

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda item 5

CX/FFV 22/22/6 Add.1
Original language only

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

Twenty-second Session

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR FRESH DATES

Comments in reply to CL 2021/86/OCS-FFV

Comments of Algeria, Cuba, Egypt, European Union, Ghana, India, Kenya, Morocco, Thailand and Uganda

Background

1. This document compiles comments received through the Codex Online Commenting System (OCS) in response to CL 2021/86/OCS-FFV issued in December 2021. Under the OCS, comments are compiled in the following order: general comments are listed first, followed by comments on specific sections.

Explanatory notes on the appendix

2. The comments submitted through the OCS are hereby attached as **Annex I** and are presented in table format.

GENERAL COMMENTS

COMMENT	MEMBER / OBSERVER
<p>L 'Algérie trouve qu 'il est nécessaire d 'éclaircir le sens de l 'expression "dattes fraîches" et ce , afin d'assurer le bon avancement de l 'élaboration de ce projet de norme.</p> <p>Afin d'éviter certaine ambiguïté dans la norme, l 'Algérie pose la question suivante: Comment faire correspondre les classes citées en 3.2 CLASSIFICATION et le calibrage selon le nombre de dattes ou leurs poids donnés en 4.DISPOSITION CONCERNANT LE CALIBRAGE A et B?</p>	Algeria
<p>India supports the Proposed Draft Standard for Fresh Dates.</p>	India
<p>Comment: Replace must with Shall in entire document Justification: To be consistent with other Codex texts.</p>	Kenya
<p>Uganda supports the proposed draft standard to progress to step 5 or 5/8</p>	Uganda

SPECIFIC COMMENTS**1. SCOPE**

<p><i>The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for fresh dates at the export control stage after preparation and packaging. However, if applied at stages following packaging, products may show in relation to the requirements of the standard.</i></p> <p>The scope of Codex standards is after preparation and packaging and is not restricted to export control stage.</p>	European Union
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<p><i>The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for fresh dates at the export-control stage after preparation and packaging. However, if applied at stages following packaging, products may show in relation to the requirements of the standard:</i></p> <p>Comment: Delete and take to the end of clause 3.1 Justification: It fits more as a quality parameter.</p> <p>Comment: Added second statement from definition of produce to read. 'The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for fresh dates after preparation and packaging. This Standard applies to commercial varieties of Fresh Dates (<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> L. from Arecaceae family), to be supplied fresh and whole to the consumer in unpitted form after preparation and packaging. Dates intended for industrial purposes are excluded.' Justification: Moved to clause 1 from Clause 2- fits more as scope rather than a definition of produce and thus clearer.</p> <p>Comment: Expurge the statement '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 with standard such conformity' Justification: It is not necessary for a standard setting process to describe to a seller/holder how the product should be displayed/offered for sale, but should rather set the requirements.</p>	Kenya
<p><i>The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for fresh dates at the export-control stage after preparation and packaging. However, if <u>When it is applied</u> at stages following packaging, products may show in relation to the requirements of the standard.</i></p> <p>Section 1 SCOPE, 1st paragraph Following the agreed standard layout, the phrase "at the export-control stage" in the first sentence should be removed, and revise the second sentence to read as follows:</p> <p>"The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for fresh dates after preparation and packaging. However, if <u>When it is applied</u> at stages following packaging, products may show in relation to the requirements of the standard:"</p>	Thailand

2. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

Move the part mentioning "Dates intended for industrial processing are excluded to Scope "	Egypt
<p>) This Standard applies to commercial varieties of Fresh Dates <i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> L. from Arecaceae family), to be supplied fresh and whole to the consumer in unpitted form after preparation and packaging form. Dates intended for industrial purposes are excluded.</p> <p>The last part of the first sentence should be deleted as "after preparation and packaging" is already mentioned in the scope.</p>	European Union

<p>Comment: The statement taken to Paragraph one Justification: It makes the scope more clear.</p> <p>Comment: Amended to read 'Dates, Phoenix dactylifera L. is a date-palm tree from Arecaceae family cultivated for its edible sweet fruits. Date fruits go through four well-defined stages of maturity, Kimri, Khalal, Rutab, and Tamer. The fruits are to be supplied fresh and whole to the consumer in unpitted form after preparation and packaging at either Khalal and Rutab or tamer stage. However, dates intended for industrial purposes are excluded in this standard.' Justification: Definition more clearer.</p>	Kenya
<p><i>This Standard applies to commercial varieties of Fresh Dates (Phoenix dactylifera L. from Arecaceae family), to be supplied fresh and whole <u>fruit</u> to the consumer in unpitted form after preparation and packaging. Dates intended for industrial purposes are excluded.</i></p> <p>The word "fruit" should be added after the word "whole" for clarity</p>	Thailand

