



Food and Agriculture  
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Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - Fax: (+39) 06 5705 4593 - E-mail: [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org) - [www.codexalimentarius.org](http://www.codexalimentarius.org)

Agenda Item 3(d)

CX/FFV 12/17/6  
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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

17<sup>th</sup> Session

Mexico City, Mexico, 3 – 7 September 2012

DRAFT PROVISIONS FOR UNIFORMITY RULES AND OTHER SIZE-RELATED PROVISIONS

(Sections 5.1 and 6.2.4) (draft Standard for Avocado)

(At Step 6)

(Prepared by the Electronic Working Group on Avocado led by Spain)

Codex Members and Observers wishing to submit comments on this proposal should do so in conformity with the Uniform Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts (Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual) as presented in the [Annex I](#) before **31 July 2012** to: the Codex Contact Point of Mexico, Dirección General de Normas (DGN), Av. Puente de Tecamachalco 6, 2do piso, Lomas de Tecamachalco Sección Fuentes, C.P. 53950 Naucalpan de Juárez, Estado de México, México (Tels.: +52 (55) 57 29 94 80, +52 (55) 57 29 91 00, Ext.: 43220, 43218; Fax: +52 (55) 55 20 97 15; E-mail: [codexmex@economia.gob.mx](mailto:codexmex@economia.gob.mx); [codexmex1@economia.gob.mx](mailto:codexmex1@economia.gob.mx)), with a copy to the Secretariat, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy (Fax: +39 (06) 5705 4593; E-mail: [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org))

**Format for submitting comments:** In order to facilitate the compilation of comments and prepare a more useful comments document, Members and Observers, which are not yet doing so, are requested to provide their comments in the format outlined in Annex III to this document.

## BACKGROUND

1. The Codex Committee on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CCFFV) agreed at its 16th Session to establish an electronic working group (EWG) led by Spain and working in English and Spanish to provide a proposal for uniformity rules and size tolerances for finalization by the next session of the Committee.
2. The Committee noted that for avocados sized by count, uniformity rules should be further developed in Section 5.1. It was explained that this would allow for different sizing count practices applied by trade operators while ensuring uniformity of the presentation in the package by establishing maximum differences in size between fruits in the same package in relation to the size indicated on the package.<sup>1</sup>

## REPORT

3. The electronic Working Group comprised Argentina, Australia, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, Spain (rapporteur), United States of America and Sudan.
4. The EWG began deliberations in January, 2012. The members of the EWG were asked to consider and comment on a proposal elaborated by the leading country on avocado uniformity requirements. The proposal tried to provide wide enough ranges for sizing uniformity to allow for any sizing method used in international trade and, at the same time, to ensure uniformity in size in the same package.
5. There were 6 responses to this first round of comments, with very little support for the initial proposal. Three members suggested a different uniformity proposal that reads: *the weight of the smallest fruit shall be not less than 75 percent of the weight of the largest fruit in the same package.*
6. This new proposal was sent to the EWG members in May 2012 for a second round of comments, with the following considerations that:

<sup>1</sup> REP11/FFV, paras. 44-46, 59 and Appendix II.

- It referred only to uniformity rules (developed in Section 5.1), and not to the sizing methods.
- It applied to avocados sized by count, to ensure uniformity of presentation in the package by establishing maximum differences in size between fruit in the same package in relation to the size indicated on the package;
- It was a simple and easy to apply guide and provided the required guidance on uniformity, allowing the standard to remain flexible in implementation of the provision;
- It already reflected the practices in important markets.

7. Besides, having taken into account the mandate of the EWG, the rapporteur suggested to amend the text in Section 6.2.4 "Commercial identification" (paragraph 46 of the report REP11/FFV) in order to be consistent with the sizing and uniformity provisions.

8. Five responses were submitted to the rapporteur as a result of this second round of comments and all of them were in agreement with the proposal.

9. Furthermore, one of the members of the EWG pointed out the following two suggestions that were not discussed by the EWG should be put to the Committee for consideration: the proposed provision on uniformity should replace Section 3 PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING; and that there should be a provision for mixed sizes and varieties in presentation, as it is allowed in the Standard for Apples (Codex STAN 299-2010)

### **Conclusion/Recommendation**

10. Based on the aforementioned and if the absence of comment may be considered as agreement, it can be said that the EWG has reached a consensus on sections 5.1 and 6.2.4 of the Draft Codex Standard for Avocado, which is proposed for consideration by the Committee (see Annex I).

### Comments on the amendments of section 6.2.4

11. The words "or by count" have been added because there are two sizing options included in the standard (by weight and by count) and both should also be included in the labelling section.

