

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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Organization

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Agenda Item 4.1

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

Sixth Session
Virtual
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DRAFT STANDARD FOR DRIED SEEDS - NUTMEG

Comments in reply to CL 2022/26/OCS-SCH

Comments of Canada, Cuba, Egypt, European Union, India, Kenya, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, USA, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and ICUMSA, IOSTA

Background

1. This document compiles comments received through the Codex Online Commenting System (OCS) in response to CL 2022/26/OCS-SCH issued in June 2022. Under the OCS, comments are compiled in the following order: general comments are listed first, followed by comments on specific sections.

Explanatory notes on the appendix

2. The comments submitted through the OCS are hereby attached as Annex I and are presented in table format.

Annex I**GENERAL COMMENTS**

COMMENT	MEMBER/ OBSERVER
Cuba is grateful for the opportunity to submit its comments on the Draft Standard for Dried Nutmeg Seeds, in response to CL 2022/26/OCS-SCH and states that that Nutmeg is not produced in Cuba; it is a product that is imported and the quality specifications stated in the standards established by Codex are accepted. Having analysed the criteria proposed by other countries, we state our agreement with the same.	Cuba
India supports the Draft Standard for Dried Seeds - Nutmeg.	India
Kenya will like to thank the EWG, chaired by Indonesia and co-chaired by India, for the work well done and supports the draft standard for dried Seeds- Nutmeg to move to the next step.	Kenya
The Philippines supports the adoption of the text of the proposed draft's scope, description, essential composition and quality factors, food additives, contaminants, hygiene, weights and measures, labelling, and the method of analysis and sampling.	Philippines
Saudi Arabia reiterates its concern regarding the safety of nutmeg and mace since this product contains "myristicin and methoxysafrole" which may have detrimental effect on health. Saudi Arabia also suggests forwarding the mentioned components of nutmeg as well as nutmeg in whole to be evaluated for its safety as a flavor agent and / or to set maximum levels for its use through JECFA.	Saudi Arabia
We generally accept the proposed document.	Syrian Arab Republic
The United States of America submits the following comments in support of the activities of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs proposed draft Codex standard for Dried seed- nutmeg. The United States fully supports the decision of CCSH5 to simplify this draft standard. Thereby, facilitating the timeliness of delivery to stakeholders.	USA
Nevertheless, the committee is reminded that Codex standards should always reflect international trade practices. As such, the new standard should not impose unwarranted provisions and/or restrictions that could impede trade practices.	
Font size and type change from body of document. Should be same throughout.	ICUMSA

2. DESCRIPTION

Table 1. Dried Seeds Covered by this Standard It is suggested to delete table 1 because it is already mentioned in the definition item 2.1.1 . It is to be as follows: "2.1.1 Dried nutmeg is the "seed" of <i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt. of the Myristicaceae family, having reached appropriate degree of development, harvested and post-harvest treated properly, by undergoing operations such as stripping, drying, sorting, cracking, grading, and/or grinding before the final packaging and, and are sold in styles as described in 2.2	Egypt
Dried nutmeg is the "seed" of <i>Myristica fragrans</i> of the Myristicaceae family (Table 1), having reached appropriate degree of development, harvested and post-harvest treated properly, by undergoing operations suchas stripping, drying, sorting, cracking, grading, and/or grinding <u>before the before</u> final packaging <u>and,</u> <u>packaging</u> <u>and</u> are sold in styles as described in 2.2.	India
Dried nutmeg is the "seed" of <i>Myristica fragrans</i> of the Myristicaceae family (Table 1), having reached appropriate degree of development, harvested and post-harvest treated properly, by undergoing operations suchas stripping, drying, sorting, cracking, grading, and/or grinding before the final packaging and, and are sold in styles as described in 2.2. Uganda recommends adding "space" between the words "...suchas...."	Uganda
PROPOSED CHANGES The proposed changes to read as "...by undergoing operations such as stripping...." Uganda recommends to delete the repeated words "...packaging and, and are...."	
PROPOSED CHANGES The recommended changes to read as "...packaging and, are...."	
Issue and Rationale: The product definition is an overly long confusing sentence of four lines. Proposal: The United States recommends the rewriting the Product definition as follows: 2.1.1 Dried nutmeg is the "seed" of <i>Myristica fragrans</i> of the Myristicaceae family (Table 1), having reached appropriate degree of development, harvested and post-harvest treated in an appropriate manner.	USA

Nutmeg may undergo operations such as, washing, blanching, drying or dehydrating, decorticating, grading, crushing and grinding before the final packaging.	
Table 1. Dried seeds regulated by this Standard It is proposed to modify the title of Table 1, a: Table 1: Scientific name for Dried Seeds – Nutmeg	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

When dried nutmeg are is traded as classified, the chemical and physical characteristics in Annexes I and II apply as the minimum requirements.	India
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5. CONTAMINANTS

The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum levels of the <i>General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed</i> (CXS 193-1995), <i>Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Mycotoxins in Spices</i> (CXC 78-2017) and other relevant Codex texts. Uganda recommends adding “space” between the words “...and Reduction of...” PROPOSED CHANGES The recommended changes to read as “.... and Reduction of...”	Uganda
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6. HYGIENE

It is recommended that the products covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the <i>General Principles of Food Hygiene</i> (CXC 1-1969), <i>the Code of Hygienic Practice for Low Moisture Foods</i> (CXC 75-2015), Annex III Spices and dried culinary herbs and other relevant Codex texts . Uganda recommends that the statement “....Annex III Spices and dried culinary herbs and other relevant Codex texts....” is put in brackets JUSTIFICATION it was creating the impression that there was an Annex III attached which was on “Spices and dried culinary herbs and other relevant Codex texts”. PROPOSED CHANGES The proposed changes to read as “ CXC 75-2015, Annex III Spices and dried culinary herbs and other relevant Codex texts”).	Uganda
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8. LABELLING

