato Trade
Association (DKHV)



An effective organisation

Tasks RUCIP European Secretariat

- Based in Brussels 
- Responsible for:
 - ✓ day-to-day administration
 - ✓ finances and reporting
 - ✓ updates lists arbitrators & experts
 - ✓ meetings of the European RUCIP Committee
 - ✓ meetings of the Working Group
 - ✓ answers to general queries
 - ✓ website updates



Tasks RUCIP European Delegate

- In charge of running the European Delegate Office
- **Responsible for:**
 - ✓ **Arbitration cases (1st & 2nd degree)**
 - ✓ **Expertise requests**
- Also supporting Europatat in:
 - ✓ handling finances
 - ✓ organising meetings of Europatat RUCIP Commission and WG



When and how RUCIP applies

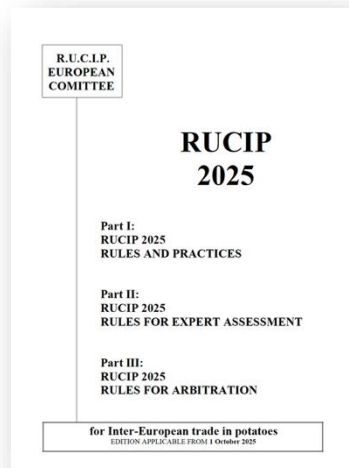
- **RUCIP applies when explicitly referenced in contracts.**



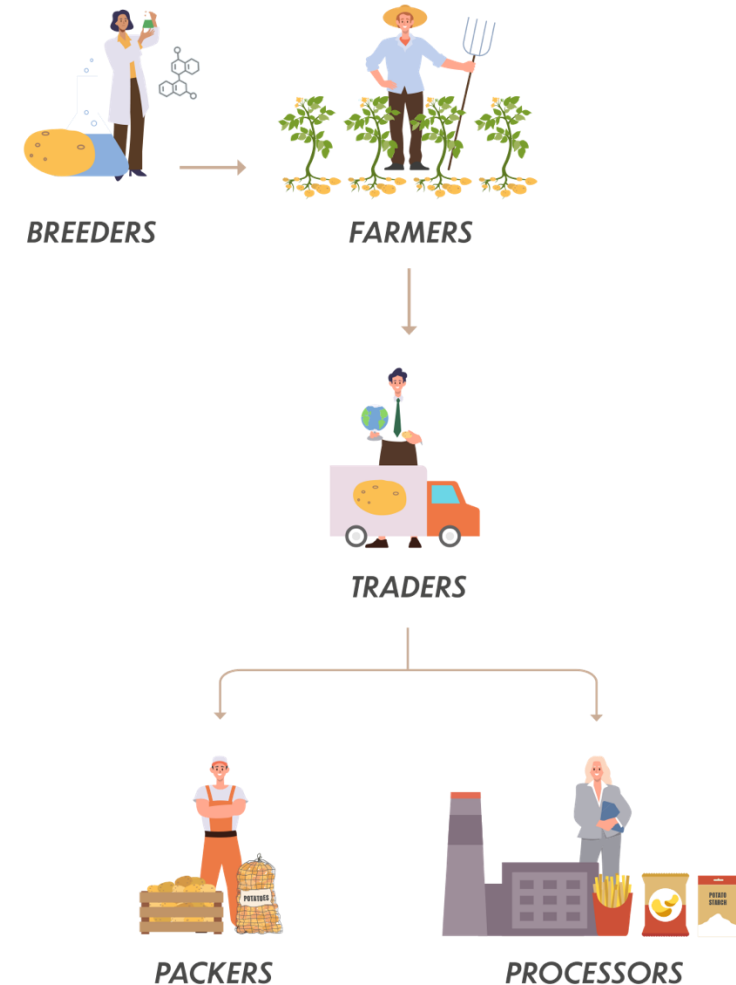
Who can use it:

Breeders, farmers, traders, exporters, importers, brokers, processors.

- **Components of RUCIP:**



Part I: Contractual rules and practices
Part II: Rules for expert assessment
Part III: Rules for arbitration
Annexes



