codex alimentarius commission

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

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Agenda Item 3(b) **CX/FFV 09/15/6-Add.1**

October 2009

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Fifteenth Session

Mexico City, Mexico, 19 – 23 October 2009

DRAFT STANDARD FOR APPLES

Comments

(Argentina, India, Mexico and New Zealand)

ARGENTINA

Argentina appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments.

2.2 **MATURITY REQUIREMENTS**

Argentina supports the wording suggested by the drafting group.

2.4 **COLOURING**

Argentina supports the wording suggested by the drafting group.

4.1 **QUALITY TOLERANCES**

Argentina supports the tolerance levels defined in Extra Class, Class I and Class II (1%, 1% and 2%, respectively).

5.1 **UNIFORMITY**

Argentina supports option B; uniformity should be base on weight.

On the other hand, Argentina does not support the inclusion of an option C where uniformity is based on national legislation of importing country. In our view, this reference to national standards in international standards reflects very poor regulatory practice. The contents of Codex standards should be based on consensus and option C reflects exactly the opposite, i.e. the lack of consensus.

ANNEX I – MAXIMUM ALLOWANCE FOR DEFECTS

Argentina maintains its initial proposal. See the percentages in Extra Class in bold for Smooth net-like Russetting and the surface area in square centimeters for the three classes of Accumulated Blemishes & Bruising in the table below.

MAXIMUM ALLOWANCE FOR DEFECTS

DEFECTS ALLOWED		"EXTRA" CLASS	CLASS I	CLASS II
Russetting outside Calyx/stem cavity	• Smooth net-like	**5% of surface area**	20% of surface area	50% of surface area
	• Smooth solid	1%	5% of surface area	33 % of surface area

Accumulation for both types of russeting should not exceed the following	3%	20%	50%
Accumulated Blemishes & Bruising Which Scabs (*Venturia inaequalis*) And/or of which healed hail marks/or other similar indentations	**0.75 cm ^{2}** -	**2.0cm^2** 0.25 cm^2 1.0 cm^2	**3.0 cm^2** 1cm ^{2} 2.5 cm^2
Stem or Calyx cracks (healed or well cured)	----	0.5 cm	1 cm
Maximum length of elongated shaped defects	----	2 cm	4 cm

Russetting can be simple described as a "brownish roughened area or streaks on the skin of the apple". In some apple varieties russeting is a characteristic of the variety and for others a quality defect. Allowances for russetting will be applied to apple varieties that russetting is not a characteristic of.

INDIA

During the physical meeting of the Working Group held at Fredericksburg, VA from 20 to 23 July, 2009, the discussion was confined only to certain issues of draft 'Codex Standard of Apples' given in square brackets. Although India has been pressing the need for modification of the draft Standards on several issues, these have not been taken up for consideration. India would, therefore, like to reiterate its position on the following issues for consideration during 15th Session of CCFFV:

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

In the first indent, the words, "the stalk (stem) may be missing, provided the break is clean and the adjacent skin is not damaged;" may be modified to read, "stalk (stem) should be intact", as it is felt that removal of the stalk (stem) may cause bacterial contamination inside the fruit. Moreover, it provides a vent causing loss of moisture, carbohydrates and phenols. It also causes increase in the evolution of ethylene, which enhances the ripening process, thereby, decreasing the shelf life of the fruit.

In the third indent, the sentence may be replaced by the word, "– *firm"*. In fact, during the 14th session of CCFFV, the word' firm' was placed in square brackets as the ninth indent. India's view is that the square brackets need to be removed. There is no Codex standard where the words, 'not soft' have been used. On the other hand, there are many Codex standards where the word, 'firm' has been used.

In the fifth indent, the words, *"and diseases"* may be added after the word, "pests". This is suggested, as there may be situations where pests could be killed by providing treatment to the produce, but the sign of the disease will still remain in the fruit.

2.1.1 In line with other Codex Standards of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, the second paragraph along with the two indents may be given a separate serial number as follows:

"2.1.2 The apples must be free from signs of physical injury and the ~~The~~ development……..place of destination."

2.3 CLASSIFICATION

The sentence may be reworded as follows: *"Apples are classified in three classes defined below, subject to the defects allowed in Annex - I: Maximum Allowance for Defects:"*

2.3.2 CLASS I and 2.3.3 CLASS II

The second indent '- a slight defect in colouring' need to be supported with certain parameters as was available in Annex - I of the earlier version of the draft Codex Standard for apples. India is, therefore, of the view that Annex-I for colour classification of apples needs to be retained with the proposed amendments as annexed.

