

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 5

CX/PFV 06/23/10
October 2006

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

23rd Session

Arlington, VA (Washington DC metro area), U.S.A.,
16 – 21 October 2006

PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE PRIORITY LIST FOR THE STANDARDIZATION OF PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

(Comments in Response to CL 2005/03-PFV)

Comments have been received from the International Olive Oil Council

BACKGROUND

Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables

1. The Committee considered proposals for addition to the Priority List from the EC, the United States and the International Olive Oil Council. The Committee recalled that proposals for new work or revision of standards should be accompanied by a project document and the Executive Committee would review the status of development of draft standards at the end of a specified time-frame, normally no more than five years. In view of the heavy workload for its next Session, the Committee decided to maintain the priority list unchanged¹.
2. The Committee may propose the removal and/or inclusion of new products for future work taking into account the *Proposals to Undertake New Work or to Revise a Standard* (Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual, Part 2 Critical Review) and the work already done by other international standardization organizations in this field. The new work undertaken shall be approved by the Codex Alimentarius Commission taking into account the outcome of the Critical Review conducted by the Executive Committee.

International Olive Oil Council

3. In conformity with the *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities* (Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual, 13th Edition), the **International Olive Oil Council (IOOC) requests the Codex Alimentarius Commission** to examine the Priority List for the Standardisation of Processed Fruits and vegetables (ALINORM 03/27, Appendix VII) and, when agenda item 5 of the provisional agenda (CX/PFV 04/22/1 May 2004) of the twenty-second session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (Washington D.C., 27 September–1 October) is discussed, to propose to the committee that **priority consideration be given to the Codex Standard for Table Olives CODEX STAN 66-1981**, in the light of the following:

- (a) The close cooperation between the Codex Alimentarius and the IOOC between 1970 and 1973 on the development of the first Codex Standard for Table Olives (CAC/RS 66-1974), which was adopted in 1974 and issued an amended reference in 1981 (CODEX STAN 66-1981).
- (b) The decision taken by the Codex Alimentarius Commission in 1983 to initiate the procedure for revising the Codex Table Olive Standard and to entrust the IOOC (designated as an “other body” in charge of amendments) with revising the Standard in conjunction with the members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and the ensuing adoption of the revised Standard, CODEX STAN 66-1981 (Rev. 1-1987), in 1987.

¹ ALINORM 05/28/27, paras. 91 - 98.

- (c) The distribution in October 1997 (CL 1997/1-PFV) of the preliminary drafts of 37 revised standards, including the Table Olive Standard (Appendix XXXII), at Step 3 of Procedure for comment.
- (d) The decision of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables, recorded in ALINORM 99/27 paragraph 67: *Noting the long-standing cooperation between the Committee and the International Olive Oil Council (IOOC) in the elaboration of the Standard for Table Olives, the Committee requested the Secretariat to advise the IOOC of the proposals to revise the present Standard and to cooperate with the IOOC in the preparation of the appropriate draft.*
- (e) The acceptance by the committee of IOOC collaboration in 2000, as recorded in ALINORM 01/27, paragraph 14: *The Committee also accepted the offer of the International Olive Oil Council to collaborate with the Codex Secretariat in the elaboration of the proposed draft Codex Standard for Table Olives.*
- (f) The decision taken by the committee in 2002 and recorded in ALINORM 03/27, paragraphs 107 and 109, to include table olives in the Priority List for the Standardisation of Processed Fruits and Vegetables for comments and continuing consideration at future meetings of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables; and the comment of the delegation of France regarding the priority consideration of products of international trade significance, including table olives (in collaboration with the IOOC).
- (g) The request addressed by the IOOC Executive Secretariat to the Secretariat of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in October 2003, and reiterated in February 2004, asking it to include table olives in the Priority List for Standardisation with a view to initiating the examination of the revised Standard at the session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables in September 2004.
- (h) The forthcoming adoption by the IOOC in November 2004 of the draft *Trade Standard applying to Table Olives*, COI/OT/NC no. 1, which was submitted to the IOOC in June 2004. This Standard is a revision of the *Unified Qualitative Trade Standard applying to Table Olives in International Trade*, which was adopted in 1980 and revised in 1981. The revision has been carried out to update and adapt the old Standard to technological and scientific progress and to changing commercial practices.
- (i) The importance of harmonising international standards in order to remove any obstacles to international trade and to protect consumers from any fraudulent practices.
- (j) The volume of world production, consumption and international trade in table olives, which averaged the following tonnages during the 1998/99–2002/03 crop years according to the attached statistics:
- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| - Production | 1401 tonnes |
| - Consumption | 1337 tonnes |
| - International trade | 374 tonnes |
- (k) The preliminary draft revision of the *Codex Standard for Table Olives* CODEX STAN 66-1981(Rev.1-1987) proposed by the IOOC in June 2004, attached hereafter.

