

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



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Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 6

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

Second Session

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PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR OREGANO

Comments at Step 3

Comments of Cameroon, Costa Rica, Japan, Sudan and Thailand

CAMEROON

Section 1: Scope

This standard applies to dried leaves and flowers of species or hybrids of the genus *Origanum* L from the Lamiaceae family...for direct human consumption

Section 2: Description

2.2: Styles

a) ~~Whole leaf~~

~~Rationale~~-Whole leaf may be difficult to handle in dried form

b) Crushed or rubbed leaves...that are 100% retained by 40 mesh ~~retained sieve of a normal aperture size of 500µm~~

c) Ground or powdered leaves...that will pass completely through a 40 mesh ~~that will pass completely through a sieve of nominal aperture size of 500µ~~

Section 3: Essential Composition and Quality Factors

3.2.2 Dried oregano shall have a characteristic odour and flavour (fragrant, warm, unpungent and bitter flavor) ~~varying according to the chemical strain of the main components of the volatile oil~~

Rationale: It is not necessary to specify that it may vary with the chemical strain of the main components of volatile oil.

3.3: Classification of Defectives

A lot ~~container~~ that fails to meet one or more of the applicable quality

Section 5: Contaminants

5.1: Advice may be sought from the CCFF but it is better to establish the maximum contaminant levels for this product.

5.2: The product ~~products~~ covered by this standard shall comply...

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica supports the advancing of Proposed Draft Standard for Oregano.

JAPAN

First of all, Japan appreciates Argentina's dedicated work as the chair of the electronic working group on the proposed draft for Oregano and also having the opportunity to provide specific comments on the draft standard.

In general, Japan supports the development of this standard in view of protecting consumer's profit and ensuring fair food trade, but we would like to express our concern about quality factors as presented in **underlined/bold font** for new texts and strikethrough font for deletion below.

(2) Specific Comments

Japan suggests replacing values in section 3.2.4 Chemical and physical characteristics as follows.

3.2.4 Chemical and physical characteristics

3.2.4.1 Chemical characteristics

[Whole leaf,] crushed or rubbed/ground/powdered oregano shall comply with the chemical requirements as specified in Table 1.

Table 1

PARAMETERS	Requirements for [Whole or] Crushed/Rubbed styles			Requirements for Ground/Powdered styles		
	Extra	Class/Grade I	Class/Grade II	Extra	Class/Grade I	Class/Grade II
Moisture content (m/m,) maximum	11	12	12	11	12	12
Total ash (m/m, dry basis) maximum	9	10	10 [12]	9, [10]	10, [12]	10, [12]
Acid insoluble ash (m/m, dry basis) maximum	1.2 [1.5]	2	2	1.2, [1.5]	2, [2.5]	2, [3]
Volatile oil ml/100 g (dry basis) minimum	2,5	1.2 [1.5], [2.00]	1.0 [≤ 1.2], [1.75]	1.2, [1.5], [1.75]	[1], 1.1, [1.5], [1.50]	[0.8], 1, [1.1]

3.2.4.2 Physical characteristics

[Whole leaf,] crushed or rubbed/ground/powdered oregano shall comply with the physical requirements as specified in Table 2.

Table 2

	PARAMETERS	Requirements for [Whole or] Crushed/Rubbed styles			Requirements for Ground/ Powdered styles		
		Extra	Class/Grade I	Class/Grade II	Extra	Class/Grade I	Class/Grade II
1	Extraneous matter ^(a) (maximum % mass fraction)	1	2	2	1	2	2
2	Foreign parts of other non-toxic plants (maximum % mass fraction)	2	2, [3]	2, [4]	2	2	2
3	Non-plant foreign parts (maximum % mass fraction)	0.1 [4]	0.1 [4]	0.1 [4]	1	1	1
4	Oregano powder ([smaller than 40 mesh/500 μm] maximum) (%)	1, [5]	2, [10]	4 [2], [20]	N/A	N/A	N/A

Japan is not of the view of establishing too strict standards which lead to prevent the trade, but believes it is not appropriate to establish too lax standard from the point of view of protecting consumer's profit. Japan thinks the requirement in the proposed draft standard should set stricter values as presented above from the point of view of protecting consumer's profit. We believe our modification would be consistent with preexisting regulatory practices of some member countries including Japan.

SUDAN**1- Scope:****Comment:**

Sudan would like to change the proposed scope to read as follows:

This Standard applies to dried leaves or flower tops of Oregano (*Oreganum vulgare* L.) of family Lamiaceae, employed for food Seasoning, Culinary and food processing purposes.

It is preferable to put specific standards for *Origanum vulgare* L.

Justification:

* *Origanum vulgare* L. is the well recognized and most important species of oregano genus in the International Trade and can easily be recognized by its distinctive flavor and pungency. Other species are inferior substitute, or used as adulterant to oregano. Therefore we propose that oregano is to be identified within the scope as *oreganum vulgare* L. to avoid confusion as possible adulterant.

Contrary to other comment, oregano is widely used by industrial food processers as an antioxidant to cure rancidity in food with high fat contents. So it has industrial processing uses quite appropriate in the scope.

* The phrase; for catering purposes is not suitable because catering means delivery of food, we prefer using the phrase; food seasoning and culinary purposes; instead.

2- Description:**2.1- product definition:****Comment:**

Sudan proposed the following definition:

Dried oregano is the product obtained from leaves and flowering tops of *Oreganum vulgare* L. of family Lamiaceae.

Justification:

Internationally traded oregano is obtained for *Origanum vulgare* L.. *Origanum vulgare* L.

In trade also there is fresh form of (leaves and flowering tops)

The word Styles.**Comment:**

The word **Style** is not suitable; we propose instead the word **Form.**

Justification:

Word Style indicates distinctive characteristics of anything (product) but not different forms of the same product.

Name of the Product:**Comment:**

We propose; Dried leaves and flowering tops of Oregano.

Justification:

These are the parts in trade not the whole plant. And not powdered or grounded

Chemical and Physical Characteristics:**THAILAND**

1. We would like to propose that plants in genus Lippia should not be included in the Product Definition of Oregano. Although the flavor of plants in genus Lippia is similar to that of Origanum, other qualities may be difference. If both of these genus are specified in the same Product Definition, the genus should be clearly declare on label.

2. We would like to support to define the whole leaf as one of the oregano styles and the use of 40 mesh sieve for defining the differences between crushed/rubbed and ground/powdered oregano.

3. We would like to support to retain the phrase linked to the main chemical components of the volatile oil in Section 3.2.2. Also, we would like to add other factors that have effect on characteristic odour and flavour such as geo-climatic factors/conditions. So, the text should read as

“[varying according to the chemical strain of the main components of the volatile oil (carvacrol and/or thymol) **and geo-climatic factors/conditions.**]

4. We would like to support that Physical and Chemical Characteristic Requirements for both whole leaf and crushed/rubbed oregano could be the same. Furthermore, we would like to propose to delete Parameters: %Maximum Oregano Powder in Table 2 as there are impractical and unnecessary for trade.

We would like to propose the working group to add the analysis method for moisture content determination (ISO 939:1980) as an alternative method.