8.5 Labelling of non-retail containers This section is still using the old text. Should be updated to align with text used in other draft spice standards: The labelling of non-retail containers should be in accordance with the General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021).	Canada
8.5 Labelling of non-retail containers Information “The labelling of non-retail containers should be in accordance with the General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021).” for non-retail containers shall be given either on the container 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. Rationale: The revised provision for Non-Retail Containers (NRC) is as per the latest guidelines on NRC and consequential amendment in codex procedural manual which was approved in CAC44.	India
8.2.2 The name of the product may include an indication of the style as described in Section 2.2. Uganda Recommends using “shall” in place of “may” in the statement “The name of the product may include an indication....”. The justification is that “the different styles are distinct and might affect trade PROPOSED CHANGES The proposed changes to read, as “....The name of the product shall include an indication”	Uganda
8.5 Labelling of non-retail containers Uganda recommends that the “labelling of non-retail containers clause “ is made uniform like in the previous draft standards which give reference to the standard on non-retail containers and not the statement.	

"Information for non-retail containers shall be given either on the container 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"	
PROPOSED CHANGES	
The proposed changes to read as "The labelling of non-retail containers should be in accordance with the General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021)..."	

8.4.1 Size (optional)	USA
Issue and Rationale: The section needs indicate the styles that may be sized in accordance with Section 2.3 Sizing. Proposal: The United States recommends adding the following text after (optional): "only for whole inshell and shelled styles"	

Table 2. Chemical characteristics for Whole, Broken and Ground/Powdered Nutmeg

Replace „(dry basis)” with „(on dry basis)”	European Union
Rationale: This formulation is usually used in other Codex standards and also in ISO 6577:1990 standard Nutmeg, whole or broken, and mace, whole or in pieces (<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houttuyn) – Specification.	
Replace “Acid Insoluble ash, % mass fraction (drybasis)” with “Acid-insoluble ash, % mass fraction (on dry basis)”.	
Replace: “Volatile Oils content, (mL/100g) minimum” with “Volatile oils content, ml/100 g (on dry basis), min”.	
Rationale: In ISO 6577:1990 standard volatile oils content is expressed on dry basis. For consistency, the same expression should be followed in the draft Codex standard. We also suggest using a short form for minimum as it is written for max in this table. The way of presentation of “max” and “min” in table 2 and 3 should be standardised, with or without brackets.	
Rationale: To improve the consistency of the document.	
In whole and broken nutmeg, a moisture content as high as 10% may enable mould growth. We recommend that these values be lowered.	IOSTA

Table 3. Physical characteristics for Nutmeg

Correcting N/A to be NA	Egypt
Parameter “Mould visible, insect defiled/infested % w/w (max)” should be modified as follows: “Insect defiled/infested % w/w (max)”. A new parameter should be introduced for mould with a value of 0 in all styles.	European Union
Rationale: In the ISO 6577:1990 standard it is said that “Nutmeg and mace shall be free from living insects and moulds....”. The amount of insect fragments is too high in the style “broken”. Rationale: ISO 6577:1990 standard states: “Nutmeg and mace shall be free from living insects and moulds, and shall be practically free from dead insects, insect fragments and rodent contamination”. The proposed amount of 100 pieces of insect fragments in 10 g of a spice is not consistent with the ISO provision. The table should be reordered: the parameters related to dead and live insects and insect fragments should be presented side by side. Rationale: To improve the clarity of the document. The way of presentation of “max” and “min” in table 2 and 3 should be standardised, with or without brackets.	
Rationale: To improve the consistency of the document.	India

Rationale: Based on the availability of trade data and also considering the fact that max. 0.1% Mace in Nutmeg may restrict export trade. Further, mace is not harmful and increasing its percentage in nutmeg will not pose any health hazard to the consumer.	
It is proposed to modify the title to: Table 3: Limits for extraneous matter established for dried seeds – nutmeg. In Table 3, there is a mention of Mammalian excreta and/or other excreta, mg/kg (max.), does this include birds?	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
How recognize that the presentation of the "mould visible, insect defiled/infested" line has been previously discussed. However, for clarity, we recommend that "mould visible, insect defiled/infested" are separated into two categories. Instead of a combined %w/w of 10, each would be assigned a %w/w of 5.	IOSTA

Table 4. Method of Analysis

Add "on dry basis" to the following parameters: Total ash, Acid-insoluble ash, Water-insoluble ash, Volatile oils content, Calcium content expressed as CaO.	European Union
Rationale: To be consistent with Table 2. A moisture method (ISO 939) should be added to the following parameters: Total ash, Acid-insoluble ash, Water-insoluble ash, Volatile oils content, Calcium content expressed as CaO.	
Rationale: In other Codex draft standards, for example for chilli peppers and paprika or for small cardamom, two methods are presented: for the parameter [provision] and moisture. Since parameters dead insect, insect fragments and rodent contamination are written together, then add to them also "live insects" (the same ISO 927 method applies to all of them) or consistently write everything separately.	
Rationale: To increase the clarity of the document.	
For "mould visible," the current standard recommends method ISO 927. However the current Codex standard for cardamom recommends FDA Method V-8 (Microanalytical Procedure Manual). We recommended that the methods are harmonized between these two Codex standards.	IOSTA