

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 2(c)

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CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

17th Session

Mexico City, Mexico, 3 – 7 September 2012

UNECE STANDARDS FOR FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

BACKGROUND

1. As established in the Terms of Reference of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, the Committee is entrusted to elaborate worldwide standards and codes of practice as may be appropriate for fresh fruits and vegetables. This task should perform in consultation with the UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards with particular regard to ensuring that there is not duplication of standards or codes of practice and that they follow the same broad format.¹
2. In regard to cooperation between UNECE and Codex in the elaboration of fresh fruit and vegetables standards, the need for close cooperation in order to avoid duplication was reiterated by the 43rd Session of the Executive Committee (June 1996), and the suggestion was made that UNECE standards should be used as a starting point for draft Codex Standards where appropriate. On that occasion, the Executive Committee requested that relevant UNECE standards be distributed as working documents for the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables when like products were being considered.²
3. In addition, the 46th Session of the CCEXEC (June 1999) stressed the need for exchanges of information between the two parties concerned while recognizing that harmonization of standards for these commodities was important and that the broadest possible consensus on all international standards needed to be achieved.³
4. The Codex Alimentarius Commission has also stressed the need for the CCFFV to cooperate and coordinate with the UNECE towards the elaboration of harmonized standards without duplication of effort. While avoiding any unnecessary duplication of work, the collaboration would benefit both Codex and UNECE by allowing the Commission to use UNECE standards as a base for developing Codex standards and in doing so to give UNECE the international recognition to its standards.⁴
5. Since the CCFFV is currently discussing the revision of the Codex Standard for Avocado, the Codex Secretariat, in compliance with the recommendation of the Executive Committee, has attached to this document the UNECE Standard for Avocado for consideration by the Committee when discussing this matter under the relevant agenda items. In addition, the Layout for UNECE Standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables is attached for consideration by the Committee when discussing the Proposed Layout for Codex Standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

¹ Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual, Section IV, Subsidiary Bodies of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, available for downloading at: <http://www.codexalimentarius.org/>.

² ALINORM 97/3, para. 15.

³ ALINORM 99/4, para. 19.

⁴ ALINORM 95/37, para. 32 & ALINORM 99/37, para. 206.

UNECE STANDARD FFV-42
concerning the marketing and
commercial quality control of

AVOCADOS

2010 EDITION



UNITED NATIONS
New York and Geneva, 2010

NOTE

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

The commercial quality standards developed by the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) help facilitate international trade, encourage high-quality production, improve profitability and protect consumer interests. UNECE standards are used by governments, producers, traders, importers and exporters, and other international organizations. They cover a wide range of agricultural products, including fresh fruit and vegetables, dry and dried produce, seed potatoes, meat, cut flowers, eggs and egg products.

Any member of the United Nations can participate, on an equal footing, in the activities of the Working Party. For more information on agricultural standards, please visit our website <www.unece.org/trade/agr>.

The present revised Standard for Avocados is based on document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2009/4, reviewed and adopted by the Working Party at its sixty-sixth session.

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**UNECE standard FFV-42 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of
Avocados**

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to avocados of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Persea americana* Mill. to be supplied fresh to the consumer, parthenocarpic fruit and avocados for industrial processing being excluded.

II. Provisions concerning quality

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for avocados at the export-control stage, after preparation and packaging.

However, if applied at stages following export, products may show in relation to the requirements of the standard:

- a slight lack of freshness and turgidity
- for products graded in classes other than the "Extra" Class, a slight deterioration due to their development and their tendency to perish.

The holder/seller of products may not display such products or offer them for sale, or deliver or market them in any manner other than in conformity with this standard. The holder/seller shall be responsible for observing such conformity.

A. Minimum requirements

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

- intact
- sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter
- practically free from pests
- free from damage caused by pests affecting the flesh
- free from damage caused by low temperature
- having a stalk not more than 10 mm in length which must be cut off cleanly. However, its absence is not considered a defect on condition that the place of the stalk attachment is dry and intact
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste¹.

