



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

Fifth Session

Virtual, 20 - 29 April 2021

DRAFT STANDARD FOR OREGANO

Report of the Oregano the Informal virtual meeting held on 23/04/2021

(Prepared by Turkey)

At the CCSC5 meeting held on April 21, it was decided to hold an virtual meeting on the afternoon of April 23, in order to discuss the disagreements, existing in the Oregano Standard studies. At the CCSC5 meeting held on April 22, it was announced that a meeting regarding the Oregano Standard would be held on April 23 at 15:00 (CET) and the meeting link was shared by the Codex Secretariat.

Outcomes:

1. Chemical Characteristics Table (Table 3): There have been some modification suggestions on the table. However, the chairman explained that in order for the studies to progress, only the opinions presented with scientific justification should be evaluated, and it would be beneficial not to spend time on editorial corrections. After the negotiations, it was decided to accept the table as CX / SCH 21/5/3 without any changes.
2. Physical Characteristics Table (Table 2): It has been decided to adopt the table as proposed by the USA in the Report of the Oregano Working Group on 4/22/2021.
3. Product Definition Table (Table 1):

There have been long discussions on the table. It should be better to delete the *Satureja* spp. and *Poliomintha longiflora* L. because of the keeping the standard as simple as possible. *Satureja* is known as savory in the some countries and this is from another genus. One member expressed that, because of the scientific name on the labeling will be optional, it should be better to rearrange the general names as oregano and mexican oregano/lippia. It is important to inform the consumers correctly. But another member disagreed with this comment. He stated that in some countries Lippia is traded as Mexican Oregano, Lippia is the scientific name and the obligation to write Lippia will require additional labeling.

For this reason, the trade name column, *Satureja* spp. and *Poliomintha longiflora* L. have been deleted. The table accepted as below:

Table 1. Dried culinary herbs covered by this Standard

General name	Scientific name
Oregano	<i>Origanum</i> L. spp., except (<i>Origanum majorana</i> L.)
Mexican oregano	<i>Lippia</i> L. spp.

Conclusion:

Attached is the revised Draft Standard for Oregano with some additional edits in Table 4

DRAFT STANDARD FOR DRIED OREGANO

(CHANGED TEXT IS INDICATED IN YELLOW FURTHER CHANGES INDICATED IN RED AND STRIKE OUT)

1 SCOPE

This Standard applies to dried leaves/flowers of oregano, as defined in Section 2.1, offered for direct consumption, as an ingredient in food processing or for repackaging if required. It excludes dried oregano intended for industrial processing.

2 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Product definition

Dried oregano is the product obtained from the leaves and the flowering tops of the plants mentioned in Table 1 and processed in an appropriate manner, undergoing operations such as cleaning, drying, rubbing and sifting.

Table 1. Dried culinary herbs covered by this Standard

General name	Scientific name
Oregano	<i>Origanum</i> L. spp..., except (<i>Origanum majorana</i> L.)
Mexican oregano	<i>Lippia</i> L. spp.

2.2 Styles

2.2.1 Dried oregano may be offered in one of the following styles:

- a) Whole;
- b) Crushed/Rubbed: processed to varying degrees, ranging from a coarse to fine crush; and
- c) Ground/Powdered: processed into a powder.

2.2.2 The particle size of ground/powdered styles is determined by contractual agreement between buyer and seller.

3 ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Composition

Product as defined in Section 2.

3.2 Quality factors

3.2.1 Moisture content

Dried oregano (whole, crushed or ground) shall not contain more than 12% moisture.

3.2.2 Odour, flavour and colour

Dried oregano shall have a characteristic odour and flavour, varying according to the composition/chemical content of the main components of the volatile oil (carvacrol and/or thymol), which may vary depending on geo-climatic factors/conditions. Dried oregano shall be free from any foreign odour or flavour and especially from mustiness. Dried oregano shall have a characteristic colour varying from pale greyish yellow green to dark green.

3.2.3 Classification

Whole and crushed/rubbed oregano may be classified in three classes/grades according physical and chemical requirements as specified in Table 2 and 3, respectively.

- Extra
- Class/Grade I
- Class/Grade II

When dried oregano is treated as unclassified/ungraded, the chemical and physical characteristics of Class/Grade II apply as the minimum requirements.

3.2.4 Physical characteristics

Whole, crushed/rubbed and ground/powdered oregano shall comply with the physical requirements specified

in Table 2.

