

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of  
the United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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## STANDARD FOR OATS

CXS 201-1995

Adopted in 1995. Amended in 2019.

## 1. SCOPE

This Standard applies to oat grains as defined in Section 2 intended for processing for direct human consumption. This Standard does not apply to *Avena nuda* (hulless oats).

## 2. DESCRIPTION

Oats are defined as the grains of *Avena sativa* and *Avena byzantina*.

## 3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

### 3.1 Quality factors – general

3.1.1 Oats shall be safe and suitable for processing for human consumption.

3.1.2 Oats shall be free from abnormal flavours, odours, living insects and mites.

### 3.2 Quality and safety factors – specific

3.2.1 **Moisture content** 14.0% m/m max

Lower moisture limits should be required for certain destinations in relation to the climate, duration of transport and storage.

#### 3.2.2 Ergot

*Sclerotium* of the fungus *Claviceps purpurea* 0.05% m/m max

#### 3.2.3 Toxic or noxious seeds

The products covered by the provisions of this Standard shall be free from the following toxic or noxious seeds in amounts which may represent a hazard to human health.

- *Crotalaria* (*Crotalaria* spp.), Corn cockle (*Agrostemma githago* L.), Castor bean. (*Ricinus communis* L.), Jimson weed (*Datura* spp.), and other seeds that are commonly recognized as harmful to health.

#### 3.2.4 Filth

Impurities of animal origin (including dead insects) 0.1% m/m max

3.2.5 **Other organic extraneous matter** 1.5% m/m max

which is defined as organic components other than edible grains of cereals (foreign seeds, stems, etc.).

3.2.6 **Inorganic extraneous matter** 0.5% m/m max

which is defined as any inorganic component (stones, dust, etc.).

## 4. CONTAMINANTS

### 4.1 Heavy metals

Oats shall be free from heavy metals in amounts which may represent a hazard to human health.

### 4.2 Pesticide residues

Oats shall comply with those maximum residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

## 5. HYGIENE

5.1 It is recommended that the product covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969), and other Codes of Practice recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission which are relevant to this commodity.

5.2 To the extent possible in good manufacturing practice, the cleaned product shall be free from objectionable matter.

- 5.3** When tested by appropriate methods of sampling and examination, the product, after cleaning and sorting, and before further processing:
- shall be free from micro-organisms in amounts which may represent a hazard to health;
  - shall be free from parasites which may represent a hazard to health; and
  - shall not contain any substance originating from micro-organisms including fungi in amounts which may represent a hazard to health.

## **6. PACKAGING**

- 6.1** Oats shall be packaged in containers which will safeguard the hygienic, nutritional, technological, and organoleptic qualities of the product.
- 6.2** The containers, including packaging material, shall be made of substances which are safe and suitable for their intended use. They should not impart any toxic substance or undesirable odour or flavour to the product.
- 6.3** When the product is packaged in sacks, these must be clean, sturdy, and strongly sewn or sealed.

## **7. LABELLING**

In addition to the requirements of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985), the following specific provisions apply:

### **7.1 Name of the product**

The name of the product to be shown on the label shall be "oats".

### **7.2 Labelling of non-retail containers**

Information for non-retail containers shall either be given on the container or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the product, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer shall appear on the container. However, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided that such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

## **8. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING**

See relevant Codex texts on methods of analysis and sampling.

## ANNEX

In those instances where more than one factor limit and/or method of analysis is given it is strongly recommended that users specify the appropriate limit and method of analysis.

Factor/Description	Limit	Method of analysis
<b>1 Minimum test weight:</b> The weight of a hundred litre volume of oats expressed as kilograms per hectolitre.	At least 46 kg/hl	The test weight shall be the weight per ISO 7971-1986 or any other equipment giving equivalent results expressed as kilograms per hectolitre as determined on a test portion of the original sample
<b>2 Hull-less and broken kernels</b> (kernels with no hulls and broken of any size).	5% m/m max	To be developed
<b>3 Edible grains other than oats</b> (whole or identifiably broken).	3% m/m max	To be developed
<b>4 Damaged kernels</b> (including pieces of kernels that show visible deterioration due to moisture, weather, disease, insects, mould, heating, fermentation, sprouting or other causes).	3% m/m max	To be developed
<b>5 Wild oats:</b> <i>Avena fatua</i> or <i>Avena sterilis</i> .	0.2% m/m max	To be developed
<b>6 Insect bored kernels:</b> kernels which have been visibly bored or tunnelled by insects.	0.5% m/m max	To be developed
<b>7 Blemished grains</b> , i.e. grains with stained hulls due to the action of climatic factors.	To be decided	To be developed