PRELIMINARY DRAFT REVISION
CODEX STANDARD FOR TABLE OLIVES
CODEX STAN 66-1981 (Rev. 1-1987)

1. **SCOPE**

This Standard applies to the fruit of the cultivated olive tree (*Olea europaea* L.) as defined in Section 2 below, which has been suitably treated or processed, and which is offered for direct consumption including for catering purposes or for repacking if required. It does not apply to the product when indicated as being intended for further processing.

2. **DESCRIPTION**

2.1 **PRODUCT DEFINITION**

“Table olives” is the product:

- (1) prepared from the sound fruits of varieties of the cultivated olive tree (*Olea europaea* L.) that are chosen for their production of olives whose volume, shape, flesh-to-stone ratio, fine flesh, taste, firmness and ease of detachment from the stone make them particularly suitable for processing;
- (2) treated to remove its bitterness and preserved by natural fermentation, or by heat treatment, with or without the addition of preservatives;
- (3) packed with or without packing medium.

2.2 **TYPES OF OLIVES**

Table olives are classified in one of the following types according to the degree of ripeness of the fresh fruits:

- (1) **Green olives:** Fruits harvested during the ripening period, prior to colouring and when they have reached normal size.
- (2) **Olives turning colour:** Fruits harvested before the stage of complete ripeness is attained, at colour change.
- (3) **Black olives:** Fruits harvested when fully ripe or slightly before full ripeness is reached.

2.3 **TRADE PREPARATIONS**

Olives shall undergo the following trade preparations:

- (1) **Treated olives:** Green olives, olives turning colour or black olives that have undergone alkaline treatment, then packed in brine in which they undergo complete or partial fermentation, and preserved or not by the addition of acidifying agents:
 - (a) Treated green olives in brine;
 - (b) Treated olives turning colour in brine;
 - (c) Treated black olives.
- (2) **Natural olives:** Green olives, olives turning colour or black olives placed directly in brine in which they undergo complete or partial fermentation, preserved or not by the addition of acidifying agents:
 - (a) Natural green olives;
 - (b) Natural olives turning colour;
 - (c) Natural black olives.
- (3) **Dehydrated and/or shrivelled olives:** Green olives, olives turning colour or black olives that have undergone or not mild alkaline treatment, preserved in brine or partially dehydrated in dry salt and/or by heating or by any other technological process:
 - (a) Dehydrated and/or shrivelled green olives;
 - (b) Dehydrated and/or shrivelled olives turning colour;
 - (c) Dehydrated and/or shrivelled black olives.

- (4) **Olives darkened by oxidation:** Green olives or olives turning colour preserved in brine, fermented or not, darkened by oxidation in an alkaline medium and preserved in hermetically sealed containers subjected to heat sterilisation; they shall be a uniform black colour.

(a) Black olives.

- (5) **Specialities:** Olives may be prepared by means distinct from, or additional to, those set forth above. Such specialities retain the name “olive” as long as the fruit used complies with the general definitions laid down in this Standard. The names used for these specialities shall be sufficiently explicit to prevent any confusion, in purchasers' or consumers' minds, as to the origin and nature of the products and, in particular, with respect to the designations laid down in this Standard.

2.4 STYLES

Olives may be offered in one of the following styles:

2.4.1 Whole olives

- (1) **Whole olives:** Olives, with or without their stem, which have their natural shape and from which the stone (pit) has not been removed.
- (2) **Cracked olives:** Whole olives subjected to a process whereby the flesh is opened without breaking the stone (pit) which remains whole and intact inside the fruit.
- (3) **Split olives:** Whole olives that are split lengthwise by cutting into the skin and part of the flesh.

2.4.2 Stoned (pitted) olives

- (1) **Stoned (pitted) olives:** Olives from which the stone (pit) has been removed and which basically retain their natural shape.
- (2) **Halved olives:** Stoned (pitted) or stuffed olives sliced into two approximately equal parts, perpendicularly to the major axis of the fruit.
- (3) **Quartered olives:** Stoned (pitted) olives split into four approximately equal parts along and perpendicularly to the major axis of the fruit.
- (4) **Divided olives:** Stoned (pitted) olives cut lengthwise into more than four approximately equal parts.
- (5) **Sliced olives:** Stoned (pitted) or stuffed olives sliced into segments of fairly uniform thickness.
- (6) **Chopped or minced olives:** Small pieces of stoned (pitted) olives of no definite shape and practically devoid (no more than 5 per 100 of such units by weight) of identifiable stem-insertion units as well as of slice fragments.
- (7) **Broken olives:** Olives accidentally broken while being stoned (pitted) or stuffed. They normally contain pieces of the stuffing material.