Table 2. Physical requirements for whole/crushed/rubbed and ground/powdered oregano (allowed tolerance for defects)

Parameter	Whole or Crushed/Rubbed Oregano			Ground/Powdered Oregano
	Extra	Class/Grade I	Class/Grade II	
Extraneous vegetable matter ⁽¹⁾ (maximum % mass fraction)	0.5	2	2	N/A ⁽⁵⁾
Foreign matter content ⁽²⁾ (maximum % mass fraction)	0.1	0.1	0.1	N/A
Tolerance for oregano powder among non-powder styles (% smaller than the particle size indicated) ⁽³⁾	5	10	20	N/A
Dead insects (maximum number/100 g)	3	3	3	N/A
Insects fragments (maximum number/10 g) (applies to crushed/rubbed and ground only)	300	300	300	1250
Visible mold/insect damage (maximum % m/m) (applies to whole only)	1	3	5	N/A
Live insects	0	0	0	0
Mammalian excreta maximum (mg/Kg) (applies to whole only)	1.0	2.2	2.2	N/A
Other excreta (maximum mg/Kg) ⁽⁴⁾ (applies to whole only)	10	10	22	N/A

⁽¹⁾: Vegetative matter associated with the plant from which the product originates but not accepted as part of the final product, such as stems/sticks, etc.

⁽²⁾: Any visible/detectable objectionable foreign matter or material not usually associated with the natural components of the spice plant, such as stones, burlap bagging, metal, foreign leaves etc.

⁽³⁾: Particle size is evaluated upon request accompanied by supporting documents.

⁽⁴⁾: Excreta from other animals such as reptiles and birds.

⁽⁵⁾: N/A: Not applicable, means that this form of the above product has not been evaluated for this provision, and currently we do not have values. N/A does not refer to zero

3.2.5 Chemical characteristics

Whole, crushed/rubbed and ground/powdered-oregano shall comply with the chemical requirements specified in Table 3.

Table 3. Chemical requirements for whole/crushed/rubbed and ground oregano

Parameter	Whole/Crushed/Rubbed Oregano			Ground/Powdered Oregano
	Extra	Class/Grade I	Class/Grade II	
Total ash, % mass fraction (dry basis), maximum	9	10	10	12
Acid-insoluble ash, % mass fraction (dry basis), maximum	1.2	2	2	2.5
Volatile oils, ml/100 g (dry basis), minimum	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.5

Anticaking agents may be used in the powdered form of the product in accordance with Table 3 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (CXS 192-1995).

5 CONTAMINANTS

5.1 The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum levels of the *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed* (CXS 193-1995) and *Code of Practice for Weed Control to Prevent and Reduce Pyrrolizidine Alkaloid Contamination in Food and Feed* (CXC 74-2014) and other relevant Codex texts.

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

6 HYGIENE

6.1 It is recommended that the products covered by this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969), the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Moisture Foods* (CXC 75-2015), Annex III (Spices and Dried Aromatic Herbs), and other Codes of Practice.

6.2 The products shall comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the *Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria Related to Foods* (CXG 21-1997).

7 WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Containers shall be as full as practicable without impairment of quality and shall be consistent with a proper declaration of contents for the product.

8 LABELLING

8.1 The products covered by this Standard shall be labelled in accordance with the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985). In particular, the following specific provisions apply:

8.2 Name of the product

8.2.1 The name of the product shall be “dried oregano” or “oregano” when the omission of the word dry would not mislead or confuse the consumer.

8.2.2 The general name, and style of the product shall be noted??? as described in Table 1 and Section 2.2. The scientific name of the product is optional.

8.3.1 Country of origin

Country of origin shall be indicated in accordance with section 4.5 of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985), and the region of production may be indicated.

8.3.2 Country of Harvest

Country of harvest may be indicated if its omission would mislead or deceive the consumer. If there are more than one country of harvest, they may be indicated using the legend ‘and /or’???. (incomplete)

8.3.3 Year of harvest (optional)

8.4 Commercial identification

- Class/Grade, if applicable
- Size (optional)

8.5 Labelling of non-retail containers

Information for non-retail containers shall be given either on the package or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the product, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer, as well as storage instructions, shall appear on the container. However, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided that such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

9. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

9.1 Methods of analysis

Table 4. Methods of analysis¹

Provision	Method	Principle	Type
Moisture	ISO 939	Distillation	I
Total ash on dry basis	ISO 939 and ISO 928	Calculation??? Distillation and Gravimetry	I
Acid-insoluble ash on dry basis	ISO 939 and ISO 930	Calculation??? Distillation and Gravimetry	I
Volatile oils on a dry basis	ISO 939 and ISO 6571	Calculation??? Distillation and Distillation	I
Extraneous vegetable matter	ISO 927	Visual examination Gravimetry	I
Foreign matter	ISO 927	Visual examination Gravimetry	I
Mammalian excreta Other excreta	Macroanalytical Procedure Manual, USFDA, Technical Bulletin V.39 B (For whole)	Visual examination	IV
Whole dead insect	ISO 927	Visual examination	IV
	MPM V-8 Spices, Condiments, Flavours and Crude Drugs A. General methods for spices herbs and botanicals (V 32)		
Insect fragments	AOAC 969.44	Flotation method	IV
Mould visible	Method V-8 Spices, Condiments, Flavors and Crude Drugs (Macroanalytical Procedure Manual, FDA Technical Bulletin Number 5) http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodScienceResearch/LaboratoryMethods/ucm084394.htm#v-32	Visual examination	IV
Insect Damage	ISO 927	Visual Examination	I

(1) Latest edition or version of the approved method should be used

9.2 Sampling plan

To be developed.