

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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Agenda Item 6

CRD 5

September 2016

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE

## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

28<sup>th</sup> Session  
Washington DC, United States of America,  
12 – 16 September 2016

Comments on

DISCUSSION PAPER ON STANDARDISATION OF DRY AND DRIED PRODUCE

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY:

KENYA, NIGERIA, THAILAND

### **KENYA**

**AGENDA 6: DISCUSSION PAPER ON STANDARDIZATION OF DRY AND DRIED PRODUCE.**

*a) Full revision of the Standards for Pistachio Nuts;*

*b) Revision of the following Sections of the Standard for Dates:*

*b1. 2.2 Varietal Types*

*b2. 2.5. Size Classification*

*b3. 3.2.3 Allowance for Defects*

*c) Revision of the following Sections of the Standard for Raisins:*

*c1. 2.3 Styles (or Forms) “a” and “b”*

*c2 3.2.2. Minimum Quality Requirements “a”*

*c2 3.2.4. Allowances for Defects*

*d) Evaluation if the Standards for Dates and Raisins could be simplified and grouped into more horizontal standard; e) Evaluation if the Standard for Pistachio Nuts could be simplified and set as a frame for the incorporation of other tree nuts such as Brazil nuts to function as a grouped horizontal standard.*

### **COMMENT**

*We accept the revision of the dry and dried produce mentioned above for the three products namely Dates, Raisins , Pistachio Nuts among others*

### **NIGERIA**

Nigeria commends the eWG chaired by Brazil for reassessing the conclusions and recommendations of the discussion paper, and evaluating the provisions of the remaining dry and dried products standards that might need revision.

1. Nigeria supports the recommendation to revise the Dates and Pistachio Nuts Standards as individual Standards.
2. Nigeria also supports the establishment of eWG for both standards.

**THAILAND**

Thailand appreciates the efforts made by eWG chaired by Brazil. It provides helpful information to support the decision making on work priorities of the remaining dried and dried produce standards.

Generally, Thailand supports the recommendations of eWG that standards for Pitachio Nuts, Dates and Raisins need to be revised. However, taking into account the conclusion of the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia that agreed to recommend interest member to propose work on dried longan within the framework of the Electronic Working Group on Dry and Dried Produce established by CCPFV, Thailand, therefore would like to propose that revision of standards for Dates and Raisins should be simplified and grouped into horizontal standard for dried fruits to facilitate the inclusion of other dried fruits available in international trade, especially dried longan in the standard.

Thailand has prepared a discussion paper on development of new work on standard for Dried Longan for consideration as attached.

## DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CODEX STANDARD FOR DRIED LONGAN

(Prepared by Thailand)

### Background

1. At the 27<sup>th</sup> session of CCPFV (September 2014), the Delegation of Brazil introduced the discussion paper on standardisation of dry and dried produce (CX/PFV 14/27/11). The committee noted that the conclusions and recommendations concerning the approach that could be taken for the standardisation of dry and dried produce in CCPFV should be considered in the framework of the discussion of status of work on the review of remaining individual Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables for future prioritisation of work areas (Agenda Item 10). The Committee agreed to establish an electronic working group, chaired by Brazil and working in English only, to reassess conclusions of the discussion paper and evaluate provisions of remaining dry and dried products standards that might need revision. The conclusions and recommendations of the discussion paper would provide information to the Committee to assist in future decisions on work priorities.
2. Under Agenda Item 10, the Committee considered the paper CX/PFV 14/27/12 introduced by the Codex Secretariat. However, in view of time constraints, the work on review of remaining individual Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables has not yet been prioritised.
3. Since the reestablishment of the Committee in 1998, CCPFV has not yet reviewed Codex standards for dry and dried produce. The table below shows the pending work on existing individual Codex standards for dry and dried produce (Fruits / Vegetables)

**Table1:** Pending work on Codex standards for Dry/Dried Produce (Fruits / Vegetables)

Dry and dried produce (Fruits / Vegetables)
Apricots
Fungi, dried, edible
Dates
Pistachio nuts
Raisins

### The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for ASIA

4. At the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of CCASIA (November 2014). The Delegation of Thailand introduced the discussion paper (CRD11) proposing new work on the development of a regional standard for dried longan. The Coordinating Committee agreed to recommend interested members to propose work on dried longan within the framework of the CCPFV EWG on dry and dried produce and, in case there is no support in CCPFV, to prepare a discussion paper and project document for consideration at the next CCASIA.

