

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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Agenda Item 4(a)

CX/FFV 02/09

CX/FFV 02/09-Add.1

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Tenth Session,
Mexico City, Mexico, 10-14 June 2002

Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Apples

(At Step 3)

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AUSTRALIA

Australia has some concerns on aspects of the proposed code, particularly with regard to tolerances and colour gradings.

Australia wishes to express concern over the 5mm size tolerances, as these would be very difficult to meet, fruit would have to be virtually perfectly uniform. Also, the suggested gradings do not correspond with current Australian domestic standards. This is a potential issue for exporters, as it would mean having to pack differently for export than for domestic sales.

Australia's greatest concerns are the proposed colour gradings that we consider inappropriate. Australia questions the need for defining an apple as belonging to one group or another. Implementing such a standard would create unnecessary difficulties in the marketing of certain varieties and put potential limitations on the development of new varieties that would have to conform to one category or another.

As an example, the grading of the variety Pink Lady could cause significant problems. Firstly, it is trademarked and has its own specifications set out, e.g., as being a minimum of 40% bright pink (Note not red). The blush is allowed to be 40-50% but 20-30% is not allowed. The proposed Codex groupings indicate for Group B semi-red, 50% colouring is needed to be categorised in the Extra Class. Consequently, most Pink Lady apples would be downgraded to Class I because of their trademarked characteristics. This is not viewed as acceptable to Australia. The colour gradings for Pink Lady apples also do not conform to the definition for the proposed group B apple specification. Group C would not be an appropriate grade for Pink Lady because it is described as striped or slight red colouring (30%).

Consequently, what has been proposed in the draft standard for apples would not be acceptable to Australia as it would unfairly disadvantage Pink Lady growers or marketers in Australian and from other international apple producing regions.

CANADA

Canada is pleased to offer the following comments on the Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Apples, CX/FFV 02/9:

Canada notes Appendix I of document CX/FFV 02/9 is a collection of comments submitted on the version of the Proposed Draft Standard which was considered at the last Session of the CCFFV. It would appear that the text has not yet been revised to take these comments into consideration. Therefore it will need to be addressed in plenary under agenda item #4(a) unless the Working Group established at the last Session can meet and revise the Proposed Draft Standard prior to the plenary session.

We would remind that Committee that the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has recently finalized the revision of its Apple Standard. All major apple producing countries, as well as major importing countries, were involved in the UNECE revision process.

Canada would like to congratulate the Secretariat for preparing the table in Appendix II to CX/FFV 02/9 comparing the Proposed Draft Codex Standard with the UNECE Standard. Canada suggests that the Committee request the Working Group on the apple standard to prepare a new Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Apples taking into consideration the UNECE revised Apple Standard as well as the comments received.

Canada notes the document CX/FFV 02/9 is a collection of comments submitted to the Secretariat. However, the comments have not yet been incorporated into the Proposed Draft Standard in accordance with the mandate of the Working Group.

Canada also notes the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) recently finalized the revision of its Apple Standard. All major apple producing countries, as well as major importing countries, were present at the last meeting of the UNECE Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

Therefore, Canada suggests that the Committee should request the Working Group on Apples to further consider the comments received and prepare a new Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Apples for the next Committee meeting. In addition, the Working Group should take into consideration the UNECE revised Apple Standard.

GERMANY

We propose to amend the Codex Draft Standard for Apples in accordance with the amendments concerning the UN/ECE Standard for Apples as agreed by the 48th session of the Specialized Section for the Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables. The revised text will be available through the UN/ECE secretariat.

INDIA

1. Para-2.1

- It is proposed that an additional indent should be added as follows:
 - mature
- It is proposed that the 4th indent should be modified as follows :
 - practically free of pests and diseases
- It is proposed that the 5th indent should be modified as follows :
 - practically free of damage caused by pests and diseases

2. Para-2.1.1

It is proposed that the foot note at no.2 should include Jonathan variety in addition to Fuji

3. Para-2.2.1

It is proposed that this para should be modified~ as follows :

Apples in this class must of superior quality .Their shape, size and colouring must be characteristic of the variety and the stalk must be intact. The flesh must be perfectly sound. They must be free of defects with the exception of very slight superficial defects of skin such as marks produced by branches, slight or isolated russetting or brown patches in the stem cavity , provided these do not effect the general appearance of the produce, the quality , the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

It is, further proposed that the defects should be specified as skin defects, flesh defects and other defects.