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

<p>A ce niveau , l 'Algérie propose les teneurs en eau comme suit:</p> <p>La teneur en eau ne doit pas dépasser :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 46-85 % pour le stade khalal ; Au lieu de - 50-85% for khalal stage; - 26-45 % pour le stade rutab ; et Au lieu de - 30-45 % for rutab stage; and - 10-25% et moins pour le stade tamar. Au lieu de - 10-25% and less for tamar stage. <p>* les intervalles de teneur en eau doivent être définis avec précision (26 à 29% et 46 à 49 % ne sont pas pris en compte) Exemple: les dattes dont la valeur du taux d'humidité est de 27% ou 47% ne peuvent pas être classées selon ces intervalles. l 'Algérie rappelle qu'en appliquant la même norme de calibrage par le poids (petits, moyen, grand et extra -large) aux dattes demi-sèches et /ou sèches qu'aux dattes semi-molles et molles, on décline et on pénalise les premières tout en favorisant les dattes à importantes teneur en eau.</p> <p>Pour cette raison, l 'Algérie suggère de ne considérer pour les dattes demi-sèches et /ou sèches que le calibrage par nombre; qui est déterminé par le nombre de dattes par paquet.</p> <p>l 'Algérie propose la reformulation de ce point avec une modification dans le pourcentage de défaut comme suit :</p> <p>De légers défauts de l 'épiderme tels que des éraflures et des taches ne dépassent pas 7 % au lieu de 5% de la surface totale d'un fruit individuel pour 12% au lieu de 10% maximum des fruits</p> <p>L'Algérie propose une modification dans le pourcentage de défaut comme suit:</p> <p>-Les défauts de l 'épiderme tels que les éraflures, les cicatrices , les éraflures, les meurtrissures et les taches ne doivent pas dépasser 10% de la surface totale d'un fruit individuel pour 15% au lieu de 10% maximum des fruits.</p>	Algeria
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<p>And about the ratio according to the maximum number of fruits we request editing according to table 5.1</p> <p>Edit the ratio of skin defects to the total surface area as following:</p> <p>3.2.2 Class I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • slight skindfects such as scratches, and blemishes not exceeding 15%of the total surface area of an individual fruit . • skin defects such as scratches, scars, scrapes, bruises and blemishes shall not exceed 25%of the total surface area of an individual fruit <p>And about the ratio according to the maximum number of fruits we request editing according to table 5.1</p>	Egypt
<p>Practically free from pest damage;- <u>free from mould filaments visible to the naked eye,- free of fermentation</u></p> <p>The following indents should be inserted after “pest damage” as these are important minimum requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “free from mould filaments visible to the naked eye, - free of fermentation “ <p>Dates shall have a moisture content not exceeding 85%, in accordance with criteria to the variety and stage of harvest/or commercial type and the area in which they are grown. <u>Moisture-The moisture content should not exceed be within the following range:</u></p> <p>In the second paragraph, the term “not exceeding 85 %” is in contradiction to the subsequent indents on moisture content related to the ripening stage and should be deleted. Moreover, the introductory sentence to the moisture contents should be specified.</p> <p>Footnotes3 and 4: The acceptable moisture contents are defined in the main text. For simplification, the moisture content should be deleted in the footnotes</p> <p>rutab: Means soft or moist fully ripe stage, color changes to light brown and starts to lose weight and accumulate more sugars (mainly reducing sugars) (water content 30-45%) <u>sugars</u>).</p> <p>The acceptable moisture contents are defined in the main text. For simplification, the moisture content should be deleted in the footnote</p> <p>tamer: Full ripe stage of development, more water loss and gains more sugars and depending on variety attains a high sugar-to-water ratio (low moisture content 10-25%) <u>ratio</u>.</p> <p>The acceptable moisture contents are defined in the main text. For simplification, the moisture content should be deleted in the footnote</p>	European Union
<p><i>free of blemished fruit; i.e. fruit scarred, discolored or sunburnt, or having blacknose (noticeable darkening of the head, generally accompanied by severe checking or cracking of the flesh) or side- spot (a very dark patch extending into the flesh) or similar abnormalities affecting an area of or not more greater than 7 mm of total surface area of the fruit;</i></p> <p>Dates shall have a moisture content not exceeding 85%, in accordance with criteria to the variety and stage of harvest/or commercial type and the area in which they are grown. Moisture content should not exceed be <u>within:</u></p> <p>%25-10] and less for tamer⁴stage].</p>	Ghana