2.4.3 **Stuffed olives:** Stoned (pitted) olives stuffed either with one or more suitable products (pimiento, onion, almond, celery, anchovy, olive, orange or lemon peel, hazelnut, capers, etc.) or with natural pastes prepared therefrom.

2.4.4 **Salad olives:** Whole broken or broken-and-stoned (pitted) olives with or without capers, plus stuffing material, where the olives are the most numerous compared with the entire product marketed in this style.

2.4.5 **Olives with capers:** Whole or stoned (pitted) olives, usually small in size, with capers and with or without stuffing, where the olives are the most numerous compared with the entire product marketed in this style.

2.4.6 **Olive paste:** Exclusively olive flesh, finely crushed.

2.5 OTHER STYLES

Any other presentation of the product should be permitted provided that the product:

- (1) is sufficiently distinctive from other forms of presentation laid down in this Standard;
- (2) meets all other requirements of the Standard, including requirements relating to limits for defects, drained weight, and any other requirements which are applicable to the various styles;
- (3) is adequately described on the label to avoid confusing or misleading the consumer.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 COMPOSITION

3.1.1 Basic Ingredients

Olives as defined in Sections 1 and 2, with or without packing medium.

3.1.2 Packing Media (brines)

This term applies to solutions of food grade salts dissolved in potable water, with or without the addition of all or some of the ingredients listed under Section 3.1.3.

Brine shall be clean, free from unauthorised foreign matter and shall comply with the hygiene rules laid down in Section 6 of this Standard.

3.1.2.1 Physico-chemical characteristics of the packing brine or of the juice after osmotic balance:

Preparation	Minimum sodium chloride content %			Maximum pH limit			Minimum lactic acidity % lactic acid		
	SCC, MAT	PR, R	P, S	SCC, MAT	PR, R	P, S	SCC, MAT	PR, R	P, S
Treated olives	5	4	GMP	4.0	4.0	4.3	0.5	0.4	GMP
Natural olives	6	6	GMP	4.3	4.3	4.3	0.3	0.3	GMP
Dehydrated and/or shrivelled olives	10	10	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP
Olives darkened by oxidation	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP	GMP

SCC: Specific chemical characteristics

MAT: Modified atmosphere

PR: Addition of preservatives

R: Refrigeration

P: Pasteurisation

S: Sterilisation

GMP: Good manufacturing practice

Note: Trade preparations of table olives not complying with the above physico-chemical characteristics may only be marketed if they are made according to traditional methods the food safety of which is guaranteed by an official body which authorises their distribution and sale.

3.1.2.2 Characteristics of the thermal pasteurisation and sterilisation treatment applied to table olives, as evaluated in the packing brine or flesh:

Preparation	Minimum microbially lethal units	
	UP ^{5.25} _{62.4°C}	F ₀ ¹⁰ _{121°C}
	P	S
Treated olives	15	-
Natural olives	15	-
Dehydrated and/or shrivelled olives	15	-
Olives darkened by oxidation	-	15

P: Pasteurisation

S: Sterilisation

PU_{rt}^z : Pasteurisation units, defined as the cumulative lethal rate during heat processes performed at temperatures below 100° C. Propionic bacteria shall be considered the reference microorganisms for table olives, for which the equation of the thermal death time is defined by a reference temperature equal to 62.4°C and a z curve of 5.25.

Rt: The reference temperature is the temperature corresponding to a decimal reduction time which, together with the z curve, defines the logarithmic representation of the T.D.T. curve of a given microorganism.

z: Curve that plots the logarithmic representation of the thermal death times according to temperature (T.D.T.); it is equivalent to the number of degrees for the curve to traverse one log cycle.

$F_{o_{rt}}^z$: Cumulative sterility value: integral, or sum of the partially lethal rates, obtained during sterilisation and expressed as exposure time at a reference temperature. When the reference temperature Rt is fixed at 121°C and the z curve at 10°C, the F_o value applicable to olives darkened by oxidation is obtained.

Decimal reduction time: heating time, in minutes, required to reduce the active population of a bacterial suspension by one tenth.

Thermal death time: heating time, at a specific temperature and in specific conditions, required to reduce the initial microbial population by a factor of 10^{12} .

