



Source: [Calcalist](#)

THE UNEXPECTED CONTRIBUTION OF *COVID 19* TO THE FRESH PRODUCE EXPORT INDUSTRY

(The article is discussing Global Problems while often using Africa as a Case Study)

In the previous manifesto, I wrote that the Coronavirus crises is primarily a challenge, but more importantly, **an opportunity for regulators**, including those who are responsible for regulating plant protection related issues.

The Coronavirus pandemic serves as a global scale “test field” to develop, experiment and present innovative protocols, for better dealing with a future pandemic, while minimizing the negative effects on the economy.

REGULATORS ARE AT THE FRONTLINE

Big changes are already happening as a result of great difficulties. But, to make life **safer and better** we need additional BIG changes.

Traditionally, regulators are conservative. However, nowadays they need to be the ones to lead the required changes and show the vision and prospect for a better and safer life.

Changes can take place through revolutionizing outdated current protocols or develop and present new ones.

THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS- Presents the entire world with the greatest difficulty. Therefore, it poses for regulators the greatest challenge, which requires big changes.

Quarantine of people - People are the vector (carrier) of the Coronavirus. Therefore, the straightforward approach, widely used today, is to stop people from moving and hence transferring the virus. Fear is the engine that enables the continuation of lockdown.

Unsustainable human-virus protocol - Yet, it is already clear, continuing countries' lockdown until the virus is eliminated from the face of the earth is not a viable option. There are many reasons for that, but the adverse economic effect is the most notable.

THE AGRI QUARANTINE PESTS' CRISIS – Fruit flies present the entire agri-industry with the greatest difficulty, and in particular, when it comes to fresh produce export. Hence, it poses the greatest challenges for the regulators and requires the greatest innovative approach to overcome it.

Unsustainable fruit export protocol - It is already clear that continuing the current export ban of fresh produce on tens of countries until the quarantine pest becomes extinct is not a viable option. There are many reasons for that, such as hunger and poverty, but one again; it is the adverse economic effect that is devastating for tens of countries with an agro-based that is the most notable.

Have no mistake, along with novel effective eco-friendly technologies, the long-term salvation for the challenge posed by quarantine diseases/pests will be regulatory ones.

This is an exciting time to be a regulator. If you are 'A Regulator', I hope you appreciate that uniqueness and you have a sense of urgency for the required changes.

RE-FOCUS REGULATIONS

Present human virus/pandemic control, i.e. Coronavirus control is focused on achieving zero cases of sick people. It means we focus on **eradicating the virus**.

In the case of agricultural quarantine disease/pests, the focus is on **eradicating the disease/pest** and achieving zero pests' population.

That notion is well presented in the *Fruit Fly Free Zone* or SIT (Sterile Insect Technique) projects. Such campaigns are aiming to eradicate the pest but rarely manage to achieve it even after decades of tireless efforts.

Based on results, it is time to reconsider our protocols; although enormous financial investments and economical losses in the scale of trillions of USD, we have come to a state where everything stands still - people do not travel and most countries of the world can't export fresh agri-produce for many years.

It is clear that we need to protect ourselves from quarantine disease/pests, just as it is clear that current protocols are not viable.

There is little time, and Regulators need to reinvent themselves and come up with new protocols, which will present novel approaches.

RESTRICTIVE-REGULATION OR ENABLING-REGULATION

For most farmers *Regulation* is an adverse factor in trade and livelihoods. It restricts freedom of trade, including export, and livelihood.

I'm confident that it doesn't have to be that way.

The alternative is *Regulation* that is an advanced tool, which uses innovative protocols to enable the opening of many more international markets.

The Enables-regulation approach will create prosperous trading and exports while maintaining uncompromising (pest) bio-security.

INNOVATIVE PROTOCOL MODELS

Two recently developed innovative regulatory models may change the way we deal with quarantine disease/pests.

Both model protocols are much alike; presenting a similar approach to nearly a similar situation.

One is to overcome the necessity of Coronavirus (human virus) lockdown and enables free movement for millions of people in China at the epicenter of coronavirus pandemic.

Two is the regulatory protocol to overcome export-ban on fresh produce, hence to enable smooth and continuous export of fresh produce from places where quarantine pests exist.

REGULATORS CAN BE VERY FAST AND INNOVATIVE

In the previous manifesto, I have foreseen the use of *Certificate of Health* and "*Prohibition of entry to the country of people, and fresh produce unless there are evidence and a **certificate** showing that they are not carrying any quarantine disease/pest*" ([source](#)).

This week it became a reality.

Hubei had ordered all residents to get the color-based QR code which acts as an indicator of one's health status and comes in red, yellow and green.