### An overview of dried longan

5. Longan, *Euphoria longana* Lam. (syn. *Dimocarpus longan* Lour.) is a small tropical fruit that closely resembles lychee, both in terms of taste and appearance. Longan is an aromatic, delicious and fairly sweet fresh fruit. The fruit is either round or oval with a translucent pulp and contains one single black seed. Fresh longan fruit appears leathery and light brown in color. When dried, the fruit becomes golden color and has a unique flavor. This fruit is believed to have originated in either the area between India and Burma or in China. However, it is now grown in various parts of the world such as Thailand, Sri Lanka, South India, South China, several Southeastern Asian countries as well as Australia.

6. Longan is very popular as it has a lot of health benefits. The longan fruit is a rich source of many vitamins, minerals and other nutrients, such as carbohydrate, proteins, amino acids, vitamins B1, B2, B3, C, phosphorus, potassium, and adenine. It is also a good source of dietary fiber. Most of these nutrients are well preserved after dehydration process. Consuming dried longan fruit is presumably help sleepless, reduce fatigue, calm the nervous system etc. It is believed among the Chinese people that longan is a potent tonic herb.

7. Longan is mostly consumed fresh. It can also be processed to canned, frozen or dried product. The most common form of processing is drying. Longan is normally consumed directly or used to prepare food, desserts, juice etc. The dried longan is also eaten as snack in many countries as China, Thailand, Korea and Singapore.

8. Currently, there are two main types of dried longan traded internationally i.e. dried flesh, and dried whole fruit either with or without seed (Figure 1 and 2) Both types are processed without addition of any ingredient, namely sugar or syrup. The flesh of dried longan may be golden, dark brown or black depending on the processing techniques. Codex has established a commodity standard for fresh longan in 1999 (Codex Stan 220 -1999).

**Figure 1: Dried longan flesh**



**Figure 2: Dried whole longan**

### Relevance of dried longan in international trade

9. Mostly, dried longan is produced in Thailand, China and Vietnam. World production of longan is an average of 144,000 tonnes per year. The major import countries are China, Myanmar, Vietnam, Lao PDR and Korea. The main importers outside Asia are North America and Australia. Statistical data showed a slight increase in export value of dried longan from approximately 118 million US Dollars in 2012 to 169 million US Dollars in 2015 (Table 2).

**Table 2** Market for dried longan in 2012-2015

Quantity: Tons, Value: 1,000 US dollars

Country	2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
CHINA	59,951	69,350	60,960	73,175	34,731	44,126	12,761	21,189
VIETNAM	56,163	37,512	75,131	45,778	154,862	114,333	91,083	125,421
HONG KONG	352	2,559	290	2,114	448	3,492	528	2,998
MYANMAR	4,170	2,858	2,723	1,208	5,534	6,505	4,718	15,001



S. KOREA	150	675	194	961	122	648	238	1,208
SINGAPORE	107	783	108	839	173	1,472	119	1,099
LAOS	3,838	1,821	300	443	469	86	240	104
CANADA	45	317	56	297	36	274	37	374

AUSTRALIA	27	241	25	252	16	173	16	184
U.S.A.	80	649	23	187	58	514	52	552
TAIWAN	114	142	100	166	51	75	128	191
VATICAN CITY STATE	3,316	442	195	143	0	0	66	54
MALAYSIA	62	243	80	105	121	353	196	605
NETHERLANDS	22	40	18	39	18	50	0	2
SPAIN	10	6	10	26	0	0	0	0
NEW ZEALAND	0	2	9	21	0	3	0	5
FRANCE	5	26	2	17	2	19	2	19
JAPAN	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0
AUSTRIA	0	3	1	13	0	0	0	0
U. ARAB EMIRATES	4	14	3	12	4	8	27	43
OTHERS	840	542	1.987	10	21.458	51	516.118	517
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>129,255</b>	<b>118,223</b>	<b>140,232</b>	<b>125,821</b>	<b>196,666</b>	<b>172,183</b>	<b>110,729</b>	<b>169,566</b>

