

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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Agenda Item 3(b)

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

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

DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR PITAHAYAS

Governments and interested international organizations wishing to submit comments on the attached *Draft Codex Standard for Pitahayas* (AT STEP 6) (see ALINORM 01/35, paras. 24-25) are invited to do so **no later than 15 April 2002** to Mr. Miguel Aguilar Romo, Director General de Normas, Av. Puente de Tecamachalco 6, segundo piso, Lomas de Tecamachalco Sección Fuentes, C.P. 53950 Naucalpan de Juárez, Estado de México, Tel: (52) (5) 7 29 93 00, Ext. 4144, 4108 Directo: (52) (5) 7299480. Fax: (52) (5) 7299484 E-mail: codexmex@economia.gob.mx, with a copy to the Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Foods Standards Programme, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy (Fax No. 39.06.5705.4593 or E-Mail codex@fao.org).

BACKGROUND

1. The 7th Session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (Mexico City, Mexico, 8-12 September 1997) accepted the offer of Colombia to prepare a *Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Yellow Pitahayas*.¹ The 45th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 3-5 June 1998) approved the elaboration of the Standard as new work with the understanding that information on production and trade should be provided.² The Proposed Draft Standard was subsequently circulated for comments at Step 3 and consideration at the next session of the Committee.
2. The 8th Session of the CCFFV (Mexico City, Mexico, 1-5 March 1999) advanced the *Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Yellow Pitahayas* to the 23rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption at Step 5/8.³ However, the Commission adopted the text at Step 5 only, advancing it to Step 6. It was noted that this produce was relatively new in countries of temperate zones and time was needed to consider all the aspects of the Standard. Therefore, it was preferable to follow all the steps of the procedure and to consider it further at the next Session of the Committee.⁴
3. In considering the *Draft Codex Standard for Yellow Pitahayas*, the 9th CCFFV (Mexico City, Mexico, 9-13 October 2000) agreed to retain the Draft Standard at Step 6 for circulation, comments and further consideration by the next Committee's session. Meanwhile, a Drafting Group lead by Colombia with the assistance of France and Mexico would redraft the Draft Standard to cover other coloured varieties of pitahayas traded internationally account being taken of the written comments submitted at that Session.⁵

¹ ALINORM 99/35, para. 87.

² ALINORM 99/3, para. 26 and Appendix 3.

³ ALINORM 99/35A para. 155 and Appendix VI.

⁴ ALINORM 99/37, para. 162

⁵ ALINORM 01/35, paras. 24-25

5. The revised Proposed Draft is appended to this document as Appendix I. The comments of the Drafting Group in relation to the revision of the Draft are presented in Appendix II.
4. Governments and interested international organizations are invited to comment at Step 6 on the attached *Draft Codex Standard for Pitahayas* as directed above.

DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR PITAHAYAS**(At Step 6)****1. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE**

This Standard applies to commercial varieties of pitahayas grown from the genera *Selenicereus* and *Hylacereus*, of the *Cactaceae* family, to be supplied fresh to consumer, after preparation and packaging. Pitahayas for industrial processing are excluded.¹

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY**2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

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

- whole;
- free from cracks in the skin;
- firm;
- fresh in appearance;
- sound, produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded;
- clean, and free of any visible foreign matter;
- without thorns;
- free of abnormal external moisture, excluding condensation following removal from cold storage;
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste²;
- with a peduncle or stem between 15 and 25 mm in length;
- practically free of pests affecting the general appearance of the produce;
- practically free of damage caused by pests.

The minimum flesh content shall be 31%

2.1.1 The pitahayas must have been carefully picked and have reached an appropriate degree of development and ripeness³ account being taken of the characteristics of the variety and/or commercial type and to the area in which they are grown.

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

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

2.2 CLASSIFICATION

Pitahayas are classified in three classes defined below:

¹ Governments, when indicating the acceptance of the Codex Standard for Pitahayas, should notify the Commission which provisions of the Standard would be accepted for application at the point of import, and which provisions would be accepted for application at the point of export.

² This provision allows for smell caused by conservation agents used in compliance with corresponding regulations.

³ The maturity of the yellow pitahayas can be gauged visually from its external colouring and confirmed by examining flesh content and using the iodine test.

2.2.1 “Extra” Class

Pitahayas in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type. 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

Pitahayas in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type. 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:

- slight defects in shape;
- slight defects of the skin not exceeding 1 cm² of the total surface area of the fruit.

The defects must not, in any case, affect the pulp of the fruit.

2.2.3 Class II

This class includes pitahayas which do not qualify for the inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified in Section 2.1 above. The following defects may be allowed, provided the pitahayas retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- defects in shape;
- defects of the skin not exceeding 2 cm² of the total surface area of the fruit.