[New York Post](#)

This week, we were informed that the 11 million of Wuhan residents, the epicenter of Coronavirus pandemic, were allowed to move out of the quarantine area -

"China on Tuesday announced it will end the two-month lockdown on Wuhan, the city at the epicenter of the Coronavirus pandemic, on April 8 - and is lifting travel restrictions in the rest of Hubei province... Starting Wednesday, Hubei residents - other than those in

Wuhan - will be allowed to leave the province **if they have a green QR code** on their mobile phones". [New York Post](#)

Practically, at these moments, the Chinese government is taking steps to remove the quarantine, provided you have a digital code (QR code), which serves as a **Certificate of Health** that shows you are not a carrier of the Coronavirus, i.e. quarantine disease.

Wuhan resident Bo Hanlin said he welcomed the news of the **imminent lifting of restrictions**.

"This is the day I've been waiting for," he told CNN Tuesday.

In 'normal days', we would not imagine that anyone would be happy from the need to get a '*Certificate of Health*'.

But those days are not 'normal days' and people of the *Hubei* province are happy with the *Certificate of Health* that allows them to return to their daily routine, and travel freely.

That is because they understand too well the alternative – a continuation of home lockdown, and BAN of movement and traveling outside the province.

In other words, staying home until **everybody** is healthy, with no signs of Coronavirus, which may take many more months or even years.

SIMPLE SOLUTION THROUGH NOVEL REGULATION

In the previous manifesto, I suggested that the agri-industry could benefit from having a Certificate confirming fresh produce to be '*free Of Quarantine Pests*'.

Why?

Because farmers, exporters, and regulators alike understand too well, the alternative – a continuation of the *Export Ban*.

Meaning, marketing primarily to the local market until all farmers, and the entire country, will stand up to the stringent regulations of quarantine pests, or the pest is eradicated, which may take many more years and even decades.

Nowadays, the situation is that most of the 46 sub-Sahara countries, India, China, etc. cannot export their main high-value crops such as Mango, Avocado and Citrus.

How can we change that dreadful faith?

Now that we understand the similarity between Coronavirus and fruit flies, we should pay more attention to the way the world is dealing with the Coronavirus.

The Chinese first reaction to the dangerous virus was an uncompromised lockdown.

Today, the Chinese understand that lockdown alone is a limited and unsustainable tool to fight the virus, not to mention too costly.

The result is the introduction of a new protocol that understands that not all people are sick; hence differentiate the population on the base of risk of being sick or getting sick, and accordingly issue a ***Certificate of Health***.

The result is far more satisfying; most of the population get back to 'business as usual', while only a handful remains isolated.

Using the *Health Certificate* system powered by a simple QR Code, the Chinese demonstrated that it is possible to provide a high level of public health while enabling life to continue.

Starting Wednesday, Hubei residents — other than those in Wuhan — will be allowed to leave the province if they have a green QR code on their mobile phones, CNN reported, citing a provincial government notice on social media platform Weibo.

[New York Post](#)

AGRI-EXPORT BAN = LOCKDOWN

Allow me to flip the picture toward pest control. Above I presented that at a state level, fresh produce *Export Ban* is the parallel of a *Coronavirus lockdown*.

The most common reason for a fresh produce *Export Ban* is quarantine fruit flies.

Fruit flies make up the world's largest and most important quarantine pest group for fresh agricultural produce.

For many years, fresh agricultural produce of fruits and vegetables from large parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America has hardly been exported due to the presence of **fruit flies, defined as - quarantine pests.**

For many countries, this is a national disaster and used as the regulator's default for not taking any risk.

The result is a complete halt to fresh agricultural exports from the **entire country.** This is similar to stopping flights for passengers.

Instead of a *National Fresh Produce Export Ban*, I suggest we take the Chinese path, which became more selective, thanks to zoom in to the level of Province and Individuals, and as a result is able to provide reliable Certificates of Health.

Wouldn't fruit growers, currently (or shortly to be) under *Export Ban*, be glad to uplift the ban by using a Certificate that ensures the fresh produce is free of fruit flies?

Of course, they will!!!

And they will be grateful, as this is what they have waited for so many years.

DIFFERENTIAL-REGULATION

The agri-export industry should follow the example set by the Chinese *Hubei* province, until uplifting the fresh agri-produce Export Ban.

Today, fresh produce regulation is controlled, measured and implemented at the state level.

Hence, when a single infested fruit is being intercepted at an export market the entire export from that country is at risk of immediate Export-Ban. Then the uplifting of such a ban will then take years.

The consequences of such an export ban are disastrous to the local economy and agri-industry.

This is the same as saying that; as long as there is a single person infected (sick) by Coronavirus no one can fly out of China, even if it takes years. Can you imagine that?

The concept of the *Hubei* province example enables us to look at the problem of public safety and quarantine from a different perspective, and therefore to issue a **Certificate of Health, based on the region and present behavior of the individual.**

Thanks to such breaking through regulatory certificate approach, many countries that today do not export fresh produce, or struggle to keep it open, will be able to focus efforts and start exporting, or in a short while increase export of fresh produce.

