



## Recommendations BABM & COMEOS

# PALLETS, DISPLAYS & PACKAGING

The ECR Belgium Working Party "Unit Load Identification & Tracking" has issued a first series of recommendations for pallets, displays and secondary / tertiary packaging. These recommendations have been made within the framework of consultation meetings held since 1997 between representatives of member companies from COMEOS (Belgian Federation of Distributors) and from BABM (Belgilux Association of Branded Products Manufacturers). Follow-up is now being given by the ECR Working Party to the actual implementation of these recommendations.

## Pallets

### *Types and dimensions*

A decrease in the number of pallet types and formats contributes to the objective of higher logistic efficiency which manufacturers and distributors try to achieve. The ECR Working Party recommends to use the so-called euro pallets (dimensions 80 x 120 cm) and its two derived dimensions (½ Euro [80 x 60 cm] and ¼ Euro [40 x 60 cm]), except for beverages and coffee as well as for heavy rotations of fresh vegetables and fruits, for which the industrial pallet (format 100 x 120 cm) is recommended. Per dimension at least two or three types should be accepted. Displays should be placed on a mini pallet belonging to a pool. The formats chosen are 40 x 60 cm (plastic pallet) on the one hand and 60 x 80 cm (Düsseldorf type) on the other hand.

### *Re-use*

For environmental and security reasons, it is recommended to have re-usable pallets and to avoid as much as possible the use of one-way pallets.

### *Pallet height*

The ECR Working Party deems that a pallet height of maximum 1.85 m (pallet included) is the best compromise for reasons of security, comfort and efficiency. However, in case of lightweight goods (pallets with a weight of less than 500 kg), the height can be exceeded in accordance with the retailer.

### *Accessibility*

The ECR Working Party underlines that a maximum and universal interchangeability is to be guaranteed within the Belgian and European context.

### *Loading*

For pallet loading, the ECR Working Party recommends to level the load (equal heights), to work with full pallet layers, without overhang, and to avoid sagging of the load.

With regard to auxiliary devices, the ECR Working Party proposes the following guidelines:

- Priority should be given to an optimum stacking scheme.
- The use of auxiliary devices should be avoided as much as possible, however, without hampering the stability of the entire load.
- One should be able to attach and remove auxiliary devices without damaging the goods.
- After removal the load has to be sufficiently stable to allow for order picking.

- As for the intermediary layers, the use of materials such as cardboard and paper is to be preferred.

The ECR Working Party recommends a maximum weight of 1000 kg for euro pallets and a maximum weight of 1250 kg for industrial pallets.

### *Quality*

With regard to the purchase and repair of pallets, the ECR Working Party recommends to appeal to certified pallet producers and repairers; this for reasons of security and in order to secure a qualitatively good pallet park.

The European organisation of EUR pallets, EPAL, has worked out a system for certification and control of EUR pallet producers and repairers. In Belgium this quality control is done by the Belgian National Railways (NMBS).

The Belgian EUR pallet producers and repairers (members of Febelhout) are grouped in Belepall. Belepall is EPAL's official national committee for Belgium.

A list of certified manufacturers and repairers is available at Belepall (c/o Febelhout v.z.w., Allée Hof-ter-Vleest 5 B.1., B-1070 Brussels, tel. +32 2 556 25 55, fax +32 2 556 25 70, [jan.dietvorst@febelhout.be](mailto:jan.dietvorst@febelhout.be)).

For more information on EPAL: Hauptstrasse 16, A-8502 Graz-Lannach, Austria, tel. +43 31 36 82 74 60, fax +43 31 36 82 74 64, [info@epal-pallets.org](mailto:info@epal-pallets.org).

## Displays

The ECR Working Party has formulated a series of recommendations for displays (dimensions, presentation and

construction) that are intended for the display of goods in the point of sale.

1. The recommended maximum height, pallet included, is 185 cm; in case of non food products, the recommended maximum height is 154 cm.

2. The indication of pricing will be done at the request of the retailer concerned.

3. The products in the display are preferably put on the original shelf tray pack; they are also equipped with the normal barcoding, hence facilitating the placing of the remaining goods in the shelves after the display action.

4. The displays are to be of solid quality, constructed in a safe and well-balanced way. They will also have to retain their stability during the sale of the products.

5. The use of false mass is to be restricted to a minimum and in no way the stability of the display may be hampered.

6. The displays on the mini pallet are to be placed on a mother pallet 80 x 120 cm (see "Pallets: types and dimensions").

7. It is recommended to place the facing:

- on the short side (40 cm) in case of 40 x 60 cm displays

- on the long side (80 cm) in case of 80 x 60 cm displays

8. Materials used and environmental protection:

In view of qualitative and environmental prevention objectives, the recommendations read as follow:

- Too much cardboard and plastic foil should be avoided in order to decrease the amount of waste material, however, without harming the solidity needed for transport.

- To ensure an optimum ratio between the number of products and the volume of the overpackaging.

- To use fully or partially recycled materials.

- To use materials free of heavy metals (e.g. inks and varnishes without heavy metals, cadmium-free synthetic pallets,...).

- To avoid multi-material types that are difficult to assort and to recycle.

- With regard to overpackaging, it is recommended to choose in function of the possibilities for recycling (overpackaging that can be completely recycled is better) and to use polyethylene (PE) foil.

## Secondary & Tertiary Packaging

### *Dimensions*

Standardisation of packaging is of great importance for an efficient transport of the product from the producer via the distribution centre to the point of sale (integral supply chain approach).

When developing new packaging, collomodular dimensions are to be preferred. These collomodular dimensions are:

600 x 400 600 x 200 600 x 100  
400 x 300 400 x 200 400 x 150 400 x 100  
300 x 200 300 x 100  
200 x 150 200 x 100  
150 x 100

The tolerance is - 6 % and + 0 %. When determining the collomodular dimensions, the divergence in minus of 4 % will be taken as a standard, this amongst other things to avoid that the packaging will bulge and taking into account the dimensions of the basis pallet.

### *Identification*

For the identification of "Unit Loads", we refer to the "Manual for labelling of logistic units and for

datacommunication in the context of traceability."

<http://www.gs1belu.org/nl/logistiek-etiket>

## Re-usable crates

For re-usable secondary/tertiary packaging too, it is recommended to limit the number of re-usable crate pools to two or three. The crates must be compatible so that they can be piled up.

The labels on the crate have to be washable. Therefore, it is recommended to use glues that are water dissolvent.

Formats are limited to 60 x 40 cm and 30 x 40 cm.

## Roll containers

With regard to roll containers, it is also recommended to have a pool system and to limit the number of pools to maximum three. The internal surface should be compatible with the dimension of two crates.

## Dolly's

They should also be compatible with the dimensions of crates.

The wheels of roll containers and dolly's should respect the noise standards while rolling. The weight of the roll containers and dolly's should respect human ergonomics.

## Palletbox

They should be compatible with the dimension of two crates and should be in accordance with the HACCP standards.

*Approved by the ECR Belgium Executive Board on 17/10/2006.*

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