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

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

B. Maturity requirements

The development of the avocados should have reached a physiological stage, which will ensure a continuation of the ripening process to completion.

The fruit should have a minimum dry matter content, to be measured by drying to constant weight:

- 21 % for the variety Hass
- 20 % for the varieties Fuerte, Pinkerton, Reed and Edranol
- 19 % for the other varieties except for Antillian varieties that may show a lower dry matter content.

¹ The use of preserving agents or any other chemical substance liable to leave a foreign smell on the skin of the fruit is permitted where it is compatible with the regulations of the importing country.

The ripe fruit should be free from bitterness.

C. Classification

Avocados are classified in three classes, as defined below:

(i) "Extra" Class

Avocados in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety.

They must be free from 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. If present, the stalk must be intact.

(ii) Class I

Avocados in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety.

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:

- a slight defect in shape
- slight defects in colouring
- slight skin defects (corkiness, healed lenticels) and sunburn, provided they are not progressive; the maximum total area should not exceed 4 cm².

In no case may the defects affect the fruit flesh.

The stalk, if present, may be slightly damaged.

(iii) Class II

This class includes avocados that do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes but satisfy the minimum requirements specified above.

The following defects may be allowed, provided the avocados retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- defects in shape
- defects in colouring
- skin defects (corkiness, healed lenticels) and sunburn, provided they are not progressive; the maximum total area should not exceed 6 cm².

In no case may the defects affect the fruit flesh.

The stalk, if present, may be damaged.

III. Provisions concerning sizing

Size is determined by the weight or count of the fruit.

The minimum weight for avocados is 123 g except for Hass where it is 80 g and for Antillean varieties where it is 170 g.

To ensure uniformity in size between produce in the same package, the following provisions should be applied:

(a) For Antillean varieties

The weight of the smallest fruit shall be not less than 75 percent of the weight of the largest fruit in the same package.

(b) For other varieties the following size scale applies:

Size code	Weight range (g)
4	781 to 1220
6	576 to 780
8	456 to 576
10	364 to 462
12	300 to 371
14	258 to 313
16	227 to 274
18	203 to 243
20	184 to 217
22	165 to 196
24	151 to 175
26	144 to 157
28	134 to 147
30	123 to 137
S*	80 to 123 (Hass variety only)

* The difference between the smallest and largest fruit within a package should not be more than 25 g.

IV. Provisions concerning tolerances

At all marketing stages, tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each lot for produce not satisfying the requirements for the class indicated.

A. Quality tolerances

(i) "Extra" Class

A total tolerance of 5 per cent, by number or weight, of avocados not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class I is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 0.5 per cent in total may consist of produce satisfying the requirements of Class II quality.

(ii) Class I

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of avocados not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class II is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 1 per cent in total may consist of produce satisfying neither the requirements of Class II quality nor the minimum requirements, or of produce affected by decay.

(iii) Class II

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of avocados satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 2 per cent in total may consist of produce affected by decay.

B. Size tolerances

For all classes: a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of avocados not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing is allowed.

V. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only avocados of the same origin, variety, quality, colouring² and size.

The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

B. Packaging

The avocados must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

The materials used inside the package must be 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 or stamps bearing trade specifications, is allowed, provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Stickers individually affixed to the produce shall be such that, when removed, they neither leave visible traces of glue nor lead to skin defects.

Packages must be free of all foreign matter.

VI. Provisions concerning marking

Each package³ must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside:

A. Identification

Packer and/or dispatcher/shipper:

Name and physical address (e.g. street/city/region/postal code and, if different from the country of origin, the country) or a code mark officially recognized by the national authority⁴.

B. Nature of produce

- "Avocados" if the contents are not visible from the outside
- "Antillean/Florida" or equivalent denomination, where appropriate
- Name of the variety.

C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin⁵ and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size expressed as minimum and maximum weights or by count
- Code number of the size scale and number of fruits when it is different from code number or, optionally, code number of the size scale and the net weight of the package.