Lethal rate: reciprocal of the number of minutes of heat exposure required to destruct a given microorganism at a specific temperature.

3.1.3 Other Permitted Ingredients

Other ingredients may be used such as:

- (1) Water;
- (2) Food-grade salts;
- (3) Vinegar;
- (4) Olive oil;
- (5) Sugars;
- (6) Any single or combination of edible material used as an accompaniment or stuffing such as, for example, pimiento, onion, almond, celery, anchovy, capers, or pastes thereof;
- (7) Spices and aromatic herbs or natural extracts thereof;
- (8) Authorised additives (including flavourings).

3.2 QUALITY CRITERIA

Table olives shall have normal taste, smell, colour, and shall possess a texture characteristic of the product.

Table olives shall be size-graded. Size-grading shall be carried out according to the number of fruits per kilogramme or hectogramme. It shall be compulsory for olives in the whole, stoned (pitted) and stuffed styles.

3.3 OTHER QUALITY CRITERIA

3.3.1 Definition of Defects

- (1) **Harmless extraneous material:** Any vegetable matter not injurious to health, nor aesthetically undesirable, for example leaves, separated stems, but not including substances the addition of which has been authorised in the Standard.
- (2) **Blemished fruit:** Olives with marks on the skin that are more than 9 mm² in surface area and that may or may not penetrate through to the flesh.
- (3) **Mutilated fruit:** Olives damaged by tearing the epicarp to such an extent that a portion of the mesocarp becomes visible.
- (4) **Broken fruit:** Olives damaged to such an extent as to affect their normal structure.
- (5) **Shrivelled fruit:** Olives that are so abnormally wrinkled as to affect their appearance. The slight superficial wrinkles displayed by certain trade preparations shall not be considered a defect.
- (6) **Abnormal texture:** Olives which are excessively or abnormally flabby or tough in comparison with the trade preparation in question and with the average of a representative sample of the lot.

- (7) **Abnormal colour:** Olives the colour of which is distinctly different from the characteristic colour of the trade preparation in question and from the average of a representative sample of the lot.
- (8) **Stems:** Stems attached to the olives and which measure more than 3 mm in length when measured from the shoulder of the olive. Not considered a defect in whole olives presented with stem attached.
- (9) **Defective stuffing:** Olives presented in the stuffed olive style which are totally or partly empty in comparison with the trade preparation in question and with the average of a representative sample of the lot.
- (10) **Stone (pit) or stone (pit) fragments (except for whole olives):** Whole stones (pits), or stone (pit) fragments measuring more than 2 mm along their longest axis.

3.3.2 Defects and Allowances

The maximum defect tolerances for each type of olive and for olives darkened by oxidation are as follows:

(1) **Whole, stoned (pitted) or stuffed olives:**

	Green olives	Olives darkened by oxidation	Olives turning colour and black olives
Stoned (pitted) or stuffed olives			
<u>Maximum tolerances as % of fruit:</u>			
Stones (pits) and/or stone (pit) fragments	1	1	2
Broken fruit	7	7	7
Defective stuffing	7	7	7
Whole olives, stoned (pitted) or stuffed			
<u>Maximum tolerance as % of fruit:</u>			
Blemished fruit	10	6	12
Mutilated fruit	8	8	10
Shrivelled fruit	6	6	10
Abnormal texture	10	10	12
Abnormal colour	10	10	12
Stems	6	6	6
Cumulative maximum of tolerances for these defects	22	22	22
<u>Maximum tolerance as units per kg or fraction:</u>			
Harmless extraneous material	1	1	1

The tolerances shall be assessed in a minimum sample of 200 olives taken in accordance with the *Codex Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (AQL 6.5) (CODEX STAN 233-1969)*.

- (2) **Olives presented in the halved, quartered, divided, sliced, chopped or minced, broken, salad olive (except when prepared with whole olives) and olive paste styles:** the presence of a stone (pit) or stone (pit) fragment shall be tolerated in every 300 grammes of net drained content of olive flesh.