12. The third indent has been deleted because it referred only to the sizing table by weight of the standard when this was the only way of sizing and now is optional. Furthermore, the marking of the sizing by weight is already in the second indent. As a consequence, the size code wouldn't be compulsory anymore, but optional.

## ANNEX I

## DRAFT PROVISIONS FOR UNIFORMITY RULES AND OTHER SIZE-RELATED PROVISIONS

(Sections 5.1 and 6.2.4) (draft Standard for Avocado)

Proposed text - bold and shaded

**5.1 UNIFORMITY**

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

**To ensure uniformity in size between produce in the same package when they are sized by count, the weight of the smallest fruit shall be not less than 75% of the weight of the largest fruit in the same package.**

**6.2.4 Commercial Identification**

- Class;
- Size expressed in minimum and maximum weight in grams **or by count**;
- [~~Code number of the size scale and count of fruits when it is different from reference number;~~]
- Net weight (optional).

**ANNEX II  
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

	PAIS	PERSONA DE CONTACTO	DATOS PERSONALES	EMAIL
1	ARGENTINA	Ligia López	Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería (MAG), Instituto Nacional de Innovación y Transferencia en Tecnología Agropecuaria (INTA)	<a href="mailto:llopez@inta.go.cr">llopez@inta.go.cr</a>
2	AUSTRALIA	Ms Angela O'Sullivan Sherryl Greathead	Manager, International Food Standards Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	<a href="mailto:Angela.O'Sullivan@daff.gov.au">Angela.O'Sullivan@daff.gov.au</a> <a href="mailto:sherryl.greathead@daff.gov.au">sherryl.greathead@daff.gov.au</a>
3	CHILE	Claudia Espinoza		<a href="mailto:Claudia.espinoza@sag.gob.cl">Claudia.espinoza@sag.gob.cl</a>
4	COSTA RICA	JOCELYN M. SALES	Division Chief Food Development Center, National Food Authority	<a href="mailto:joyce23_dms@yahoo.com">joyce23_dms@yahoo.com</a>
9	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Dra. Matilde Vásquez	Tel. + 1 - 809-541-0382 Dirección postal: 10514	<a href="mailto:codexsespas@yahoo.com">codexsespas@yahoo.com</a>
7	JAMAICA	Mrs. Juliet Goldsmith	Manager, Pest Risk Analyst Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries Plant Quarantine /Produce Inspection Branch	<a href="mailto:julietgoldsmith@gmail.com">julietgoldsmith@gmail.com</a>
8	MEXICO	Dr. Salvador Ochoa Ascencio	Profesor Investigador Facultad de Agro biología Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo	<a href="mailto:salvadorochoa@prodigy.net.mx">salvadorochoa@prodigy.net.mx</a> <a href="mailto:sochoaascencio@yahoo.com">sochoaascencio@yahoo.com</a>
5	SPAIN	Jaime Camps Almiñana <u>Chair of the Working Group</u>	Jefe de Área Subdirección General de Inspección, Certificación y Asistencia Técnica del Comercio Exterior. MINISTERIO DE ECONOMÍA Y COMPETITIVIDAD	<a href="mailto:jcamps@comercio.mineco.es">jcamps@comercio.mineco.es</a>
10	SUDAN	Mrs. Dena Omer Mohamed Ali	Assistant scientist, Food chemistry and Nutrition Department	<a href="mailto:dinaomer73@yahoo.com">dinaomer73@yahoo.com</a>
6	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Dorian A. LaFond	International Standards Coordinator Office of the Deputy Administrator AMS Fruit and Vegetable Programs 1400 Independence Ave. SW Washington DC 20250	<a href="mailto:Dorian.LaFond@ams.usda.gov">Dorian.LaFond@ams.usda.gov</a>

**ANNEX III****GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR THE PROVISION OF COMMENTS**

In order to facilitate the compilation and prepare a more useful comments' document, Members and Observers, which are not yet doing so, are requested to provide their comments under the following headings:

- (i) General Comments
- (ii) Specific Comments

Specific comments should include a reference to the relevant section and/or paragraph of the document that the comments refer to.

When changes are proposed to specific paragraphs, Members and Observers are requested to provide their proposal for amendments accompanied by the related rationale. New texts should be presented in underlined/bold font and deletion in ~~strike through font~~.

In order to facilitate the work of the Secretariats to compile comments, Members and Observers are requested to refrain from using colour font/shading as documents are printed in black and white and from using track change mode, which might be lost when comments are copied/pasted into a consolidated document.

In order to reduce the translation work and save paper, Members and Observers are requested not to reproduce the complete document but only those parts of the texts for which any change and/or amendments is proposed.