E. Official control mark (optional)

Adopted 1986

Last revised 2010

The OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables has published an explanatory illustrated brochure on the application of this standard. The publication may be obtained from the OECD bookshop at: www.oecdbookshop.org.

² A change in the colour of the dark-skinned varieties is not considered as a defect, but the colouring of the fruit in each package must be uniform at the point of dispatch.

³ These marking provisions do not apply to sales packages presented in packages.

⁴ 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, and the code mark should be preceded by the ISO 3166 (alpha) country/area code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

⁵ The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.

**STANDARD LAYOUT FOR UNECE
STANDARDS ON FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES
2011**

The present revised Standard Layout has been revised and adopted at the sixty-seventh session of the Working Party.



UNITED NATIONS
New York and Geneva, 2011

STANDARD LAYOUT FOR UNECE STANDARDS

Standard layout for UNECE standards concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of fresh fruit and vegetables

In the text the following conventions are used:

{text}: For text which explains the use of the Standard Layout. This text does not appear in the standards.

<text>: For optional texts or text for which several alternatives exist, depending on the products.

UNECE Standard FFV-*{code of produce}*

concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of *{name of produce}*

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to *{name of produce}* of varieties (cultivars) grown from {Latin botanical reference *in italics* followed where necessary by the author's name} to be supplied fresh to the consumer, *{name of produce}* for industrial processing being excluded.

{According to the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature the name of taxon whose rank is lower than species (e.g. variety, subspecies, form) should be followed only by the name of author of the lowest rank. Example: *Apium graveolens* L. but *Apium graveolens* var. *dulce* (Mill.) Pers. (without letter L. after *Apium graveolens*.)}

{Additional provisions concerning the definition of the produce may be included under this heading}

II. Provisions concerning quality

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for *{name of produce}* at the export-control stage after preparation and packaging.

However, if applied at stages following export, products may show in relation to the requirements of the standard:

- a slight lack of freshness and turgidity
- <for products graded in classes other than the "Extra" Class,> a slight deterioration due to their development and their tendency to perish.

The holder/seller of products may not display such products or offer them for sale, or deliver or market them in any manner other than in conformity with this standard. The holder/seller shall be responsible for observing such conformity.

A. Minimum requirements

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the *{name of produce}* must be:

- intact {depending on the nature of the produce, a deviation from the provision is allowed}
- sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter {with regard to traces of soil, a deviation from this provision is allowed, depending on the nature of the produce}
- practically free from pests
- <free from damage caused by pests affecting the flesh>
- <practically free from damage caused by pests>
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

{Additional provisions may be made for specific standards, depending on the nature of the produce}.

<The produce must be sufficiently developed, and display satisfactory ripeness, depending on the nature of the produce.>

The development and condition of the {name of produce} must be such as to enable them:

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

B. Maturity requirements

{To be drawn up, depending on the produce}.

C. Classification

{Name of produce} are classified in two or three classes, as defined below:¹

(i) "Extra" Class

{Name of produce} in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

They must be:

.....
.....
.....

{Provisions, depending on the nature of the produce}.

They must be free from 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.

(ii) Class I

{Name of produce} in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

They must be:

.....
.....
.....

{Provisions, depending on the nature of the produce}.

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:

- a slight defect in shape
- slight defects in colouring
- slight skin defects.

.....
.....
.....

{Add additional defects allowed, depending on the nature of the produce}.

(iii) Class II

This class includes {name of produce} that do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes but satisfy the minimum requirements specified above.

¹ For those standards where it does not appear necessary to establish a classification, only the minimum requirements apply.

They must be:

.....
.....
.....

{Provisions, depending on the nature of the produce}.

The following defects may be allowed, provided the {name of produce} retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- defects in shape
- defects in colouring
- skin defects.

.....
.....
.....

{Add additional defects allowed, depending on the nature of the produce}.

III. Provisions concerning sizing

Size is determined by {diameter, length, weight, circumference, depending on the nature of produce}.