<p>Dates in this class must be of superior quality and they must be characteristics characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type. 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.</p>	
<p>Comment: Replaced intact with 'whole' Justification: For consistence with Scope.</p> <p>Comment: Delete bullet 4 Justification: This is regulated under the IPPC and provisions applied by governments. In the draft, provision is already made for the freedom of damage caused by pests (bullet 5) and freedom of visible foreign matter (bullet 3), all aspects that define provisions concerning quality. The provisions from freedom of pests should be left to member governments to implement as per their legal requirements as guided by IPPC. <i>arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.</i></p> <p>Comment: Added to the last statement of minimum requirements and amended statement that was moved from clause 1 to read 'If the standard is applied at stages following packaging, fresh dates may exhibit changes in relation to the requirements; : • a slight lack of freshness and turgidity; a slight deterioration due to their development and their tendency to perish. Justification: Revised and moved from clause 1 to clause 3- Fits more as a quality concern</p>	<p>Kenya</p>
<p><i>free of blemished fruit; i.e. fruit scarred, discolored or sunburnt, or having blacknose (noticeable darkening of the head, generally accompanied by severe checking or cracking of the flesh) or side- spot (a very dark patch extending into the flesh) or similar abnormalities affecting an area of not more than 7 mm of total surface area of the fruit;</i></p> <p>Please replace "not more" by "more". In fact, abnormalities affecting an area of not more than 7 mm of total surface area of the fruit will be allowed.</p> <p>- Please put "cultivar" in plural.</p> <p>The paragraph will be: Date fruits must be sufficiently developed and have reached an appropriate degree of development and ripeness according to the varieties or cultivars."</p> <p>- Please replace "Moisture content should not exceed" by the following sentence: "The following ranges of the moisture content should be adopted".</p> <p>The paragraph will be: "Dates shall have a moisture content not exceeding 85%, in accordance with criteria to the variety and stage of harvest/or commercial type and the area in which they are grown. The following ranges of the moisture content should be adopted:" tamer: Full ripe stage of development, more water loss and gains more sugars and depending on variety attains a high sugar-to-water ratio (low moisture content 10-25%).</p> <p>It is preferably to add "relatively" as follow:</p>	<p>Morocco</p>

<p>tamer: Full ripe stage of development, more water loss and gains more sugars and depending on variety attains a high sugar-to-water ratio (relatively low moisture content 10-25%).</p> <p>Dates are may be classified in three classes defined below according to the quality tolerances as specified in section 5.1 and as defined below. <u>When unclassified, the provisions for Class II requirements apply.</u></p> <p>Please add "in Extra class and Class I" as follow:</p> <p>"3.2 CLASSIFICATION Dates are may be classified in three classes defined below according to the quality tolerances as specified in section 5.1 and as defined below. When unclassified in Extra class and Class I, the provisions for Class II requirements apply."</p>	
<p>Practically free from pest damage<u>of damage caused by pests</u>;</p> <p>We propose to rewrite the sentence using the standard wording provided in the standard layout as follows:</p> <p>"Practically free of damage caused by pests" free of unripe fruit, i.e. fruit light in weight, stunted or distinctly rubbery in texture.</p> <p>Provisions under bullets 6 and 7 are more relevant to indicators for determining the maturity of fruit and should therefore be removed to avoid any confusion with Section 3.1.1, "Minimum maturity requirements." free of undeveloped and deformed fruits, as indicated by stunted growth, immature characteristics and naturally absence of pit;</p> <p>Provisions under bullets 6 and 7 are more relevant to indicators for determining the maturity of fruit and should therefore be removed to avoid any confusion with Section 3.1.1, "Minimum maturity requirements." practically free of blemished blemishes fruit; i.e. fruit scarred, discolored or sunburnt, or having blacknose (noticeable darkening of the head, generally accompanied by severe checking or cracking of the flesh) or side-spot (a very dark patch extending into the flesh) or similar abnormalities affecting an area of not more than 7 mm of total surface area of the fruit;</p> <p>It is not necessary to define specific defects of blemished fruit in this provision, as it will contradict with defects allowed in Extra Class, Class 1 and Class II. In each Class, particular allowances for certain defects could be specified as needed similarly to other fruit standards. <u>Fresh</u> Dates <u>fruits must be sufficiently developed and have reached an appropriate degree of development and/or maturity in accordance with criteria proper to the variety, to the time of harvesting and ripeness according to the varieties or cultivar area in which they are grown.</u></p> <p>The sentence in the first paragraph should be amended to conform to the standard layout. Dates <u>Fresh dates</u> shall have a moisture content not exceeding 85%, in accordance with criteria to the variety and stage of harvest/or commercial type and the area in which they are grown. Moisture content should not exceed: for khalal %85-50²stage<u>stage (partially ripe)</u>;</p>	<p>Thailand</p>