2.4 COLOURING

India does not support the introduction of colour codes, as it is not in accordance with Codex Standards and could lead to confusion. The percentage of which colour, whether red, yellow or green has not been defined. India, therefore reiterates the need to retain Annex-I of the initial draft standard.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

The second paragraph discusses apples of different sizes. For convenience sake, India proposes that this paragraph may be replaced by the following, to take into account both large and small varieties of apples as well as the consumer preferences for different sizes of the fruit:

Minimum diameter and weight for all classes of apples

Fruit Varieties	*"Extra" Class*		*Class I*		*Class II*	
	Diameter	*Weight*	*Diameter*	*Weight*	*Diameter*	*Weight*
Large Fruit Varieties	*70 mm*	*220 g*	*65 mm*	*150 g*	*60 mm*	*130 g*
Other Varieties	*65 mm*	*150 g*	*60 mm*	*120 g*	*55 mm*	*90 g*

In this situation, the reference to Brix can be removed.

4. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

India is of the view that the second paragraph along with the two indents may be deleted.

4.1.1 - 'Extra' Class; 4.1.2 - Class I; and 4.1.3 - Class II

India is of the view that there is no practice in Codex to provide tolerances over and above the tolerance limits specified under the standard provisions of the text. The tolerance of five, ten & ten percent provided for the three classes should, therefore, include the maximum allowances for defects given in *Annex - II*. Thus, it is proposed that the following be added in each of the three Classes:

"Included therein shall be the defects as given in Annex - II."

Besides, decay of one fruit could lead to rapid spoiling of other fruits in the package. Therefore, the sentence in the second paragraph, which was placed in square bracket, during the 14th Session of CCFFV *"[Included therein shall be allowed not more than [0% none] [0.5 / 1.0%] for apples affected by decay or internal breakdown at destination.]"* may be deleted from the text in case of all the three Classes.

4.2 SIZE TOLERANCES

In light of India's proposal in Para 3 (Provisions concerning sizing), the second paragraph may be deleted.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 UNIFORMITY

In respect of the second paragraph, India proposes the following wordings.

"The maximum difference in diameter between apples in the same package shall be limited to 5 mm or 15 g in terms of weight."

6. MARKING OR LABELLING

6.1 CONSUMER PACKAGES

This para covers consumer packages and para 6.2 covers non-retail containers. It is proposed that both kinds of packages may be defined because in certain countries, even a 20 kg package may be considered a consumer (retail) package.

6.1.1 Nature of Produce

In certain situations, a package may contain different varieties and/or sizes of apples. Since relevant information is needed by the purchaser for business decisions, it is proposed that the paragraph may be modified to read as follows:

"*If the produce is not visible from the outside, each package, or lot for produce presented in bulk, shall be labeled as to the name of the produce and may be labeled as to name of the variety, class and size/weight. or the number of pieces presented in rows and layers. <u>If the package contains apples of different varieties, the names of varieties and their respective size codes shall also be mentioned on the label.</u>* "

6.2 NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS

The title needs to be reworded to read as 'Non Retail Package' for sake of uniformity.

As mentioned in 6.1 above, the minimum size of a non-retail package may need to be defined so as to determine whether the package also needs to be labeled with varieties, class and size/weight.

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

It is proposed that the second indent may read as follows:

"*– Size <u>Code</u>*"

<u>ANNEX - I</u>

India supports the following:

GROUP A: VARIETIES WITH RED COLOURING

In "Extra" Class, "2/3" may be modified to "*3/4* ".

In certain countries, there are varieties with semi red or mixed colouring. Hence, Group B may need to be retained as follows:

GROUP B: VARIETIES WITH SEMI-RED OR MIXED COLOURING

"Extra" Class: At least 1/2 of the surface of the fruit is red in colour.

Class I: At least 1/3 of the surface of the fruit is red in colour.

Class II: At least 1/6 of the surface of the fruit is red in colour.

GROUP C: VARIETIES WITH STRIPES AND SLIGHT RED COLOURING

It is proposed to retain Group C.

GROUP D: GREEN AND YELLOW VARIETIES

It is proposed to retain Group D with the same words as in Group C.