4. Para-2.2.2

It is proposed that this para may be modified as follows:

Apples in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety The stalk should be intact or it may be cut close to the shoulder. provided there is no skin damage. Slight defects in shape, development, colouring and from scarring, however, may be allowed, as is handling and physiogenetic damage, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

Slight skin defects must not extend beyond the following limits :

- 1cm in length for defects of elongated shape;
- 1cm² total surface area for other defects, with the exception of scab (*Venturiainaequalis*), which must not have accumulative area of more than 0.25 cm².
- no bruising and no discolouring and the flesh must be perfectly sound without any defect.

The stalk may be broken. provided the break is clean and the skin is not ruptured/damaged

5. Para-2.2.3

It is proposed that 3rd para may be modified as follows :

Skin defects must not extend beyond the following limits :

- 2cm in length for defects of elongated shape; (a size of 4cm should be acceptable for apples of diameter exceeding 85mm) .
- 2.5cm² total surface area for other defects, which would not include even slight bruising, scab or flesh defects.
- Stalk may be missing

6. Para-3

It is proposed that the minimum diameter for all categories should be 62.5 mm in place of 50 mm.

In the 3rd para after the word between, the following should be added "the smallest and the largest" .

Further, in the second indent 10mm should be changed to 5mm. Bulk and pre packaged form is not clear. Generally, apples are packed in rows and the packing is according to no. of trays and counts and the no. of pieces is between 100-125 according to size.

7. Para-4.1.1

The words "or size" should be added after the words "weight".

8. Para-4.1.2

10% should be changed to 5% and the words "or size" should be added after the word "weight". Further, it is proposed that the second para should be modified as follows:

"This tolerance includes 2% of the apples that have unhealed light superficial damage, or very slight traces of superficial rotting or damage to the flesh.

9. Para-4.1.3

Under second para, it is proposed that 5% should be changed to 2%. The words "or size" should be added after the words "weight". Further, in the first indent the word "serious" should be changed to "slight".

10. Para-4.2

It is proposed that this para should be modified as follows:

For all classes, 10% by number or size or weight of the apples corresponding to size immediately above and/ or below that indicated on the package, ~~with, for fruit classified in the smallest grade allowed,~~ subject to a maximum variation of 5mm.

11. Para-5. 1

Under first para, it is proposed that the following words should be added at the end of the first sentence :

"subject to the limits of tolerance as mentioned above"

12. Para-5.2

It is proposed that the word "package" should be replaced by the word "container".

13. Para-5.2.1

It is proposed that the heading of this clause should be changed as follows :

"Description of the package". Similarly the word "containers" should also be replaced by the word "packages" in the first sentence.

14. Para-5.3

It is proposed that clause (a) should be modified as follows :

a) In regular layers according to size, in open or closed containers.

This form of presentation is obligatory for all classes of the apples.

15. Para-6.1.1

It is proposed that the words "or lot for produce presented in bulk" should be deleted.

16. Para-6.2

It is proposed that in the heading the word "containers" should be replaced by word "packages" .

17. Para-6.2.4

It is proposed that the following additional bullet should be added:

- no of pieces of the fruit presented in rows and layers

18. ANNEX I (COLOURING)

The following should be added at the end of first sentence :

"which should be characteristic of the variety" Further to this, under Group-B (Class-II), 1/10th should be changed to 1/5th. Similarly, under Group-C (Class-I), 1./10 should be changed to 1/4th and under Group-C (Class-II), 1/ 10th should be changed to 1/5th.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The Community reaffirms the comments that it had sent at the last session and which are included in the document CX/FFV 02/9. It wishes in addition to offer the following complementary comments:

2.1. Minimum characteristics

The European Community wishes the 6th indent to be deleted.

2.1.1.

The detailed proposal made by the Community in 2000 with regard to the drafting of this paragraph does not appear in the document. Only the justifications of this proposal still appear in the document. Here is the exact text of the Community proposal:

"Apples must have been carefully picked. **The development and condition of the apples must be such as to enable them:**

- to continue their ripening process and to reach the degree of ripeness required in relation to the varietal characteristics ¹

- to withstand transport and handling, and

- to arrive in satisfactory conditions at the place of destination.