3.4 LOT ACCEPTANCE

A lot should be considered as meeting the applicable quality requirements referred to in Sections 3.2 and 3.3 when the requirements which are based on sample averages are complied with.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

4.1 ACIDITY REGULATORS

INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level: g/kg (expressed as m/m weight of flesh)
260	Acetic acid	Limited by GMP
270	Lactic acid	15 g/kg
330	Citric acid	15 g/kg
334	L(+) tartaric acid	15 g/kg

4.2 ANTIOXIDANTS

INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level: g/kg (expressed as m/m weight of flesh)
300	L-ascorbic acid	Limited by GMP

4.3 FIRMING AGENTS

INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level: g/kg (expressed as m/m weight of flesh)
327	Calcium lactate	Limited by GMP
333	Calcium citrate	
509	Calcium chloride	

4.4 FLAVOUR ENHANCERS

INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level: g/kg (expressed as m/m weight of flesh)
621	Monosodium glutamate	5 g/kg
	Others defined by the Codex Alimentarius for this product	

4.5 FLAVOURING AGENTS

INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level: g/kg (expressed as m/m weight of flesh)
	Natural flavours as defined by the Codex Alimentarius	Limited by GMP

4.6 PRESERVATIVES

INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level: g/kg (expressed as m/m weight of flesh)
200	Sorbic acid and its sodium and potassium salts (expressed as sorbic acid)	5 g/kg
210	Benzoic acid and its sodium and potassium salts (expressed as benzoic acid)	1 g/kg

4.7 STABILISERS (to maintain the colour of olives darkened by oxidation)

INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level: g/kg (expressed as m/m weight of flesh)
579	Ferrous gluconate	0.15 /kg as total Fe
585	Ferrous lactate	0.15 g/kg as total Fe

4.8 THICKENERS AND AGGLUTINANTS (solely for pastes intended for stuffing)

Food-grade thickeners and agglutinants, as defined by the Codex Alimentarius limited by GMP for this product.

4.9 OTHER ADDITIVES

Other additives as defined by the Codex Alimentarius for this product.

5. CONTAMINANTS

5.1 PESTICIDE RESIDUES

The product covered by the provisions of this Standard shall comply with those maximum pesticide residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this product.

5.2 OTHER CONTAMINANTS

The product covered by the provisions of this Standard shall comply with those maximum levels for contaminants established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this product.

6. HYGIENE

6.1 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. 4-2003), Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods (CAC/RCP 23-1979, Rev. 2-1993), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

6.2 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)

6.3 Fermented olives held in a packing medium may contain microorganisms used for fermentation, notably lactic bacteria and yeasts. The number of such microorganisms (lactic bacteria and/or yeasts) in a selective culture medium may, for each one, be up to 10^9 colony-forming units/ml of brine or per gramme of flesh depending on the level of fermentation.

6.4 Olives preserved by heat sterilisation (such as olives darkened by oxidation) shall have received a processing treatment sufficient both in time and temperature to destroy spores of *Clostridium botulinum*.

7. WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

7.1 FILL OF CONTAINER

7.1.1 Minimum Fill

The container should be well filled with the product (including packing medium) which should occupy not less than 90% of the water capacity of the container. The water capacity of the container is the volume of distilled water at 20°C which the sealed container will hold when completely filled.

Note: For non-metallic rigid containers such as glass jars, the basis for the determination should be calculated on the weight of distilled water at 20°C which the sealed container will hold when completely filled less 20 ml.

7.1.2 Classification of 'Defectives'

A container that fails to meet the requirements for minimum fill (90% of container capacity) of Section 7.1.1 should be considered a 'defective'.

7.1.2 Lot Acceptance

A lot will be considered as meeting the requirements of Section 7.1.1 when the number of 'defectives' as defined in Section 7.1.2, does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of the appropriate sampling plan in the *Codex Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods* (AQL-6.5) (CODEX STAN 233-1969).

7.2. MINIMUM DRAINED WEIGHT

The tolerance concerning the net drained weight mentioned on the container shall not exceed the following percentage scale, providing the sample's mean net drained weight is equal to, or in excess of, said declared weight:

- (1) 5% for containers with drained weight less than 200 grammes;
- (2) 4% for containers with drained weight between 200 and 500 grammes;
- (3) 3% for containers with drained weight between 500 and 1,500 grammes;
- (4) 2% for containers with net drained weight in excess of 1,500 grammes.

8. LABELLING

8.1 LABELLING OF RETAIL CONTAINERS

The product covered by the provisions of this Standard shall be labelled in accordance with the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991). In addition, the following specific provisions apply:

8.1.1 Name of the Product

The name of the product shall be "olives" or "table olives".

The following shall be included as part of the name of the product or shall appear in close proximity thereto:

8.1.1.1 The type of olive as described in Section 2.2. This may be replaced by the terms in use in the country of sale. This declaration shall not be compulsory on transparent packs.

8.1.1.2 The trade preparation as described in Section 2.3. This may be replaced by the trade preparation in use in the country of sale.