<u>ANNEX – II</u>

MAXIMUM ALLOWANCE FOR DEFECTS

As a compromise, India agrees to support the following text in the table given below:

Defects Allowed		"Extra" Class	Class I	Class II
Russetting outside Calyx/ stem cavity	• smooth net-like	3 % of surface area	~~20 %~~10 of surface area	~~50 %~~ 15 % of surface area
	• Smooth solid	1 %	5 % of surface area	~~33 %~~ 10 % of surface area
Accumulation for both types of russetting should not exceed the following		3 %	~~20 %~~ 10 %	~~50 %~~ 15 %
Accumulated Blemishes & Bruising {Scabs *(Venturia inaequalis) excluded}*		1 %	5 %	10 %
~~- with slight discoloration;~~		~~.50 cm^2~~	~~1.0 cm^2~~	~~1.5 m^2~~ [13]

~~which Scabs *(Venturia inaequalis)*;~~ ~~and/or of which healed hail marks/or other similar indentations.~~		~~0.25 cm²~~ ~~1.0 cm²~~	~~1 cm²~~ ~~2.5 cm²~~
Stem or Calyx cracks (healed or well cured)	---	0.5 cm	~~1~~ 0.5 cm
Maximum length of elongated shaped defects	---	2 cm	4 cm

India supports inclusion of the last paragraph.

~~[13] Bruising with discoloration and dark blemishes not blending with skin color are accepted in this Class.~~

MEXICO

Mexico accepts the proposals for a minimum of **10.5º Brix** for all the varieties, regarding the tolerances for the minimum dissolved solids (SUGAR- DEGREES BRIX).

Concerning the size, Mexico accepts the proposal for **a minimum size not below 50 mm or 70 grams.**

Mexico has no problems in fulfilling these provisions, because of our climatic conditions. In fact, Mexico's apples are sweeter than other countries ones.

When starting on this standard, Mexico was in the position of an 11o Brix proposal; however, changing to 10.5o Brix is only 1/2 % difference which won't change the quality of the apples we are producing.

NEW ZEALAND

General comments

New Zealand was pleased to be a member of both the electronic working group and the physical working group on the Standard for Apples. We appreciated the leadership of the United States in hosting both these groups.

The physical working group worked very hard over 4 days, keeping in mind the Committee's intention to finalise the standard at the forthcoming 15th session. The working group was able to reach reasonable consensus positions on all the outstanding issues, with the willingness of the participating countries to make good compromises. New Zealand is therefore satisfied with the progress in drafting the standard.

The apple inspection workshop that preceded the working group was a valuable opportunity for discussion in a practical inspection setting. It enabled participants to reach more informed conclusions on the context of various parameters in the standard.

2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: Firm

New Zealand supports the term "not soft". This is a valid term that is appropriate specifically for apples.

We acknowledge that the term used in other Codex texts is "firm", but this may lead to apples being too hard. Terms used in other Codex texts are valuable as guidance, but should not be followed slavishly.

2.4 COLOUR CLASSIFICATION

New Zealand supports the conclusion of the working group.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING - Minimum Size and Brix Degrees

New Zealand supports the conclusion of the working group. We note that apples at 10.5° Brix can be suitable for dessert use (as we saw at the workshop) but in some cases might not be ready for immediate eating. The Brix level increases over time, so the proposed level allows the seller to choose the appropriate level for retail sale and ensures that apples have adequate "shelf life" after purchase. A higher Brix level will significantly shorten shelf life.

4.1.1 Quality Tolerances - Internal Breakdown and Decay

New Zealand supports the conclusion of the working group. We note that a “zero” tolerance is not a practical option for inspection of fruit at the point of import. It is normal that apples are packed with zero tolerance for internal breakdown and decay, but it is unavoidable that some slight decay will develop during transport and storage. It is also normal practice that product is sorted and repackaged after import, so that apples for retail sale would again be sold with zero tolerance for internal breakdown and decay.

5.1 UNIFORMITY

New Zealand supports the introduction of the three options A, B and C for assessing uniformity as it allows flexibility to accommodate the methods in use in different countries. Some countries size by diameter or count, with measurement by eye, as this is a low cost method though it may give irregular results. On the other hand other countries have introduced computerised sizing by weight.

ANNEX II: Maximum Allowance for Defects

New Zealand supports the proposed table as it provides a basis for progressing the standard. The figures are practicable and pragmatic, and are a good compromise developed by the working group.