<p>Apart from footnotes of each stage, it is essential to include the English term for each stage in parentheses. for rutab % 45-30³ stage; and stage (ripe).</p> <p>Apart from footnotes of each stage, it is essential to include the English term for each stage in parentheses. and less for tamer %25-10⁴ stage.</p> <p>Thailand supports the views of CCPFV that Fresh Dates Standard should include only fresh dates with moisture level greater than those specified in the existing Standard for Dates. Therefore, moisture content defined in the third dot for tamer stage should be deleted.</p>	
<p><i>Practically free from pest damage;</i></p> <p>Uganda proposes to add “disease damage” at the end of the bullet Rationale: Damage may be caused as a result of disease as well thus pests and diseases better presented together</p>	Uganda

4. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

<p><u>A</u> <i>When sized by count, size is determined by the number of individual date per package.</i></p> <p>India proposes that ‘gm’ be modified to ‘gram’ Rationale: As per Proposed Layout for Standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.</p> <p><u>B</u> <i>When sized by weight, size is determined based on the individual weight of the fruit as mentioned below.</i></p> <p>India proposes that ‘gm’ be modified to ‘gram’ Rationale: As per Proposed Layout for Standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.</p>	India
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5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

<p>Pour ce point , l 'Algérie propose ce qui suit:</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>Extra Class</th> <th>Class I</th> <th>Class II</th> <th></th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>-Tolérance individuelle.</td> <td>5</td> <td>10</td> <td>15 au lieu de 10</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>-Dégâts causés par des parasites :</td> <td>3</td> <td>8</td> <td>10 au lieu de 8</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>(a) Tolérances de calibre par rapport à ce qui est indiqué/marqué</td> <td>5</td> <td>8 au lieu de 10</td> <td>10</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Extra Class	Class I	Class II			-Tolérance individuelle.	5	10	15 au lieu de 10		-Dégâts causés par des parasites :	3	8	10 au lieu de 8		(a) Tolérances de calibre par rapport à ce qui est indiqué/marqué	5	8 au lieu de 10	10		Algeria
Extra Class	Class I	Class II																			
-Tolérance individuelle.	5	10	15 au lieu de 10																		
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(a) Tolérances de calibre par rapport à ce qui est indiqué/marqué	5	8 au lieu de 10	10																		

<p>The definition of "total tolerance" is confusing and should be made clearer. The total tolerance applies to all possible defects, of which certain defects should not exceed an individual tolerance. The EUMS propose the following wording: "Tolerances for produce not satisfying the provisions concerning quality".</p> <p>In the table under point 1. "Individual Tolerance" the following text should be added "of which no more than, i.e. Individual tolerance".</p> <p>The heading for Class II should be adapted to "Class II or unclassified product". As classification is optional in point 3.2., it has to be possible to apply tolerances for unclassified products.</p> <p>With respect to the tolerances allowed in Class II, the total tolerance should be 20 %. This tolerance of 20 % has already proven itself in international trade. "20 % total tolerance for Class II".</p>	European Union
<p>Comment: Delete requirement of living pest in the table. Justification: Delete requirement. This is regulated under the IPPC and provisions applied by governments. In the draft, provision is already made for the freedom of damage caused by pests (bullet 5) and freedom of visible foreign matter (bullet 3), all aspects that define provisions concerning quality. The provisions from freedom of pests should be left to member governments to implement as per their legal requirements as guided by IPPC.</p>	Kenya
<p>1. Total Tolerance We suggest reducing the percentage of tolerances allowed in Extra Class and Class I to reflect trade practices. As a consequent, the percentage of damage by pest in Class I should also be reduced. The proposed amended tolerances are as follows: - Total Tolerance in Extra Class: not more than 3 - Total Tolerance in Class I: not more than 5 - Damage by pest in Class I: not more than 5</p> <p>2. Additional tolerances Mineral impurities may compromise food safety, hence GHPs should be followed, especially at the post– harvest step, to minimize the potential hazards in fruits. As a consequence, tolerances allowed at one percentage of Mineral impurities in each Class are unacceptable. The proposed amended tolerances are as follows: - Mineral impurities = 0</p>	Thailand

6. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

<p>The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only dates of the same origin, variety or commercial type, <u>stage of ripeness</u>, <u>quality (if indicated)</u> and size (if sized). The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.</p> <p>Concerning the first sentence, as the eating quality and moisture content is different with respect to the ripening stage, these stages should not be mixed in a package.</p>	European Union
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7. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING OR LABELLING

<p>7.2.1- Identification</p> <p>L'Algérie donne la proposition suivante: Les emballages non destinées à la vente doivent être identifiés par: pays d'origine, nom et adresse de l'exportateur, de l'emballeur et/ou de l'expéditeur code d'identification (facultatif) .</p> <p>7.2.2- Nom du produit</p> <p>L'Algérie propose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Nom des dattes fraîches tel que prévue au point (3.1.1) suivi du nom de la variété et /ou du type commercial . -Présentation telle que grappes , en branchettes ou individuelles (facultatif) <p>Pays d'origine et, à titre facultatif, zone de production ou appellation nationale, régionale ou locale.</p> <p>L'Algérie propose: Pays d'origine et, facultativement , zone de culture ou appellation nationale, régionale ou locale.</p> <p>7.2.4- Caractéristiques commerciales</p> <p>L'Algérie propose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Classe. sèche, demi-molle ou molle ", -Calibre (en cas de calibrage); -Année de récolte. 	Algeria
<p>CONSUMER PACKAGES We request adding a clause to mention the class and fruit size or grade</p> <p>Each package must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside, either printed on the package itself or on a label (if the labels are placed inside the packages), this should be done in such a way that the indications concerning marking are readable from the outside); or in the documents accompanying the shipment and attached in a visible position inside the transport vehicle.</p> <p>We request keeping the clause</p> <p>Name of the produce "semi dry" or "semi dry" and/or dry".</p> <p>We agree to delete the clause as the standard is for fresh dates not dry dates</p> <p>Crop year; and</p> <p>We agree to delete the clause</p>	Egypt

<p>Each package shall be labelled as to the name of the produce <u>fresh dates (stage of dates ripeness as per 3.1.1)</u> and may be labelled as to the name of the variety and/or commercial type.</p> <p><u>The labelling of non-retail containers should be in accordance with the <i>General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021)</i>. In addition, the following particulars must be indicated on each non-retail container:- “Dates”, when the contents are not visible from the outside - Name of the variety (optional) - Stage of ripeness- Type of presentation as to “clusters”, “in stems” where appropriate- Origin of produce- Class (optional)- Size (if sized) in accordance with the method applied.</u></p> <p>CXS 346-2021 is not explicit enough to provide proper information as to the produce and the standard applied. Thus, more information is necessary – especially as the produce in non-retail containers is not visible from the outside. The EU MS propose to add the following text: “The labelling of non-retail containers should be in accordance with the General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021).</p> <p>In addition, the following particulars must be indicated on each non-retail container:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Dates”, when the contents are not visible from the outside - Name of the variety (optional) - Stage of ripeness - Type of presentation as to “clusters”, “in stems” where appropriate - Origin of produce - Class (optional) - Size (if sized) in accordance with the method applied.” 	European Union
<p>Comment: Amended to read; 'Each package shall be labelled as to the name of the produce, and may be labelled as to the name of the variety and/or commercial type and or stage of dates.'</p> <p>Justification: Summary of the highlights without referring to the clauses.</p>	Kenya

9. CONTAMINANTS

<p>Comment: Add Pesticide residues to Contaminants to read. 'Pesticide residues and Contaminants.'</p> <p>Justification: Tittle changed to include pesticide residues which is an intentional addition that does not fit definition of contaminant</p>	Kenya
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