



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
CODEX COMMITTEE ON SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS**

**Second Session**

**Goa, India, 14 – 18 September 2015**

**PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR THYME**

**Comments at Step 3**

**Comments of Argentina, Chile, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Kenya, Mali,  
Mauritania, Mexico, Niger and Senegal**

**ARGENTINA**

**1. Point 1. SCOPE**

This Standard applies to dried leaves and flowers of any wild or commercially cultivated variety (cultivar) of thyme (*Thymus* spp.) of the *Lamiaceae* family offered for industrial food production and for direct consumption, including for catering purposes or for repackaging if required. It does not apply to the product when indicated as being intended for further processing.

**Justification:** Argentina considers that the reference to wild or cultivated species should be removed from the SCOPE, in order to honor the format adopted for these standards and place a point 2.3 on the matter:

**2.3 - VARIETAL TYPES**

All wild species and varieties or cultivars and hybrids belonging to genus *Thymus* which are suitable for processing.

**Justification:** Unlike the other standards addressed by this committee, thyme does not include point 2.3 Varietal types. Instead, in scope for application, it says that may be wild and commercially cultivated species. Given that for oregano to honor the format has been requested, we consider that for thyme should be the same.

**2. Point 2:** It is suggested adding a paragraph 2.3 on varietal types, as follows:

**3- Point 3.2.1.** Argentina suggests keeping the sentence and deleting square brackets in point 3.2.1 regarding color.

**4- Point 3.2.3** Chemical and physical characteristics. Argentina proposes to honor the original proposal values: **Total ash: 14.**

As for "Extraneous and foreign matters:" **1% for extraneous vegetal matter and 2% for foreign matter** is suggested.

**Justification:** ISO standard values refer to extraneous matters and propose 1%, but include those that in the document we call foreign, and since the latter jeopardize hygiene even further, they must have a tighter value.

**CHILE**

The proposed second draft standard for thyme has been revised and the following comments have arisen from it.

**i. Specific Comments**

In 2.1 Product Definition, we believe the definition used in letter a) is ambiguous, since it considers the concept of "having reached appropriate development for processing" without defining it. This is subject to interpretations; therefore we suggest defining it with clear parameters.

In Table 1, letter d) Volatile oils, we believe the unit of measurement should be % volume/mass, such as ml/100 g.

## COTE D'IVOIRE, GABON, MALI, MAURITANIA AND SENEGAL

General comment

We support works for developing a standard for thyme, taking into consideration, the comments on the Quality Factors as outlined below.

The standard shall define the characteristics in terms of quality and grading required for facilitation of trade of thyme.

### 3.2 Quality Factors

#### 3.2.1 Odor and flavor [and color]

i) We propose separating the “Color” into a separate heading. Color should be separate as it is a distinct quality parameter that is not part of the sensory properties.

Proposed Change: Dried thyme shall have a characteristic color **ranging from greenish ash to brownish ash**, depending on the source. This gives a clearer description of the color of Dried Thyme.

#### 3.2.2 Infestation

The sentence should be corrected to read: “Dried Thyme **should** be free from dead insects, insect fragments and rodents’ contamination”. Delete the rest of the sentence... “visible to the naked eye...”

It is preferable to delete the rest of the sentence for avoiding any ambiguity in the standard.

#### Table 1 : Chemical & Physical Conditions for Dried Thyme Foreign Matter

**We propose the deletion of “Practically Absent” included in the table** and maintain a specific limit as “% foreign matter”, as the case may be.

Practically absent is not a measurable value. The “% foreign matter” is an important quality parameter for promoting better quality thyme.

## DIJBOUTI, ETHIOPIA AND NIGER

We support the proposal to develop a standard for Cumin taking into consideration, the comments on the Quality Factors as outlined below.

### 3.2 Quality Factors

#### 3.2.1 Odor and Flavour [and Color]

Propose the separation of ‘Color’ from the present group into a distinct heading.

**Proposed Change:** Dried Thyme shall have a characteristic color **ranging from greenish ash to brownish ash** depending on the source.

Rationale: Color should be separate as it is a distinct quality parameter and is not part of sensory properties and this gives a clearer description of the color for Dried Thyme.

#### 3.2.2 Infestation

Sentence should be corrected to read: ‘Dried Thyme **shall** be free from live insects and practically free from dead insects, insect fragments and rodents’ contamination’. And delete the rest of the sentence... ‘visible to the naked eye...’

It is better to delete the rest of the sentence in order not to introduce ambiguity into the standard.

