The 'Health and Safety Catalogue' (Arbo catalogues): an instrument for improving the working conditions of employees

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What is it?

- a form of the decentralized responsibility of sectors, of trade unions and employers' associations, for health and safety policy (improving working conditions)

- the standards stipulated in the Dutch Working Conditions Act gives the general framework for sectors

- in other words......: in the private domain, employers and employees will determine procedures for meeting the target requirements

- to develop practical means and methods in different sectors, to be used in firms for organizing a sound and safe working place

- the catalogue contains practical means and methods to be effective in firms tackling the priority risks identified in a sector

- the customisation is an individual responsibility of the entrepreneur at company level

- the catalogue gains official status if has passed the Labour Inspectorate's assessment.
What is the form and content of the Catalogue?

• every sector can choose its own form and content

• in general the content of a catalogue contains the following elements:
  
  a. an indication of the wished health and safety level in a sector (‘the norm’/’standard’): the work must be organised so that it does not have negative impact on health and safety of employees
  b. an indication of specific measures at stake in the company (to address the priority risks)
  c. a further explanation to the measures (with the aim to be as much as being effective)
  d. checklist for actions in the daily work (for worker and employer)
Responsibility of the employers' organizations:

• take initiatives to develop sectoral catalogues

• organize practical input with some of your members for the form and content of the sectoral catalogue

• communicate with your members if an assessed catalogue is available (leaflets, websites, weekly)

• organize sectoral advising to individual companies to take the measures needed

• organize an update after some years, in identifying priority risks and developing current effective means and methods
Example of glasshouse horticulture

Risks:

- in using plant protections methods|pesticides
- in the field of safety (working with electricity, fork-lift trucks)
- in physical load
- in organization of work (working with young people, tasks rotation systems)

- See the website: www.agroarbo.nl