The minimum size shall be

<To ensure uniformity in size, the range in size between produce in the same package² shall not exceed>

<There is no sizing requirement for {name of produce, variety, commercial type or class depending on the nature of produce}.>

{Add provisions on minimum and maximum sizes and size range, depending on the nature of produce, the variety, the commercial type and possibly the individual classes}.

IV. Provisions concerning tolerances

At all marketing stages, tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each lot for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.

A. Quality tolerances

(i) "Extra" Class

A total tolerance of 5 per cent, by number or weight, of {name of produce} not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class I is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 0.5 per cent in total may consist of produce satisfying the requirements of Class II quality.

{Add possible tolerances for individual defects, depending on the nature of the produce}.

² {Definitions: The term "packages" covers "sales packages" and "prepackages".

Packages are individually packaged part of a lot, including contents. The packaging is conceived so as to facilitate handling and transport of a number of sales packages or of products loose or arranged, in order to prevent damage by physical handling and transport. The package may constitute a sales package. Road, rail, ship and air containers are not considered as packages.

Sales packages are individually packaged part of a lot, including contents. The packaging of sales packages is conceived so as to constitute a sales unit to the final user or consumer at the point of purchase.}

(ii) Class I

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of *{name of produce}* not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class II is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 1 per cent in total may consist of produce satisfying neither the requirements of Class II quality nor the minimum requirements, or of produce affected by decay.

{Add possible tolerances for individual defects, depending on the nature of the produce}.

(iii) Class II

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of *{name of produce}* satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 2 per cent in total may consist of produce affected by decay.

{Add possible tolerances for individual defects, depending on the nature of the produce}.

B. Size tolerances

For all classes {for individual standards, however, different provisions according to the individual classes may be laid down}: a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of *{name of produce}* not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing is allowed.

{Possible provisions concerning admissible limits of deviations for sized or unsized produce}.

V. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package² <(or lot for produce presented in bulk in the transport vehicle)> must be uniform and contain only *{name of produce}* of the same origin, quality and size <(if sized)>.

{In addition, for individual standards, uniformity concerning variety and/or commercial type may be laid down, depending on the nature of the produce}.

{Other possible provisions, depending on the nature of the produce}.

.....
.....
.....

<However, a mixture of *{name of produce}* of distinctly different <species> <varieties> <commercial types> <colours> may be packed together in a <package> <sales package>, provided they are uniform in quality and, for each <species> <variety> <commercial type> <colour> concerned, in origin.>

{If specific requirements, including net weight limits of sales packages, are needed, they can be added within the context of individual standards.}

The visible part of the contents of the package² <(or lot for produce presented in bulk in the transport vehicle)> must be representative of the entire contents.

B. Packaging

{Name of produce} must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

The materials used inside the package² must be 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 or stamps bearing trade specifications, is allowed, provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Stickers individually affixed to the produce shall be such that, when removed, they neither leave visible traces of glue nor lead to skin defects.

Packages² <(or lots for produce presented in bulk in the transport vehicle)> must be free of all foreign matter.

VI. Provisions concerning marking

Each package³ must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside:

<For *{name of produce}* transported in bulk (direct loading into a transport vehicle) these particulars must appear on a document accompanying the goods, and attached in a visible position inside the transport vehicle.>

A. Identification

Packer and/or dispatcher/shipper:

Name and physical address (e.g. street/city/region/postal code and, if different from the country of origin, the country) or a code mark officially recognized by the national authority⁴.

B. Nature of produce

- Name of the produce if the contents are not visible from the outside
- <-name of the variety>

<The name of the variety can be replaced by a synonym. A trade name⁵ can only be given in addition to the variety or the synonym>

- <-name of the variety (optional)>
- <-name of the variety. In the case of a mixture of *{name of produce}* of distinctly different varieties <species>, names of the different varieties <species>.>
- <"Mixture of *{name of produce}*", or equivalent denomination, in the case of a mixture of distinctly different commercial types and/or colours of *{name of produce}*. If the produce is not visible from the outside, the commercial types and/or colours and the quantity of each in the package must be indicated.>

{Add name of the commercial type, depending on the nature of the produce}.

