CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION E

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

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Agenda Item 4(a) **CX/FFV 12/17/7**

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CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

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DRAFT STANDARD FOR POMEGRANATE AT STEP 7 – REP11/FFV, APPENDIX V

Comments at Step 6 from Colombia and Iran

COLOMBIA

Colombia is pleased to submit the following comments on the DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR POMEGRANATE at Step 5, sent by the Secretariat of Codex Alimentarius Committee:

Henceforth we consider the document CX/FFV 12/17/8.

I. Section 2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- free of sunburns affecting the ~~[flesh/~~edible~~/arils]~~ of the fruit.

For users of the Standard, the term "edible part" is better known than the technical terms "flesh or arils".

II. Section 2.1 **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

-**Free of physical damages excepting those allowed, depending on the sizing of fruits (2.2. Classification).**

Include in section 2.1 minimum requirements the text "free of physical damages…" due to they are not referred in previous bullets.

III. Section **2.2.2 Class I**

The defects must not, in any case, affect the ~~[flesh/~~ edible part~~/arils]~~ of the fruit.

For users of the standard, the term "edible part" is better known than the technical term "arils" or "flesh".

IV. Sección 2.2.3 Class II

The defects must not, in any case, affect the [~~flesh/~~edible part~~/arils]~~ of the fruit.

For users of the standard, the term "edible part" is better known than the technical term "arils" or "flesh".

V. Section 2.2.3 **Class II**

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

2.2.3 **Class II**

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

Change the Word "rambutans" to "pomegranates".

IX. Section 6.1.1 **Nature of Produce**

~~[If produce is not visible from the outside,]~~…

Packages shall be labelled regardless of the produce is visible from outside.

X. Section 6.2.2 **Nature of Produce**

Name of the produce ~~if the contents are not visible from the outside~~. Name of the variety (where appropriate).

Packages shall be labelled regardless of the product is visible from outside.

XI: Section 6.2.4 **Commercial Identification**

- Class;
- Size (if sized);
- Net weight ~~(optional)~~.

It should be mandatory to include the net weight, according to the current commercial practices.

IRAN

Iran is pleased to submit the following comments in response to CX/FFV 12/17/8 (JUNE 2012) on the Draft Codex Standard for Pomegranate; the comments are seen in bold and italic text within the indicated sections/paragraphs.

Section 1 Definition of produce

1. The name pomegranate derives from the Medieval Latin words pomus, meaning apple and granatum, meaning seeded. Pomegranate was initially classified under the Lythraceae family, but later revised by two scientists, Hooker and Benetham, and placed under the family name Punicaceae – the basis of their decision:

a. The lack of an internal excretory system in the vegetative organs.

b. Single ovary with one receptacle.

c. Several stamens protruding from inside the receptacle.

This family consist of one genus and two species in the world:

a-Punica granatum L. species with 2 or 3 style rows-indigenous of Iran and the Mediterranean region.

b-Punica protopunica Balf species with a single style row - indigenous of Sumatra.

2. The term “cultivar” essentially refers to a plant variety which has been cultivated. The term “variety” is more correctly used in agronomy.

The committee had agreed to delete the reference to "**cultivar**" and to refer to "commercial varieties" only as not all cultivars were traded commercially. However,Iran recommends the use of “cultivar” as a more suitable term of reference.

The term “variety” is not related to cultivation or soil condition. It concerns a genotype; it is a botanical term. Whereas this standard concerns those “cultivated varieties” that are available, namely the “cultivars”.

A “commercial variety” suggests a specific connection of produce to a market and its marketing characteristics, while a “cultivar” also associates with the morphological characteristics not only of the fruit produce, but the whole plant, root, leaves, shoots, etc. Moreover, all cultivars have a commercial potential and hence marketing characteristics, be it at a local or international level.

Hence we are of the opinion that the term “cultivar” adequately covers the characteristics of all cultivated pomegranate varieties which exist and can have a market presence.

Section 2.1 Minimum requirements

1. In botany the term “**aril**“ is commonly used to refer to the fleshy and usually brightly coloured cover of some seeds that develop from the ovule stalk and partially or wholly envelope the seed. The “aril” is essentially the *edible part* of the pomegranate fruit and so the use of the term “aril” in this standard is deemed to be correct.

   On the other hand “flesh” is used for a sort moist part of a fruit. Considering these definitions, it seems “aril” has a better over all meaning and it is suggested to be used in the text.

   With respect to edible part (any substance that can be used as food) we do not recommend because it has a general meaning any substance as food.

2. Frost and low temperature damage can signify different conditions:

   As a rule, frost damage implies low temperature conditions that occur while the fruit is still on the tree – preharvest. During frost, intercellular water is frozen.

   Freezing due to low temperature implies conditions that occur to the fruit during storage or transport – postharvest. During freezing, intracellular water is frozen, and so the nature of the damage can be different from frost damage.

So by definition we should allow for 2 categories:

- **Free of damage caused by frost**
- **Free of damage caused by low temperature**

3. Sunburn and high temperature damage denote different conditions:

Sunburn is a result of intense localized radiation which directly affects the skin, colour and edible part of the fruit.

Exposure to prolonged high temperature causes discolouration, a breakdown in texture and the development of a "cooked" flavour in the arils.

Therefore these can be defined separately as follows:

- **Free of sunburn affecting the skin and edible portion of the fruit**
- **Free of damage caused by high temperature**

Section 2.1.1

The pomegranates must have reached an appropriate degree of ripeness consistent with the cultivar in question and the area in which they are grown.

The condition of the pomegranates should be such so as:

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

Section 2.2 Classification

The committee had agreed to delete "**cracking**" from the minimum requirements and consequently to amend classes I and II by including cracking as a skin defect.

Please note that cracks on pomegranates (at the very least) open the outer skin while leaving the inner skin intact. Such fruit with visible cracks are not acceptable in commercial practice and are usually diverted to industrial processing. Furthermore, cracks facilitate the entry of pathogenic organisms which lead to rapid deterioration of the fruit.

Hence it is recommended that the absence of cracking remains as a minimum requirement and be removed from classification section 2.2

Section 4.2 Size tolerance

To align this section with the standard language applied in most codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables, we propose the following sentence:

For all classes of fruit subjected to rules of uniformity, 10% by number or weight of pomegranates not meeting the size indicated on the package.

Section 6.1.1 Nature of produce

As a rule pomegranate packages are open on top, with the contents clearly visible to the consumer. However if the packaging happens not to allow visual access to the fruit, then the specifications of the fruit contents – variety, size, number, class, etc. – should be clearly provided via labelling attached to the package. This label should require identifying specifications such as variety, size and class to help potential buyers.

Section 6.2.4: Commercial identification

Regarding GSFA Fresh fruits are generally free of additives. However, if fresh fruit is coated, cut or peeled for presentation to consumers, it may contain additives.

Pomegranate is covered by a thick skin, and sound fruit are unlikely to have fissures (cracks) or be punctured, therefore the entrance of fungus or mould via the skin is very limited.

The waxing of pomegranates is not a common practice and usually only carried out during sorting operations and for the prevention of desiccation. Unlike the case for the surface treatment of citrus fruit where microbial preservatives are sometimes applied, for pomegranates plant resins are used which have the sole function of maintaining the freshness of the fruit skin.

Pomegranate trade does not require quarantine phytosanitary certification. This is because pesticides are not used in pomegranate orchards. The use of preservatives of any form would necessitate declaration via product labelling.