#### Table 1: Chemical & Physical Requirement for Dried Thyme Foreign Matter

We propose the **deletion of ‘Practically Absent’ included in the table** and maintain specific limit as ‘% Foreign Matter’ where applicable

Practically Absent is not measurable. The ‘% Foreign Matter’ is important Quality parameter for promote better quality of thyme

## GAMBIA

Gambia supports the proposal to develop a standard for thyme taking into consideration, the comments on the Quality Factors as outlined below.

i) Gambia proposes the separation of ‘Color’ from the present group into a distinct heading.

ii) Proposed Change: Dried Thyme shall have a characteristic color ranging from greenish ash to brownish

ash depending on the source

Sentence should be corrected to read: 'Dried Thyme shall be free from live insects and practically free from dead insects, insect fragments and rodents' contamination'. And delete the rest of the sentence... 'visible to the naked eye...'

We propose the deletion of 'Practically Absent' included in the table and maintain specific limit as '% Foreign Matter' where applicable.

## RATIONALE

The standard will provide the quality characteristics and grading necessary to facilitate trade in Thyme.

i) Color should be separate as it is a distinct quality parameter and is not part of sensory properties.

ii) This gives a clearer description of the color for Dried Thyme.

It is better to delete the rest of the sentence in order not to introduce ambiguity into the standard.

## KENYA

### SCOPE

This Standard applies to dried leaves and flowers of any wild or ~~commercially~~ cultivated variety (cultivar) of thyme (*Thymus spp.*) of the *Lamiaceae* family offered for ~~industrial-food PROCESSING production~~ and for direct consumption, ~~including for catering purposes~~ or for repackaging if required. It does not apply to the product when ~~indicated as being~~ intended for further processing.

### COMMENT

**We would like to submit the modified scope as indicated above**

### SCOPE

*This Standard applies to dried leaves and flowers of any wild or cultivated variety (cultivar) of thyme (Thymus spp.) of the Lamiaceae family offered for food processing and for direct consumption, or for repackaging if required. It does not apply to the product when intended for further processing.*

### DESCRIPTION

#### 2.1 PRODUCT DEFINITION

Dried thyme is the product: ~~(a)~~ prepared from leaves and flowers of *Thymus spp.* having reached appropriate development for processing; and

~~(a) — processed in an appropriate manner, undergoing operations such as cleaning, drying, rubbing, milling and sifting.~~

#### COMMENT ON 2.1

*Dried thyme is the product prepared from leaves and flowers of Thymus spp. having reached appropriate development for processing.*

### STYLES

#### COMMENT:

**We propose to remove the sentence (b) under clause 2.1 product definition to read as follows:**

*Dried Thyme may be processed in an appropriate manner, undergoing operations such as cleaning, drying, rubbing, milling and sifting.*

Dried thyme may be offered in one of the following styles:

- a) Whole: intact leaves and flowers.
- b) Crushed/rubbed: crushed/rubbed leaves and flowers.
- c) Ground/powdered: powdered leaves and flowers.

#### 3.2.1 Odour and flavor [and colour]

#### COMMENT:

*Dried thyme shall have a characteristic odour, **colour** and flavour according to the chemical components of the volatile oil (such as thymol, carvacrol, and linalool), which can vary depending on geo-climatic factors/conditions. Dried thyme shall be free from any foreign odour or flavour and especially from*

mustiness.

**COMMENTS**

We propose to delete the sentence in square brackets for it is taken care of geo-climatic factors/conditions of the product

~~[Dried thyme shall have a characteristic colour varying from green ash to brownish gray depending on the source.]~~

**3.2.3 Chemical and Physical Characteristics**

Dried thyme shall comply with the chemical and physical requirements specified in Table 1.

**COMMENT**

**Moisture:** we propose the Maximum limit of moisture to be 12 to be aligned with other codex standards.

**MEXICO**

<p><b>3.2 QUALITY FACTORS</b></p> <p>3.2.1 Odour and flavor [and colour]</p> <p>.....[Dried thyme shall have a characteristic colour varying from green ash to brownish gray depending on the source.]</p>	<p>Mexico supports this section.</p>								
<p><b>3.2.3 Chemical and Physical Characteristics</b></p> <p>Dried thyme shall comply with the chemical and physical requirements specified in Table 1.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Parameter</th> <th>Requirement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>% mass fraction (dry basis)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>a) Moisture</td> <td>≤ 12,0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) Total ash</td> <td>≤ [12,0] [14,0]</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Parameter	Requirement		% mass fraction (dry basis)	a) Moisture	≤ 12,0	b) Total ash	≤ [12,0] [14,0]	<p>Mexico has national standard <b>(NMX-F-452-1983)</b> where requirements are established as follow:</p> <p><b>(a) moisture:</b> mass fraction percentage (dry basis) is ≤9,0%</p> <p><b>(b) total ash</b> mass fraction percentage (dry basis) is ≤11,0%</p>
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a) Moisture	≤ 12,0								
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