C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin⁶ and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name.
- <In the case of a mixture of distinctly different varieties <species> of *{name of produce}* of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the variety <species> concerned.>
- <In the case of a mixture of distinctly different commercial types and/or colours of *{name of produce}* of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the commercial type and/or colour concerned.>

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size <(if sized)>

{Add other possible particulars, depending on the nature of the produce}.

E. Official control mark (optional)

³ These marking provisions do not apply to sales packages presented in packages.

⁴ 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, and the code mark should be preceded by the ISO 3166 (alpha) country/area code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

⁵ A trade name can be a trade mark for which protection has been sought or obtained or any other commercial denomination.

⁶ The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.

{Depending on the nature of the produce, a list of varieties can be included as an annex.}

Annex I

<Non-Exhaustive><Exhaustive> List of {name of produce} Varieties

Some of the varieties listed in the following may be marketed under names for which trademark protection has been sought or obtained in one or more countries. Names believed by the United Nations to be varietal names are listed in the first column. Other names by which the United Nations believes the variety may be known are listed in the second column. Neither of these two columns is intended to include trademarks. References to known trademarks have been included in the third column for information only. The presence of any trademarks in the third column does not constitute any licence or permission to use that trademark – such licence must come directly from the trademark owner. In addition, the absence of a trademark in the third column does not constitute any indication that there is no registered/pending trademark for such a variety. For labelling requirements please refer to section VI of the standard.⁷

Variety	Synonyms	Trademarks	{Other information, depending on the produce}

⁷ Some of the varietal names listed in the first column may indicate varieties for which patent protection has been obtained in one or more countries. Such proprietary varieties may only be produced or traded by those authorized by the patent holder to do so under an appropriate licence. The United Nations takes no position as to the validity of any such patent or the rights of any such patent holder or its licensee regarding the production or trading of any such variety.

The United Nations endeavoured to ensure that no trademark names are listed in columns 1 and 2 of the table. However, it is the responsibility of any trademark owner to notify the United Nations promptly if a trademark name has been included in the table and to provide the United Nations (see address below) with an appropriate varietal, or generic name for the variety, as well as adequate evidence ownership of any applicable patent or trademark regarding such variety so that the list can be amended. Provided that no further information is needed from the trademark holder, the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards will change the list accordingly at the session following receipt of the information. The United Nations takes no position as to the validity of any such trademarks or the rights of any such trademark owners or their licensees.

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{In the case of lists of varieties where only very few trademarks appear, the list may be presented in the annex as follows (inclusion of references to trade names in footnotes)}

Annex II

<Non-Exhaustive><Exhaustive> List of *{name of produce}* Varieties

Some of the varieties listed in the following may be marketed under names for which trademark protection has been sought or obtained in one or more countries. Names believed by the United Nations to be varietal names are listed in the first column. Other names by which the United Nations believes the variety may be known are listed in the second column. Neither of these two columns is intended to include trademarks. References to known trademarks have been included in footnotes for information only. The absence of a trademark in the footnotes does not constitute any indication that there is no registered/pending trademark for such a variety.⁸

Variety	Synonyms	{Other information, depending on the produce}
Variety "xyz"		

Adopted 1985
Last revised 2011

⁸ Some of the varietal names listed in the first column may indicate varieties for which patent protection has been obtained in one or more countries. Such proprietary varieties may only be produced or traded by those authorized by the patent holder to do so under an appropriate licence. The United Nations takes no position as to the validity of any such patent or the rights of any such patent holder or its licensee regarding the production or trading of any such variety.

The United Nations endeavoured to ensure that no trademark names are listed in the table. However, it is the responsibility of any trademark owner to notify the United Nations promptly if a trademark name has been included in the table and to provide the United Nations (see address below) with an appropriate varietal, or generic name for the variety as well as adequate evidence ownership of any applicable patent or trademark regarding such variety. Provided that no further information is needed from the trademark holder, the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards will change the list accordingly at the session following receipt of the information. The United Nations takes no position as to the validity of any such trademarks or the rights of any such trademark owners or their licensees.