3. RUCIP 2025: What's new?

Objectives of the revision



RUCIP
RULES & PRACTICES
OF THE INTER-EUROPEAN
TRADE IN POTATOES



**Modernise the rules while
keeping all its current
advantages**

**Compatible with tools that facilitate
use (i.e. electronic forms)**



Article by article revision

**Easy to explain and apply
(training and usage)**



**Designed for modern
trade and aligned with
plant health rules**

Reference language: English



Revision RUCIP rules: main changes

Main changes

- **Structure:** Introduction, Definitions, Rules and Practices, Rules for Expert Assessment, Rules for Arbitration
- **Overall text improved** and **clear definitions added** (established broker – Annex 8, frost protection – Art. 16)
- **Early potatoes** instead of **new potatoes** (Art. 8)
- **Packaging** for seed potatoes intended only for transportation and distribution and not for storage (Art. 14)
- **Lack of required documents** as ground for claims (Art. 17)
- **No exemption for industrial potatoes** in case of **force majeure** (Art. 26)
- **Language of arbitration** (1st degree: language proposed by the requesting party or EN, 2nd degree: language of the 1st degree or EN) (Art. 2, 4 and 7)
- **Claim < 25.000 euros** -1 arbitrator (Art. 5)
- **Modern means of (tele)communication included (email)** in Annex 1
- Revised **assessment form** in Annex 2
- **Alignment** to plant health regulations **in force** in Annex 3
- **Tolerances tables** now in Annexes 5, 6, 7
- **Request form** for arbitrations in Annex 11



Annex I: Comparison RUCIP 2021 vs 2025

Category	RUCIP 2021	RUCIP 2025	Key Change / Impact	Pages (2021 / 2025)
Governing Bodies	EUROPATAT, INTERCOOP EUROPE, EUPPA	EUROPATAT, EUPPA only	INTERCOOP EUROPE removed from European Committee	p. 1–2 / p. 7–8
National Delegates	Nominated by National Committee	Must qualify as arbitrators, ratified by European Committee	More stringent requirements for delegation authority	p. 4 / p. 8–9
Terminology	New potatoes	Early potatoes	Modernised terminology	p. 13 / p. 18
Legal Scope	No national law or treaties if RUCIP used	Same, but exception for public order of seller's country	Better legal clarity and enforceability	p. 9 / p. 13
Contractual Execution	Slightly vague on intermediary roles	Clarified intermediary responsibilities and time limits	Reinforces contract chain accountability	p. 10 / p. 14
Arbitration Clause	Applies if RUCIP is referenced	Valid only if explicitly referenced and signed where required	Clarifies enforceability in court	p. 36 / p. 37
Definition of RUCIP	Rules & Practices + Expert Assessment + Arbitration	Now includes annexes; English version binding	Stronger formal legal scope	p. 9 / p. 9
Time Limits Compliance	Implicit loss of rights	Explicit: failure to respect time = loss of rights	Increases legal accountability for timing	p. 6 / p. 16
Time Definitions	Defined by category (new vs. others)	Clarified and reorganised	Better structured rules for compliance	p. 6 / p. 15–16



Annex I: Comparison RUCIP 2021 vs 2025

Category	RUCIP 2021	RUCIP 2025	Key Change / Impact	Pages (2021 / 2025)
Lot Identification	Based on origin, variety, etc.	Must include traceability number or reference	Traceability requirement introduced	p. 13 / p. 17
Tolerances (Seed, Early, Ware)	Embedded in main text	Moved to Annexes (Annex 5–7)	Easier referencing and standardisation	p. 14–20 / Annex 5–7
“Whole crop” clause	Informally mentioned	Formally defined in several articles	Ensures natural lot composition; anti-manipulation	p. 15–22 / p. 18–21
Sampling Rules	Must occur by end of working day after arrival	Explicitly linked to lot identity and traceability	Supports clearer claims and traceability	p. 20 / p. 18, Art. 8.6, 9.5
Frost Protection / Temperature	Scattered clauses; annex used	Consolidated in Art. 16	Improved clarity on temperature and transport	p. 26–27, Annex 2 / p. 23–24
Transport Conditions	General cleanliness and frost rules	Contamination prevention, odour-free, insulation	More detailed hygiene and safety requirements	p. 24–25 / p. 23
Packaging of Seed Potatoes	Must be new, uniform	Additional: not for storage; preserve identity	Reinforces traceability and storage-specific rules	p. 24–25 / p. 22–23
Force Majeure	Clause in Article 27	Clarified with examples, exemption no longer valid for industrial potatoes	Narrower interpretation; less abuse	p. 28 / p. 29
Non-Execution / Default	Termination, Prorogation...	Renamed: Default – Extra Time – Expiry	Language modernised	p. 28 / p. 28



