

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - Fax: (+39) 06 5705 4593 - E-mail: codex@fao.org - www.codexalimentarius.net

Agenda Item 3(b)

CX/FFV 11/16/6-Add.1
April 2011

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

16th Session
Mexico City, Mexico, 2 – 6 May 2011

Comments submitted on the Draft Codex Standard for Tree Tomatoes by: Costa Rica, European Union, Kenya and the United States of America.

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica welcomes the opportunity to express their support to the Draft Standard for Tree Tomatoes.

EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union and its Member States (EUMS) would like to thank Colombia for leading the work on developing the standard for tree tomatoes. The EUMS wish to make the following comments on the draft standard.

1. Definition of produce

The botanical name has changed and should read "*Solanum betaceum* Cav." Source: www.ars-grin.gov.

2. Provisions concerning Sizing

The EUMS favour option A with the two tables.

Rationale: This option would introduce the necessary level of harmonisation for international trade in tree tomatoes while at the same time allowing flexibility to choose alternative methods for sizing, i.e. by diameter or by weight or count of fruits.

Modify the first sentence as follows:

Size is determined by the maximum diameter of the equatorial section or the weight of each fruit or count of fruits, in accordance with **one of** the following tables.

Rationale: If the proposed modification is not made, it could be understood that both tables should be applied at the same time.

Add a new paragraph below the tables:

For fruit sized by count, the difference in size should be consistent with one of the tables above.

Rationale: The proposed paragraph gives useful additional guidance for sizing by count.

Section 4.2 Size Tolerances

Modify the provision as follows:

"For all classes: 10% by number or weight of tree tomatoes corresponding to the size immediately above and/or below that indicated on the package **not meeting the requirements as regards sizing is allowed.**"

Rationale: The text as it currently stands does not allow any fruit that is much smaller or larger than the size groups immediately above and/or below. This means that a lot with one or two very small or very large fruits in the sample would have to be rejected although the 10 % tolerance might not yet be exhausted.

6.1 Consumer Packages

Add a new section:

6.1.2 Preparation Instructions

A statement indicating the following is required:

The skin of unripe tree tomatoes should not be eaten and should be removed prior to using the fruit.

Rationale: According to information available to the EUMS, the skin of unripe tree tomatoes may contain toxic substances. Although the skin is not usually eaten due to its bitter taste, it could be appropriate to ensure consumer protection by labeling the above advice on consumer packages.

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

Modify the indents as follows:

- Class;
- Size **expressed as diameter or weight range** (~~size code or diameter or weight range or count~~);
- **Size code or count (optional)**
- Net weight (optional).
- **Preparation instructions (see Section 6.1.2)**

Rationale: The proposed new text provides specific information through the size range. All codes and counts can only be additional and optional indications.

KENYA

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

A) Size is determined by the maximum diameter of the equatorial section or the weight of each fruit or count of fruits, in accordance with the following tables:

Comments:

Size code	Diameter (in millimeters)
A	≥61
B	60 – 55
C	54 – 51
D	50 – 46
E	≤45

Size code	Weight (in grams)	Number of fruit (count per single-layer tray)
1	> 125	< 28
2	101 – 125	28/30/33
3	75 – 100	33/36
4	< 75	39/42

B) Tree tomatoes may be sized by diameter, weight or count.

When sized by diameter, size is determined by the maximum diameter of the equatorial section.]

[4.2 SIZE TOLERANCES

For all classes, ten percent by number or weight of tree tomatoes corresponding to the size immediately above and/or below that indicated on the package.]

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States welcomes the opportunity to submit the following comments on the proposed draft revised Codex Standard for Tree Tomatoes (CX/FFV 11/16/6) at step 3.

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

2.1.1 The tree tomatoes [must have been carefully picked and] have reached an appropriate degree of development and ripeness¹ account being taken of the characteristics of the variety and the area in which they are grown.

Comment: The U.S. reiterates that the bracketed text [must have been carefully picked] should be deleted from the standard due to the following reasons:

- I. The Definition of Produce clearly states the standard applies “to be supplied fresh to the consumer after preparation and packaging”; therefore harvest practices are excluded from the standard;
- II. During application of the standard it is impossible to differentiate each cause of physical damage to the fruit; and
- III. Codex FFV standards do not include handling requirement for harvest, post harvest, or transportation.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Comment: The United States recommends that this section be revised to reflect that tree tomatoes can also be sized by count. In part “B” sizing by weight, we recommend the deletion of the third column titled **(Number of fruit (count per single-layer tray))**. The requirement of this column is overly restrictive – as it mandates that only trays with the count ranges indicated can be used in trade. Additionally, point c) sizing by count should be included. In view of the points raised, the United States proposes that this section be rewritten as follows:

[3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING]

Tree tomatoes may be sized by diameter, weight, or count.

- A) When sized by diameter, size is determined by the maximum diameter of the equatorial section in accordance with the following table:

Size code	Diameter (in millimeters)
A	≥61
B	60 – 55
C	54 – 51
D	50 – 46
E	≤45

- B) When sized by weight, size is determined by the weight of each individual fruit in accordance with the following table:

Size code	Weight (in grams)
1	> 125
2	101 – 125
3	75 – 100
4	< 75

- C) When sized by count, size is determined by the number of individual fruit per package.

¹ The maturity of the tree tomatoes can be gauged visually from its external coloring and confirmed by examining flesh content and using the iodine test.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 UNIFORMITY

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only tree tomatoes of the same origin, variety, quality, colour, and size. The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

Comment: This section of the standard needs to make allowances for variations in the tree tomatoes' skin color characteristics. Tree tomato skin color can be solid (deep purple, blood red, orange, red and/or yellow) or striped (faint or dark longitudinal stripes). Since the same tree produces both solid colored and/or striped fruit, this section should indicate allowance for striped fruit with a solid ground/surface color among solid colored fruit.