1. Due to varietal characteristics of the Fuji variety concerning maturity at harvest, radial watercore is permitted provided it is contained within the vascular bundles of each fruit. "

The Community wishes in addition the working group responsible for drawing up the preliminary draft Codex standard for apples to work on the question (in view of making proposals to the CCFFV) of maturity criteria applicable to apples, in particular the use of the iodine test for the determination of starch content, TSS (soluble solids content) and firmness measured by penetrometer.

2.2.1. Extra class

The Community wishes the following subparagraph to be added:

"The flesh must be perfectly sound".

2.2.3. Class II

In the first subparagraph, the footnote proposed by the Community for Extra class and class I should be added:

"The criteria for colouring and russetting are set out in the annex of this standard".

At the last indent of the Community proposal mentioned on page 12 of the document CX/FFV 02/9, the Community wishes to make the following amendment:

"- skin defects which must not extend over more than:

- 4 cm in length for defects of elongated shape,

- 2.5 cm² of total surface for other defects, with the exception of scab (*Venturia inaequalis*) which must not extend over more than 1 cm² cumulative in area,

- slight bruising not exceeding 1.5 cm² in area which may be slightly discoloured."

3. Sizing

With regards to the contents, the Community comments appearing in document CX/FFV 02/9 are still valid. The Community wishes however to add that it supports also the definition of specific uniformity rules in the case of apples sized by weight. With regards to the form, the text proposed by the Community for this section is as follows:

- first subparagraph: Codex text unchanged

- second and third subparagraphs, read:

"A minimum size by diameter is required for each class as follows:

	Extra	I	II
Large fruited varieties *	70 mm	65 mm	65 mm
Other varieties	60 mm	55 mm	50 mm

* A list of large-fruited varieties is given in the annex of this standard "

- fourth subparagraph, read:

"To ensure there is uniformity of size within a package:

- for fruit sized according to the diameter, the difference in diameter between fruit in the same package shall be limited to:

- 5 mm** for Extra class fruit and for classes I and II fruit packed in rows and layers,

- 10 mm*** for Class I fruit packed loose in the package or in consumer packages.

- for fruit sized according to weight, the difference in weight between fruit in the same package shall be limited to:
- 20% of the average individual fruit weight in the package for Class Extra and for Class I and II fruit packed in rows and layers,
- 25% of the average individual fruit weight in the package for Class I fruit packed loose in the package or in consumer packages.

There is no sizing uniformity limit for class II fruit packed in bulk in the package or in consumer packages.

** However, for apples of the varieties Bramley's seedling (Bramley, Triomphe de Kiel) and Horneburger, the difference in diameter may amount 10 mm.

*** However, for apples of the varieties Bramley's seedling (Bramley, Triomphe de Kiel) and Horneburger, the difference in diameter may amount 20 mm."

4. Tolerances

First subparagraph: the bracket has to be deleted. Apples are not transported in bulk in the means of transport, but, in the worst case, in bulk bins (200-300 kilos) which are packages themselves.

5. Presentation

5.1. Uniformity

The Community proposes simplifying the first subparagraph by replacing the words "and visibly of the same degree of ripeness and development" by the words "and the same degree of ripeness".

The Community proposes an alternative drafting for the last subparagraph:

"Consumer packages of a net weight not exceeding 5 kilos may contain mixtures of apples of different varieties, provided they are uniform in quality, degree of ripeness and, for each variety concerned, in origin and size (if sized)."

5.2.

In the first subparagraph, the Community proposes adding the following sentence after the first sentence.

"In particular, consumer packages of a net weight exceeding 3 kilos shall be sufficiently rigid to ensure proper protection of the produce."

6.2.2.

The second indent could be modified as follows:

"- Name of the variety,

- in the case of consumer packages containing a mixture of different varieties, names of the different varieties "

6.2.3.

The single indent could be modified as follows:

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

- in the case of consumer packages containing a mixture of varieties of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the variety concerned."

6.2.4.

The Community wishes to supplement its proposal appearing in document CX/FFV 02/9, by envisaging the case of apples sized by weight. The text of the second indent could read:

"- size or, for fruit packed in rows and layers, number of units.

If identification is by the size, this should be expressed:

- for produce subject to the homogeneity rules, as minimum and maximum diameters or weight,
- for produce not subject to the uniformity rules, the diameter or weight of the smallest fruit in the package, followed by the expression "and more" or "and +" or if appropriate the diameter or weight of the largest fruit."

Annex

The Community confirms its wish to include the annex of the future UN/ECE standard for apples, as revised at the last meeting of the UN/ECE specialised section on fresh fruit and vegetables held last April.