8.1.1.3 The style as described in Section 2.4. This declaration may be limited to the declarations in use in the country of sale; it may be omitted on glass jars and plastic sachets. In the case of stuffed olives the style of stuffing shall be specified:

- (1) "olives stuffed with ..." (single or combination of ingredients);
- (2) "olives stuffed with ... paste" (single or combination of ingredients).

8.1.1.4 If the olives are presented in accordance with the provisions on other styles (Section 2.4.7.), the label shall contain in close proximity to the name of the product such additional words or phrases that will avoid misleading or confusing the consumer.

8.1.1.5 The size of "whole", "stoned (pitted)", "stuffed" and "halved" olives. The size may be declared according to existing practice in the country of sale; this declaration shall not be compulsory on transparent packs.

8.1.1.6 The trade category.

8.2 LABELLING OF NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS

Information for non-retail containers shall be given either on the container or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the product, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer, as well as storage instructions, shall appear on the container. However, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided that such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

9. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

The methods of analysis and sampling shall be those recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

ANNEX

The Trade Standard applying to Table Olives COI/OT/NC no. 1 of June 2004 adopted by the International Olive Oil Council comprises the following additional specifications:

1. AUTHORISED PROCESSING AIDS

	Maximum level: g/kg (expressed as m/m weight of flesh)
1.1. Cultures of lactic microorganisms	Limited by GMP
1.2. Nitrogen	
1.3. Carbon dioxide	
1.4. Manganese lactate	
1.5. Manganese gluconate	
1.6. Sodium or potassium hydroxide	
1.7. Hydrochloric acid	

2. QUALITATIVE CLASSIFICATION

Table olives are classified in one of the following three trade categories according to the defects defined in Section 3.3.1 of the Standard and to the tolerances given in Section 1.2 of this Annex.

2.1 TRADE CATEGORIES

2.1.1 **“Extra” or “Fancy”**: The high quality olives endowed to the maximum extent with the characteristics specific to the variety and trade preparation are considered as belonging to this category. Notwithstanding, and providing this does not affect the overall favourable aspect or organoleptic characteristics of each fruit, they may have very slight colour, shape, flesh-firmness or skin defects.

Whole, split, stoned (pitted) and stuffed olives of the best varieties may be classified in this category, providing their size exceeds 351/380.

2.1.2 **“First”, “1st”, “Choice” or “Select”**: This category covers good quality olives with a suitable degree of ripeness and endowed with the characteristics specific to the variety and trade preparation. Providing this does not affect the overall favourable aspect or individual organoleptic characteristics of each fruit, they may have slight colour, shape, skin or flesh-firmness defects.

All the types, preparations and styles of table olives may be classified in this category, except for chopped or broken olives and olive pastes.

2.1.3 **“Second”, “2nd” or “Standard”**: This category includes good quality olives which, although they cannot be classified in the two previous categories, comply with the general conditions defined for table olives under Section 3.1 of this Standard.

2.2 Defects and Allowances

The maximum defect tolerances for each trade category, by type of olive and for olives darkened by oxidation, are as follows:

(1) **Whole, stoned (pitted) or stuffed olives:**

	Extra category			First category			Second category		
	Green olives	Olives darkened by oxidation	Olives turning colour and black olives	Green olives	Olives darkened by oxidation	Olives turning colour and black olives	Green olives	Olives darkened by oxidation	Olives turning colour and black olives
Stoned (pitted) or stuffed olives									
<u>Maximum tolerances as % of fruit:</u>									
Stones (pits) and/or stone (pit) fragments	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2
Broken fruit	3	3	3	5	5	5	7	7	7
Defective stuffing									
- place-packed	1	1	1	2	2	2	-	-	-
- random-packed	3	3	3	5	5	5	7	7	7
Whole olives, stoned (pitted) or stuffed									
<u>Maximum tolerance as % of fruit:</u>									
Blemished fruit	4	4	6	6	6	8	10	6	12
Mutilated fruit	2	2	3	4	4	6	8	8	10
Shrivelled fruit	2	2	4	3	3	6	6	6	10
Abnormal texture	4	4	6	6	6	8	10	10	12
Abnormal colour	4	4	6	6	6	8	10	10	12
Stems	3	3	3	5	5	5	6	6	6
Cumulative maximum of tolerances for these defects	12	12	12	17	17	17	22	22	22
<u>Maximum tolerance as units per kg or fraction:</u>									
Harmless extraneous material	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

The tolerances shall be assessed in a minimum sample of 200 olives taken in accordance with the *Codex Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (AQL 6.5) (CODEX STAN 233-1969)*.