Source: The Customs Department, Thailand. Available at [www.customs.go.th](http://www.customs.go.th)

### Importance of the development of Codex standard for dried longan

10. Longan can be either dried whole with or without seed, or dried flesh. Hot air drying is commonly used for the production of "semi-dried" or "dried" longans. The moisture content is between 13% and 20%. Although drying is a safe and economical way to preserve food that the microorganisms which cause food spoilage and food safety are unable to grow and multiply in the absence of sufficient water, its effectiveness depends on the right temperature and flow rate during the operation and the hygienic control to avoid the adverse effect to human health. Dried longan with appropriate low moisture content can be stored at ambient temperature for long period without deterioration; whereas semi-dried longan, with higher percentage of moisture content, requires refrigeration during storage and transportation to ensure quality and safety of the products. At present, the process of drying fruits including longan is not only by heat but also freeze-drying, which the latter gives finished produce a crispy texture.

11. Also sizing and grading of whole dried longan are very important. The prices for each grade and size are very distinctive, approximately 50% difference. Therefore uniform sizing and grading are necessary to prevent dispute in international trade. Another concern in trade of the dried longan is the sulphite allergy. Normally, dried whole longan fruits are free from food additives, especially sulphites, however, some types of dried flesh of longan, like other dried fruits, can contain extremely high amounts of sulphites to prevent discoloration and reduce spoilage. Drying also concentrates natural salicylates, in some kind of fruits, which can affect people with asthma and sulphites sensitivity.

12. The proposed new work is aimed to establish appropriate standard and criteria on food safety, essential quality, hygiene and labelling to be used to determining the risk of non-compliance of product and describing the uniform quality and sizing of products in the marketplace supplemented by method of inspection. This would result in the introduction of a safe, fair and marketable quality of dried longan and minimizing potential impediments to international trade.

### Recommendation

13. The Committee is invited to support the recommendation for new work on the development of Dried Longan Standard. The Project Document for Proposal of New Work for the elaboration of standard for Dried Longan is provided in the Appendix of this document.

14. According to the recommendation of the Electronic Working Group on Dry and Dried Produce (EWG-DDP) established by CCPFV, chaired by Brazil, proposed CCPFV to consider the revision of standards for Dates and Raisins and to evaluate if the Standards for Dates and Raisins could be simplified and grouped into more horizontal standard as presented in document CX/PFV 16/28/6. Furthermore, Codex Alimentarius Commission has made a recommendation to move towards simplified horizontal rather than detailed individual commodity standards where possible. Therefore, if CCPFV decides to revise standards for Dates and Raisins by simplifying and grouping them into a horizontal standard for Dried Fruits, the Committee will be invited to support the proposal to develop a horizontal standard for Dried Fruits with dried longan as one of its annexes.

**PROJECT DOCUMENT****PROPOSAL FOR NEW WORK ON A STANDARD FOR DRIED LONGAN****1. Purposes and scope of the Standard**

The purpose of this work is to establish a worldwide standard with the aim of protecting the consumer's health and ensure fair practices in international trade.

The scope of the standard covers dried longan obtained from fresh longan fruit of *Dimocarpus longan Lour* of Sapindaceae which offers for direct consumption. Currently, there are two main types of dried longan traded internationally i.e. dried flesh, and dried whole fruit with or without seed. Both types are without addition of any ingredients, namely sugars or syrups

**2. Relevance and timeliness**

Longan is grown in many countries e.g. Thailand, China, Sri Lanka, South India, and Australia. Since longan provides a lot of health benefits, it is traded globally, not only limited to Asian region. Hence, it is justified to elaborate an international standard covering the safety, quality, hygiene and labeling for dried longan to be used as an agreed reference in international trade.