Annex I: Comparison RUCIP 2021 vs 2025

Category	RUCIP 2021	RUCIP 2025	Key Change / Impact	Pages (2021 / 2025)
Claim Thresholds	Single arbitrator if claim \leq €10,000; three arbitrators if $>$ €10,000	Single arbitrator if claim \leq €25,000; three arbitrators if $>$ €25,000	Clear monetary threshold for determining arbitration structure.	p. 51/ p. 52
Role of legal advisers	Arbitration commission may be assisted by legal advisers	Arbitration commission must be assisted by legal advisers if $>$ €25,000	More legal safety	p. 53 / p. 55
Award notification	Within 9 months, extension approved by National or European delegate	Within 12 months, 2 extensions of 6 months each approved by the Chair	More flexibility	p. 54 / p. 55
Procedural Language for Arbitration	Proposed by appellant or FR, DE, EN, ES or IT, agreed by parties or set by Chair	English or proposed by appellant. Must be agreed by parties or set by Chair	Defines allowable languages and fallback rules.	p. 48 / p. 28, 52
Document Structure	5 annexes	11 annexes	Adds forms, guidance, clarity	p. 62–70 / p. 61–77
Communication	Defined in Annex 1	Use of written (tele)communication emphasised	Stronger legal evidence and audit trail	p. 62 / p. 62



4. How RUCIP 2025 Works in practice

Key RUCIP benefits



Faster than legal proceedings

Only potato professionals involved

Lower and predictable costs

Precise, neutral and confidential

How expert assessments work

- **Triggered in case of quality or condition disputes** (e.g. rot, size, sprouting).
- **Must be requested within strict deadlines.**
- **Conducted by an officially registered RUCIP Expert.**
- **Based on a standard form** (Annex 2) **and objective, harmonised tolerances** (Annexes 5–7).
- **Fee structure transparent: Costs and fees defined in advance**



Arbitration: How it replaces court disputes

- **Applies to broader contractual disputes** (non-delivery, late delivery, payment, etc.).
- **Arbitration clause must be included and signed in the contract.**
- **First-degree arbitration:** single arbitrator for claims under €25,000, panel of three above.
- **Clear timeline and language rules.** Award delivered within 12 months (with extensions).
- **Costs and fees defined in advance** (Articles 5–7, Annex 11).



Comparison: RUCIP arbitration vs. civil court

Scenario: *A buyer claims financial loss due to a delivery of seed potatoes arriving 5 days late, missing the planting window.*

Civil Court:

- **Timeline:** 2–3 years before final judgment.
- **Costs:** Legal fees can exceed €10,000–15,000 depending on jurisdiction.
- **Procedure:** Formal legal procedures, court hearings, potential appeals.
- **Outcome:** Judgment by a generalist judge unfamiliar with sectoral specifics.
- **Public:** Court case and judgment are public records.

RUCIP Arbitration:

- **Timeline:** Typically resolved in 6–12 months.
- **Costs:** Fees known in advance (e.g. €500–€2,000 for 1st degree arbitration, plus modest secretariat and expert fees).
- **Procedure:** Written submissions + sector-aware arbitration panel.
- **Outcome:** Decision based on potato trade practices, by experts.
- **Confidential:** Arbitration proceedings and outcome are private.

5. Feedback from RUCIP users



Gilles Fontaine, Manager Subsidiaries Agrico Group

- **Ex CEO of Desmazieres**
- **Former President of Fedepom and Europatat**
- **Rucip Arbitrator during 15 years, in Potato Business since 1992**



6. Questions and answers

Please write your question(s) in the chat!

More questions? Check the FAQ section on RUCIP website!

Why should I foresee 'RUCIP' in my potato contracts ?

RUCIP has been since 1956 the reference for national and international potato trade. It offers a chapter on rules (the contract, the potatoes, cost and risks of transport, delivery and payment, complaints and disputes) and as well the possibility of expertise as arbitration.

RUCIP has been updated several times by its members (Europatat and EUPPA) in order to adapt to the ever changing practises in the potato trade.

Once a clear reference of RUCIP has been mentioned on the contract, signed by the concerned parties, the RUCIP rules apply.

Does the reference 'RUCIP' in my contract allow me to make specific arrangements between buyer and seller ?



Is RUCIP applicable to all parties in the potato chain ?



Is RUCIP complex for potato professionals to apply ?



Do I need to be a lawyer to understand RUCIP ?



How can I ask a RUCIP expertise and what does it cost me ?



What is the difference between an expertise and an arbitration ?



Can I choose between a court proceeding or an arbitration in case of a RUCIP-contract ?



How to start an arbitration and what will it cost me ?



7. Wrap-up and closing

What's next?

TRAININGS of:

- Experts
- Arbitrators
- National Secretariats (new & old)

GUIDELINES on:

- Operational rules European RUCIP Committee
- How to open a National Secretariat

Free webinar in German DE



12 November



10h – 11h



Registration open at rucip.dkhv.org.



eu.delegate@rucip.eu

Other languages to follow... stay tuned!



Get in touch!

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Welcome to RUCIP

RUCIP - Rules & Practices of the Inter-European Trade in Potatoes

[Read more](#)

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RUCIP website

- RUCIP rules 2025 (EN, DE, FR) and Annexes
- Contact information National RUCIP Secretariats
- Expertise and arbitration costs
- FAQ
- News

For more info & requests, contact:

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Thank you!