- (2) **Olives presented in the halved, quartered, divided, sliced, chopped or minced, broken, salad olive (except when prepared with whole olives) and olive paste styles:** the presence of a stone (pit) or stone (pit) fragment shall be tolerated in every 300 grammes of net drained content of olive flesh.

3. SIZING

The olives are size-graded according to the number of fruits per kilogramme or hectogramme.

The size scale, in one kilogramme, is as follows:

60/70	121/140	201/230
71/80	141/160	231/260
81/90	161/180	261/290
91/100	181/200	291/320
101/110		321/350
111/120		351/380
		381/410*

* Above 410, the interval is 50 fruits.

Different scales may nevertheless be applied according to agreements between the parties concerned.

Solely where stuffed olives are concerned, as from size 201/220 the interval is 20 fruits up to size 401/420.

Size-grading shall be compulsory for olives in the whole, stoned (pitted) and stuffed styles.

In the case of stoned (pitted) olives or stuffed olives (after removing the stuffing), the size shown shall be the one corresponding to the original whole olive. For the purpose of checking, the number of stoned (pitted) olives in one kilogramme shall be multiplied by a coefficient set by each producing country.

Within each size as defined above, it is stipulated that after having removed from a sample of 100 olives, the olive having the largest horizontal diameter and the olive having the smallest horizontal diameter, the difference between the horizontal diameters of the remaining olives may not exceed 4 mm.

4. CONTAINERS

The containers used may be made of metal, tin, glass, plastic materials or of any other material, except wood, which complies with existing technical and health requirements. Containers shall be such as to ensure correct preservation of the olives and shall not transmit harmful substances to the preserved product.

Transparent containers shall not produce optical effects liable to change the appearance of the product contained therein.

Except for non-returnable containers which must be original and show no signs of deterioration giving reason to believe that the organoleptic conditions, or commercial value of the product contained might be subsequently affected, all other containers may be re-used providing they are in good condition.

5. LABELLING AND POINT-OF-SALE DISPLAYS

5.1 LABELLING OF RETAIL CONTAINERS

Table olives shall be labelled in accordance with the *Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods* (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991).

In addition to any inscriptions that may be required by the regulations of the importing country, the following are compulsory on packs and containers:

5.1.1 Name of the Product

The name of the product shall be "olives" or "table olives".

The following shall be included as part of the name of the product or shall appear in close proximity thereto:

5.1.1.1 The type of olive as described in Section 2.2 of the Standard. This may be replaced by the terms in use in the country of sale. This declaration shall not be compulsory on transparent packs.

5.1.1.2 The trade preparation as described in Section 2.3 of the Standard. This may be replaced by the trade preparation in use in the country of sale.

5.1.1.3 The style as described in Section 2.4.2 of the Standard. This declaration may be limited to the declarations in use in the country of sale; it may be omitted on glass jars and plastic sachets. In the case of stuffed olives the style of stuffing shall be specified:

- (1) "olives stuffed with ..." (single or combination of ingredients);
- (2) "olives stuffed with ... paste" (single or combination of ingredients).

5.1.1.4 If the olives are presented in accordance with the provisions on other styles (Section 2.4.7 of the Standard), the label shall contain in close proximity to the name of the product such additional words or phrases that will avoid misleading or confusing the consumer.

5.1.1.5 The size of "whole", "stoned (pitted)", "stuffed" and "halved" olives. The size may be declared according to existing practice in the country of sale; this declaration shall not be compulsory on transparent packs.

5.1.1.6 The trade category .

5.1.2 **List of Ingredients**

Labelling shall include the full list of ingredients which shall be listed in descending order of ingoing weight (m/m) at the time of the manufacture of the product.

5.1.3 **Net Contents and Net Drained Weight**

5.1.3.1 The net contents shall be declared in the metric system ("Système International" units) by weight.

The declaration of net contents represents the quantity at the time of packaging and is subject to enforcement by reference to an average system of quality control.

5.1.3.2 For olives packed in brine, the net drained weight shall be declared in the metric system ("Système International" units) by weight.

The declaration of net drained weight is subject to enforcement by reference to an average system of quality control.

5.1.4 **Name and Address**

The name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor of the product shall be declared.

5.1.5 **Country of Origin**

5.1.5.1 The country of origin of the product shall be declared if its omission would mislead or deceive the consumer.

5.1.5.2 When the product undergoes processing in a second country which changes its nature, the country in which the processing is performed shall be considered to be the country of origin for the purposes of labelling.

5.1.6 **Lot Identification**

Each container shall be embossed or otherwise permanently marked in code or in clear to identify the producing factory and the lot.