**3. Main aspects to be covered**

The proposed draft standard will address the general requirements for each type of dried longan. The relevant requirements include safety and quality criteria, uniformity of size, allowance for defects, food additives, contaminants, hygiene, weight and measures, labelling and method of analysis and sampling.

**4. Assessment against the Criteria for the establishment of work priorities****General criterion**

Apart from food safety, international trading of dried longan is done according to its quality and size. An international standard for dried longan will greatly assist in removing obstacles to international trade and to protect the consumers from fraudulent practices.

**Criteria applicable to commodities**

(a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries

Mostly, dried longan is produced in Thailand, China and Vietnam. World production of longan is an average of 144,000 tonnes per year. The major import countries are China, Myanmar, Vietnam, Lao PDR and Korea. The main importers outside Asia are North America and Australia. Statistical data showed a slight increase in export value of dried longan from approximately 118 million US Dollars in 2012 to 169 million US Dollars in 2015 (Table 1).

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Source: The Customs Department, Thailand. Available at [www.customs.go.th](http://www.customs.go.th)

(b) Diversification of national legislation and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade

Dried longan is traded according to quality and size. The prices for each grade and size are very distinctive, approximately 50% difference. Therefore sizing and grading agreed between trading partners are necessary to prevent trade dispute in international trade. Thailand and some countries in Asia have national standards (safety, quality and grading standards) for dried longan. ISO and UNECE, on the other hand, do not have standard for dried longan. This new work will assist in developing a harmonised standard for dried longan.

(c) International or regional market potential

Dried longans are often used in Chinese cuisine and Chinese sweet dessert soups. Chinese foods are also becoming more and more popular. Consequently, this significantly contribute to increased consumption of dried longan worldwide. Currently, dried longan has been exported from Thailand and Vietnam to many countries in all continents.



**(d) Amenability of the commodity to standardization**

The characteristics of dried longan, packaging and labelling allow the establishment of parameters for the harmonisation of standards. The availability of some national standards will also facilitate the development of an international standard under the CCPFV, which is an appropriate forum where the consumer point of view and requirements of importing country can be incorporated to ensure quality and safety of the products.

**(e) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards**

Currently, there is no international standard for dried longan to help consumer in making an informed decision about the product in the market. The proposed standard will address both issues relating to food safety and commercial specifications such as quality grading and sizing. In addition, semi-dried longan with high moisture content, which requires refrigeration during storage and transportation to ensure its quality and safety, is becoming a popular product. Therefore, the standard requirements and labelling information will be of great value to consumer.

**(f) Number of commodities which would need separate standards including whether raw, semi-processed or processed**

A single standard for dried longan will cover all types of dried longan traded worldwide. In case CCPFV decides to revise standards for Dates and Raisins by simplifying and grouping them into a horizontal standard for Dried Fruits, it could also encompass Dried Longan as one of its annexes.

**(g) Work already undertaken by other international organisations in this field and/or suggested by the relevant international intergovernmental body (ies)**

This proposed new work does not duplicate work undertaken by other international organizations.

**5. Relevance to the Codex strategic objectives**

This proposal is in line with Strategic Goal 1 – Establish international food standards that address current and emerging food issues and its corresponding objectives of the Codex Alimentarius Commission Strategic Plan 2014-2019. The proposed new work will certainly provide an agreed essential requirements and specifications for dried longan that contribute to food safety and fair practices in the food trade.

**6. Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents**

The proposal for a standard for dried longan can be developed as an annex for specific fruit of the Codex horizontal standard for Dried fruits which is under consideration by the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables.

**7. Identification of any requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice**

No need for expert scientific advice is foreseen.

**8. Identification of any need for technical input to the Standard from external bodies so that this can be planned for**

None.

**9. Proposed date for adoption at Step 5, and the proposed date for adoption by the Commission; the time frame for developing a Standard should not normally exceed four year**

Consideration of the proposal for new work	2016
Adoption at step 5 or 5/8	2018
Adoption at step 8	2020