

CODEX STANDARD FOR TOMATOES
(CODEX STAN 293-2008)

1. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This Standard applies to commercial varieties of tomatoes grown from *Lycopersicon esculentum* Mill, of the *Solanaceae* family, to be supplied fresh to the consumer, after preparation and packaging. Tomatoes for industrial processing are excluded.

Tomatoes may be classified into four commercial types:

- “Round”;
- “Ribbed”;
- “Oblong” or “Elongated”;
- “Cherry” tomatoes and “Cocktail” tomatoes.

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

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

- whole;
- 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;
- fresh in appearance.

In the case of trusses of tomatoes, the stalks must be fresh, healthy, clean and free of all leaves and any visible foreign matter.

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

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

2.1.2 Maturity Requirements

The tomatoes must be sufficiently developed and display satisfactory ripeness.

The development and state of maturity of the tomatoes must be such as to enable them to continue their ripening process and to reach the appropriate degree of ripeness.

2.2 CLASSIFICATION

Tomatoes are classified in three classes defined below:

2.2.1 “Extra” Class

Tomatoes in this class must be of superior quality. They must have firm flesh and must be characteristic of the variety as regards shape, appearance and development.

They must be uniform in terms of size. Their colouring, according to their state of ripeness, must be such as to satisfy the requirements set out in Section 2.1.1 above.

They must be free of greenbacks and other 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

Tomatoes in this class must be of good quality. They must have reasonably firm flesh and must be characteristic of the variety as regards shape, appearance and development.

They must be uniform in terms of size. They must be free of cracks and visible greenback.

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 and development;
- a slight defect in colouring;
- slight skin defects;
- very slight bruises.

Furthermore, “ribbed” tomatoes may show:

- shallow healed cracks not more than 1 cm long;
- no excessive protuberances;
- small umbilicus but not suberization;
- suberization of the stigma up to 1 cm²;
- a linear scar no longer than two thirds of the greatest diameter of the fruit.

2.2.3 Class II

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

They must have reasonably firm flesh (but may be slightly less firm than in Class I) and must not show unhealed cracks.

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

- defects in shape, development and colouring;
- skin defects or bruises, provided the fruit is not seriously affected;
- shallow healed cracks not more than 3 cm in length for round, ribbed or oblong tomatoes.

Furthermore, “ribbed” tomatoes may show:

- more pronounced protuberances than allowed under Class I, but without being misshapen;
- one umbilicus;
- suberization of the stigma up to 2 cm²;
- fine blossom scar in elongated form (like a seam).

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

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

Sizing does not apply to trusses of tomatoes.

Sizing is not compulsory for Class II.

Tomatoes are sized with one of the following options:

(a) Tomatoes may be sized according to the following table:

Size code	Diameter (mm)
0	≤ 20
1	$> 20 \leq 25$
2	$> 25 \leq 30$
3	$> 30 \leq 35$
4	$> 35 \leq 40$
5	$> 40 \leq 47$
6	$> 47 \leq 57$
7	$> 57 \leq 67$
8	$> 67 \leq 82$
9	$> 82 \leq 102$
10	> 102

or

(b) Tomatoes may be sized according to the following uniformity provision:

The maximum difference in diameter between tomatoes in the same package shall be limited to:

- 10 mm, if the diameter of the smallest fruit (as indicated on the package) is under 50 mm;
- 15 mm, if the diameter of the smallest fruit (as indicated on the package) is 50 mm and over but under 70 mm;
- 20 mm, if the diameter of the smallest fruit (as indicated on the package) is 70 mm and over but under 100 mm;
- There is no limitation of difference in diameter for fruit equal or over 100 mm.

or

(c) Tomatoes may be sized by count, diameter or weight, according to the provisions of the legislation of the importing country.

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 number or weight of tomatoes 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 number or weight of tomatoes not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

In the case of trusses of tomatoes, 5% by number or weight of tomatoes detached from the stalk.

4.1.3 Class II

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

In the case of trusses of tomatoes, 10% by number or weight of tomatoes detached from the stalk.

4.2 SIZE TOLERANCES

For all classes, 10 % by number or weight of tomatoes not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing but have a diameter greater or less than 10 mm of the size marked.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 UNIFORMITY

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only tomatoes of the same origin, variety or commercial type, quality and size (if sized).

The ripeness and colouring of tomatoes in “Extra” Class and Class I must be practically uniform. In addition, the length of “oblong” tomatoes must be sufficiently uniform.

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

5.2 PACKAGING

Tomatoes 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.

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

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 tomatoes. Packages must be free of all foreign matter and smell.

5.3 PRESENTATION

The tomatoes may be presented as follows:

- (i) as individual tomatoes, with or without calyx and short stalk;
- (ii) as trusses of tomatoes, in other words, in entire inflorescence or part of inflorescence, where each inflorescence or part of each inflorescence should comprise at least the following number of tomatoes:
 - 3 (2 if prepackaged), or
 - in the case of trusses of “cherry” tomatoes, 6 (4 if prepackaged).

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:

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 the name of the variety and/or commercial type.

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

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)².

6.2.2 Nature of Produce

- Name of the produce “tomatoes” or “trusses of tomatoes” and the commercial type if the contents are not visible from the outside. These details must always be provided for “cherry” and “cocktail” tomatoes, whether in trusses or not;
- Name of the variety (optional).

6.2.3 Origin of Produce

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

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

- Class;
- Size expressed as minimum and maximum diameters (if sized).

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).

² 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.