5.1.7 **Date Marking and Storage Instructions**

5.1.7.1 The date of minimum durability shall be declared by the month and year by the words "Best before end...".

The declaration shall be accompanied by the date itself or by a reference to where it is given.

The month and year shall be declared in uncoded numerical sequence except that the month may be indicated by letters in those countries where such use will not confuse the consumer.

5.1.7.2 In addition to the date of minimum durability, any special conditions for the storage of the product shall be declared on the label if the validity of the date depends thereon.

5.1.7.3 Any specific instructions for storing containers, once opened, shall be declared, in particular as regards keeping the container in the refrigerator.

5.2 **Display of the price per kilogramme at the point of retail sale**

The price per kilogramme (in relation to the net drained weight for products sold in a packing medium and to the net weight for other preparations) shall be displayed at the point of retail sale in order to ensure fair competition between manufacturers and market transparency.

5.3 **Labelling of Non-retail Containers**

Information for non-retail containers shall be given on the container, or in the accompanying documents, except that the name of the product, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer shall appear on the container. However, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer may be replaced by an identification mark provided that such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

Project document

Proposal for Revision of the Codex Standard for Table Olives – CODEX STAN 66-1981(Rev. 1-1987)

Prepared by: International Olive Oil Council

Purpose and scope of the standard

The standard applies in scope to table olives, the fruit of the cultivated olive tree treated to make it suitable for human consumption. The purpose of revising the standard (CODEX STAN 66-1981 – Rev.1-1987) is to adapt it to the progress in table olive processing, particularly in the assessment and control of physico–chemical and microbiological characteristics.

Relevance and timeliness

Table olives are included in the priority list of processed fruits and vegetables for standardisation/revision by the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (ALINORM 03/27, Appendix VII).

Table olive production, consumption and international trade amounts to a large volume; consumption during the 1998/99–2002/2003 crop years averaged 1,337,000 tonnes.

The Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables accepted the offer of the International Olive Oil Council (ALINORM 01/27, paragraph 14) to collaborate in the elaboration of a proposed draft standard for table olives, prompted by the long-standing cooperation between the Committee and the International Olive Oil Council since 1970–1974 when the first Codex standard for table olives was drawn up. In 1983, on being designated as an “other body” in charge of amendments, the Council was entrusted with revising the first table olive standard in conjunction with the members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (the revised standard was adopted in 1987).

The International Olive Oil Council, whose membership has accounted for 76% of world table olive production in recent crop years, has drawn up the draft revision of the Codex standard for table olives in cooperation with the Codex Secretariat. The draft revision was accepted by the Members of the International Olive Oil Council in June 2004 and has been submitted to the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables in document CX/PFV 04/22/10. The draft revision of the Codex standard is meant to take into account the updated *Trade standard applying to table olives*, which is to be adopted by the International Olive Oil Council in November–December 2004.

Main aspects to be covered

The objective of revising the standard is basically:

- To simplify the description of table olive trade preparations in order to differentiate better between the various de-bittering and preservation treatments applied;
- To insert details regarding the physico–chemical characteristics of the packing brine or juice after osmotic balance;
- To insert the minimum pasteurisation and sterilisation characteristics applied to table olives;
- To simplify the list of defects by rearranging them according to the damage observed and to revise the defect tolerances;
- To harmonise the wording of the sections concerning *additives, contaminants, hygiene, weights and measures, labelling and methods of analysis and sampling* with the wording employed by the Codex Alimentarius for processed fruits and vegetables.

Assessment against the *Criteria for the establishment of work priorities*

This proposal is consistent with:

- the harmonisation of international standards in order to remove impediments to international trade and to protect consumers from fraudulent practices following the adoption, in 2004, by the International Olive Oil Council of the *Trade standard applying to table olives*, which is a revision of the *Unified qualitative standard applying to table olives in international trade* adopted in 1980 and revised in 1981;
- consumer protection from the point of view of health by establishing precise physico–chemical and microbiological characteristics for packing.

Relevance to the Codex strategic objectives

The proposal to revise the table olive standard is consonant with the strategy of the Codex Alimentarius in regard to the periodic review and harmonisation of standards with other international standards.

Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents

The proposal to revise the table olive standard falls within the area of work of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables concerning the update of standards.

Identification of any requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice

None.

Identification of any need for technical input to the standard from external bodies so that this can be planned for

None.

Proposed time-line for completion of the new work, including the start date, the proposed date for adoption at step 5, and the proposed date for adoption by the Commission

Request for priority consideration of the revision of the table olive standard: 2004

Consideration of the draft revision: 2005

Adoption at step 5: 2006

Adoption of the draft standard at step 8: 2007