

CODEX STANDARD FOR TABLE GRAPES
(CODEX STAN 255-2007)

1. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This Standard applies to commercial varieties (cultivars) of table grapes grown from *Vitis vinifera* L., of the *Vitaceae* family, to be supplied fresh to the consumer, after preparation and packaging. Grapes for industrial processing are excluded.

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the bunches and berries must be:

- sound, produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded;
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter;
- practically free of pests and damage caused by them affecting the general appearance of the produce;
- free of abnormal external moisture, excluding condensation following removal from cold storage;
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste;
- practically free of damage caused by low and/or high temperatures.

In addition, the berries must be:

- whole;
- well formed;
- normally developed.

Pigmentation due to sun is not a defect so long as this only affects the skin of the berries.

2.1.1 The development and condition of the table grapes must be such as to enable them:

- to withstand transport and handling; and
- to arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

2.1.2 Maturity Requirements

Table grapes must be sufficiently developed and display satisfactory ripeness.

In order to satisfy this requirement, the fruit must have obtained a refractometric index of at least 16°Brix.

Fruit with a lower refractometric index are accepted provided the sugar/acid ratio is at least equal to:

- (a) 20:1 if the Brix level is greater than or equal to 12.5° and less than 14°Brix,
- (b) 18:1 if the Brix level is greater than or equal to 14° and less than 16°Brix.

2.2 CLASSIFICATION

Table Grapes are classified in three classes defined below:

2.2.1 "Extra" Class

Table grapes in this class must be of superior quality.

The bunches be characteristic of the variety in shape, development and colouring, allowing for the district in which they are grown.

The berries must be firm, firmly attached to the stalk, evenly spaced along the stalk and have their bloom virtually intact.

They must be free of defects, with the exception of very slight superficial defects, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

2.2.2 Class I

Table grapes in this class must be of good quality.

The bunches must be characteristic of the variety in shape, development and colouring, allowing for the district in which they are grown.

The berries must be firm, firmly attached to the stalk and, as far as possible, have their bloom intact. They may, however, be less evenly spaced along the stalk than in the "Extra" Class.

The following slight defects, however, may be allowed, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package:

- a slight defect in shape;
- a slight defect in colouring;
- very slight sun scorch affecting the skin only.

2.2.3 Class II

This class includes table grapes which do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified in Section 2.1 above.

The bunches may show slight defects in shape, development and colouring, provided these do not impair the essential characteristics of the variety, allowing for the district in which they are grown.

The berries must be sufficiently firm and sufficiently attached to the stalk. They may be less evenly spaced along the stalk than in Class I.

The following defects, however, may be allowed, provided the table grapes retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- defects in shape;
- defects in colouring;
- slight sun scorch affecting the skin only;
- slight bruising;
- slight skin defects.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by the weight of the bunch.

3.1 MINIMUM BUNCH WEIGHT

The minimum bunch weight shall be 75 g. This provision does not apply to packages intended for single servings.

4. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

Tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each package for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.

4.1 QUALITY TOLERANCES

4.1.1 “Extra” Class

Five percent by weight of bunches not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class I or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

4.1.2 Class I

Ten percent by weight of bunches not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

4.1.3 Class II

Ten percent by weight of bunches satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of produce affected by rotting or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.

4.2 SIZE TOLERANCES

Ten percent by weight of bunches not satisfying the size requirements as specified in Section 3.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 UNIFORMITY

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only bunches of the same origin, variety, quality and degree of ripeness. In the “Extra” Class, the bunches must be of more or less identical size and colouring. In the case of Class I, the bunches may have slight variation in size.

However, consumer packages of a net weight not exceeding 1 kg may contain mixtures of table grapes of different varieties, provided they are uniform in quality, degree of ripeness and, for each variety concerned, in origin.

The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

5.2 PACKAGING

Table grapes must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly. The materials used inside the package must be new¹, clean, and of a quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce. The use of materials, particularly of paper or stamps bearing trade specifications is allowed, provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Table grapes shall be packed in each container in compliance with the Recommended International Code of Practice for Packaging and Transport of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 44-1995).

In the case of the “Extra” Class, the bunches must be packed in a single layer.

5.2.1 Description of Containers

The containers shall meet the quality, hygiene, ventilation and resistance characteristics to ensure suitable handling, shipping and preserving of the table grapes. Packages must be free of all foreign matter and smell².

6. MARKING OR LABELLING

6.1 CONSUMER PACKAGES

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

¹ For the purposes of this Standard, this includes recycled material of food-grade quality.

² A fragment of vine shoot no more than 5 cm in length may be left on the stem of the bunch as a form of special presentation without prejudice to the applicable plant protection rules.

6.1.1 Nature of Produce

If the produce is not visible from the outside, each package shall be labelled as to the name of the produce and may be labelled as to name of the variety.

6.2 NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS

Each package must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside, or in the documents accompanying the shipment.

6.2.1 Identification

Name and address of exporter, packer and/or dispatcher. Identification code (optional)³.

6.2.2 Nature of Produce

Name of the produce "Table Grapes" if the contents are not visible from the outside. Name of the variety or, where applicable, names of varieties.

6.2.3 Origin of Produce

Country of origin or, where applicable, countries of origin and, optionally, district where grown or national, regional or local place name.

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

- Class;
- Net weight (optional);
- "Bunches below 75 g intended for single servings", if appropriate.

6.2.5 Official Inspection Mark (optional)

7. CONTAMINANTS

7.1 The produce covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum levels of the Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CODEX STAN 193-1995).

7.2 The produce covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum residue limits for pesticides established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

8. HYGIENE

8.1 It is recommended that the produce covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969), Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 53-2003), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

8.2 The produce should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).

³ The national legislation of a number of countries requires the explicit declaration of the name and address. However, in the case where a code mark is used, the reference "packer and/or dispatcher (or equivalent abbreviations)" has to be indicated in close connection with the code mark.