Imagine that, a country with no mango export, starts exporting a lot of those.

In that country we will find, at the same time;

*Farmers that have a *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone* permit to export.

*Farmers that do not stand up to the required standards, or do not want to stand up to the standards, and will not be permitted to export.

When that happens, there will be a huge trend to increase world trade of fresh agri-produce. As a result, of increased export, farmers and states' influx of foreign currency will grow fast.

TIME FRAME

When the Chinese government wanted to enable the '*free movement of people and return to normal*' they have changed the most difficult regulations within less than 60 days.

The result is the creation of the *Health Certificate*, presented through a QR code, hence implementing a differential-regulation.

The equivalent of this for the agri-industry is -

1. The understanding and acceptance that **fruit flies** are the most critical and significant worldwide quarantine pests.
2. That it is possible to bring the same "*Health Certificate*" regulatory breakthrough to the agri-export industry within the same timeframe, through constructive collaboration between regulators in 'exporting' and 'importing' countries.

STEPS TO DIFFERENTIAL-REGULATION

Following the *Hubei* Province model (i.e. differential-regulation) these are the steps to "copy and adjust" toward the export of fresh produce in the agri-industry.

For the purpose of demonstration, I use the example of fruit flies.

However, the same model can be implemented for any other quarantine pest.

The critical 4 steps (ICMC) to open an export ban due to quarantine disease or pest -

1. **Indicate**- the quarantine pest.

2. **Control** – highly effective pest control. This is a fundamental requirement.
3. **Monitor**- infested produce (even at extremely low levels), and population.
4. **Certificate** – produce that is free of quarantine pests to be marked with a label that signals and qualify its quality, e.g. like ISO or Global GAP.

Note,

This model focuses on the need to have the **produce** free of quarantine pest, rather than the territory!

Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone

Long before the Coronavirus crises, Biofeed worked on the concept and protocol of the *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone* to enable countries to have flourishing fresh produce exporting industry.

Since 2019, Biofeed offers, a complete - regional-based package - that enables any country to jump-start its fresh produce export, or keep it moving, or increase it through the following ICMC pillars to success:

1. **Indicate**- Precise indication of the target fruit fly quarantine species.
2. **Control**- Regional control approach, suited for export quality fruit fly control level.
3. **Monitor**- Reliable monitoring of produce infestation, in addition to population monitoring.
4. **Certificate**- quality control and certification for those who meet these stringent requirements, and a mark of quality to the exported produce through a label.

That process is part of the complete *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone* protocol. Standing up to the above lines of protocol and its demands will enable any country to rapidly develop its export markets, hence to advance its agro-industry and economy.

Starting from today, **you** can change the fresh produce export situation and status in your country. It is in your hands to make use of it.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Let me know what you think of it. I am waiting for your feedback at nisraely@biofeed.co.il. You can also text me +972-5423425 (WhatsApp).

* The article was later published by [Farmers Review Africa](#).

*For a greener world
Free of sprays
Full of joy*

See you soon,
Nimrod



Biofeed
Better produce...
Better income...
Better future...

P.S.

Yes or No Coronavirus, Yes or No lockdown, people need to eat. Farmers are the only source of food, so keep growing, keep exporting, and use the unfortunate situation to grow your business!

P.P.S.

“The White House is discussing easing social-distancing guidelines as early as next week amid a broader debate over how much economic loss the country can bear to save an unknowable number of lives threatened by the pandemic.” Matt Murray, WSJ

I believe in equality and equal opportunities. That is true between people and just as well between countries.

In a few days or weeks, Coronavirus quarantine will be lifted. Why? Simple - the strong economies are not willing to absorb continuous financial loss.

At the same time, fresh produce Export Ban, which is ongoing for years and has a devastating effect on the poor economies, will remain in place. We should put an end to that horrible Export Ban, and now we even have the tools to do it.

P.P.P.S.

Biofeed offers a Package to mitigate the Root Causes of the Problems –*FreeDome* to ensure effective fruit fly control, and *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone* to enable regulators, exporters, importers and farmers alike to gain mutual trust, confidence and peace of mind in their present and future.

P.P.P.P.S.

In 2020 we will start two wide-area high-level multidiscipline *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone* projects. Now is the time to contact us and make sure your country will have its own *Fruit Fly Certified Trade Zone* project in 2021.

P.P.P.P.S.

FOLLOW me on [LinkedIn](#) for many more posts and updates.

P.P.P.P.P.S.

Now you can find the historical series [The Agricultural Gap](#) on *YouTube*. The 11,000 years history from the Agricultural Revolution to the Agri-industry Revolution.

The series is still in progress with more chapters to come.
SUBSCRIBE for updates and new chapters.

P.P.P.P.P.S.

Available and free of charge is access to our [Weekly EMAILS library](#).

***Change Begins With A Decision
That The Existing Reality Is A Choice
And Not A Decree Of Fate***