The defects must not, in any case, affect the pulp of the fruit.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by the weight of the fruit, in accordance with the following tables:

3.1 SIZE OF YELLOW PITAHAYAS

Size Code	Unit Weight (in grams)
8E	= 361
9D	360 to 261
12C	260 to 201
14B	200 to 151
16A	150 to 110

3.2 SIZE OF RED AND WHITE PITAHAYAS

Size Code	Unit Weight (in grams)
I	= 701
H	700 to 601
G	600 to 501
F	500 to 401
E	400 to 301
D	300 to 251
C	250 to 201
B	200 to 151
A	150 to 110

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 pitahayas 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 pitahayas 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 number or weight of pitahayas 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

For all classes, 10% by number or weight of pitahayas corresponding to the size immediately above and/or below that indicated on the package.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 UNIFORMITY

The contents of the each package must be uniform and contain only pitahayas of the same origin, variety and/or commercial type, quality, colour and size. The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

5.2 PACKAGING

Pitahayas must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly. The materials used inside the package must be new,⁴ 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 and stamps bearing trade specifications is allowed, provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Pitahayas shall be packed in each container in compliance with the Recommended International Code of Practice for Packaging and Transport of Tropical Fresh Fruits 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 pitahayas. Packages must be free of all foreign matter and smell.

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, Rev. 1-1991), the following specific provisions should 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 produce and may be labelled as to the name of the variety and/or commercial type.

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.⁵

⁴ For the purposes of this Standard, this includes recycled material of food-grade quality.

⁵ Governments, when indicating their acceptance of this Standard, should notify the Commission as to which provisions of this Section apply.

6.2.1 Identification

Name and address of Exporter, Packer and/or Dispatcher. Identification code (optional).⁶

6.2.2 Nature of Produce

Name of the produce if the contents are not visible from the outside. Commercial type defined by colour of pulp (yellow, red or white)

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 (size code or minimum and maximum weight in grams);
- Number of units (optional);
- Net weight (optional).

6.2.5 Official Inspection Mark (optional)

7. CONTAMINANTS

7.1 HEAVY METALS

Pitahayas shall comply with those maximum levels for heavy metals established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

7.2 PESTICIDE RESIDUES

Pitahayas shall comply with those maximum residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

8. HYGIENE

8.1 It is recommended that the product 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, Rev. 3-1997), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

8.2 The product 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).

⁶ 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.

GENERAL COMMENTS TO THE REVISED DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR PITAHAYAS

The Drafting Group revised the Draft Standard for Yellow Pitahayas taking into account the comments submitted at the 9th Session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables¹ and amended it accordingly:

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. Following the recommendation of the 9th CCFFV to enlarge the Scope of the Draft Standard to cover other coloured varieties of pitahayas marketed internationally, the Drafting Group agreed to refer to "pitahayas" instead of "yellow pitahayas" throughout the text.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Section 1 - Definition of Produce

2. In view of the above decision, it was agreed to generally refer to "*the genera Selenicereus and Hylacereus*".

Section 2.1 - Minimum Requirements

3. The Drafting Group agreed to the following revisions to Section 2.1:

- (a) A new indent "*free from cracks in the skin*" was inserted, as this was a characteristic that could occur with pitahayas and that needed to be checked.
- (b) The indent "clean and practically free from visible foreign matter principally in the terminal aperture" was reworded to read "*clean and free of any visible foreign matter*" since a clean aspect was a requirement for the whole fruit.
- (c) The indent "free from abnormal external moisture resulting from mishandling in the post-harvest process" was aligned with the standardized language used in Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables.

4. In Section 2.1.1, a reference to "commercial type" was added for consistency throughout the text.

Section 2.2 - Class I

5. In the first indent, the reference to the elongation of the apex was deleted as this was not the only type of defect in shape.

6. In the second indent, the term "scarring" was replaced by "slight defects of the skin" for consistency with other Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables. In consequence, the corresponding provision in Section 2.2.3 - Class II was amended accordingly.

Section 3 - Provisions concerning Sizing

7. The reference to minimum weight was deleted from the introductory statement as it was already referenced in the sizing scale for yellow pitahayas and a new sizing range for red/white pitahayas were introduced. It was noted that the sizes needed to be divided into two tables, depending on the variety of pitahaya, because there were different size ranges that the producer needed to guarantee. These values were based on marketing experience for these fruits and were the sizes most representative of production.

Section 6.2.2 - Nature of Produce

8. A new sentence "Commercial type defined by colour of pulp (yellow, red or white)" was added since the type of pitahaya in the container needed to be identified, given that the standard covered three commercial types.

Annex

9. The Annex was deleted as it was not applicable to all the commercial types of pitahaya covered by the Draft Standard.

¹ CX/FFV 00/6 - Comments submitted by Cuba, France, Germany and Spain.