

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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Agenda Item 4(a)

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ORIGINAL LANGUAGE ONLY

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

Fifteenth Session

Mexico City, Mexico, 19 – 23 October 2009

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR AVOCADO (REVISION) (N19-2008)

Comments at Step 3

(Costa Rica, European Community, Iran and New Zealand)

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica agradece al Comité del Codex sobre Frutas y Hortalizas Frescas, la oportunidad de realizar observaciones al documento Preparado por el grupo de trabajo electrónico dirigido por Cuba.

1. En relación a las diferentes variedades comerciales del aguacate según la enmienda a la norma en cuestión, a lo largo de la redacción del documento no se utiliza un solo termino para definir las variedades, es decir:
 - En la definición del producto se utiliza el termino “variedades comerciales”.
 - En el punto 2.1.1 se utiliza el termino “variedad y/o tipo comercial”.
 - En el punto 2.2.1 se utiliza el termino “variedad”.

Costa Rica considera que debido a esta inconsistencia de términos para definir los tipos de aguacate, se debe unificar la terminología utilizada.

2. En el punto 2.1 sobre Requisitos Mínimos, específicamente en la viñeta 4, Costa Rica considera que se debe eliminar el término “exento de plagas”, porque este aspecto no es
3. En el punto 2.1.1, eliminar el término “Los aguacates deberán haberse recolectado cuidadosamente”, porque esto no se puede regular en una norma de calidad.
4. En la pasada reunión del Coloquio del Comité del Codex sobre Frutas y Hortalizas Frescas realizado en la ciudad de Miami, se decidió eliminar el punto (b) del apartado 3 sobre Disposiciones Relativas a la Clasificación por Calibres, que especifica lo siguiente: “*Los aguacates se pueden clasificar por número de frutos, de acuerdo con las disposiciones de la legislación del país importador*”, debido a que induce a confusión”.
5. Costa Rica requiere aclarar si el aguacate con un peso de 80 gramos se refiere a aguacate denominado “baby”, por que de lo contrario es un tamaño para una fruta muy pequeña.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

General comments

The European Community and its Member States (ECMS) support the revision of the Codex Standard for Avocado (CODEX/STAN 197-1995) which did not cover new varieties currently marketed internationally.

Consequently, the relevant sections needed to be revised to cover these varieties taking into account the recently revised UNECE Standard for Avocados (FFV-42).

At this occasion, the ECMS would like to underline the need for the CCFFV to cooperate and coordinate with the UNECE towards the elaboration of harmonized standards without duplication of efforts.

Specific comments

Section 2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

4th indent: The ECMS would prefer the wording of the UN/ECE Standard, separated in two lines:

- practically free from pests;
- free from damage caused by pests affecting the flesh;

Justification: The requirement "*to be practically free of pests... affecting the general appearance of the produce*" is very restrictive, because it does not affect the edibility of the product and it is already considered in the different categories.

7th indent: The ECMS are not in agreement with the addition of the word "*practically*".

Justification: Damage caused by low and/or high temperatures is progressive and affects the edibility of the fruit.

Section 3 PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

As two methods are included to calibrate the fruits, (a) weight and (b) number of fruits, the ECMS consider it necessary to add at the beginning of this section, before subsection (a) a paragraph that reads:

"The avocados can be classified by sizing through one of the following options."

Concerning the table on sizing, the ECMS propose that it would be identical to the one in the UNECE Standard, which includes light overlap of intervals, in order to cover the margin of error of the sizing machines (and the natural decreases). The current footnote 2 in the draft Codex standard, which permits a deviation of 2%, results in certain cases in stricter limits than the limits set in the UNECE Standard causing problems for marketing certain important varieties (Hass, Bacon, Loud). For example, the size 20 is 184-217 g in the UNECE Standard and 188-214 g in the Codex standard applying the deviation of 2 %.

With regard to the square brackets for the size S (124-80 g.) applying only for the Hass, the ECMS wish to keep that interval and, therefore, suggest deleting the brackets.

Section 4.1 QUALITY TOLERANCES

The ECMS prefer that the text on quality tolerances is the same as in the UNECE Standard, because the text in the UNECE Standard is clearer.

Section 4.2 SIZE TOLERANCES

The ECMS are not in favour of adding the phrase "*The difference between the smallest and largest fruit within a package should not be more than 25 g*"

Justification: This is very restrictive, limiting in practice all the intervals of size to 25 g, independent of the weight of the fruit that may be from 80 g to more than 1220 g. From size 16 (236-265 g) up to size 2 (> 1.220 g), the size of the intervals is more than 25 g. This sentence was only stipulated for the S size of the variety "Hass".

Section 5.1 UNIFORMITY

The term "commercial type" should be deleted.

Justification: A commercial type may cover several varieties of avocados and therefore having the variety and the commercial type as alternatives under the uniformity provisions would actually allow the mixture of varieties in one package.

Sections 6.1.1 and 6.2.2 Nature of produce

The name of the variety should always be indicated on the package.

IRAN

Iran is pleased to submit the following comments in response CX/FFV 09/15/7 (September 2009): on proposed draft codex standard for Avocados with the following resulting comments based on the bold and italic text within the sections/paragraphs indicated.

Specific comments:**Section 2.1 Minimum Requirements**

Iran recommends that the Codex standard layout be followed and deviations explained.

Whole: the word “intact” specifies more precisely the intactness. It is much easier to understand by people that are not native speakers.

The below intend is mentioned in the proposed standard layout, in the requirement "*intact*".

Iran recommends the intact would be appropriate than whole in requirements.

Section 2.1 Minimum Requirements

The Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and other international standardization decided to delete the term “carefully” which has been deleted from all standards because this is impossible to verify, besides there are different methods picking that are used both manual and mechanical. For consistency purposes in Codex fresh fruit and vegetable standards the deletion of “carefully” should be considered.

Section 2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

This paragraph "The avocados must have been carefully picked. Their development should have reached a physiological stage which will ensure a continuation of the maturation process to completion, (in accordance with criteria proper of the variety and/ or commercial type, and to the area in which they are grown). Fruit should be free of bitterness amended as mentioned in the following sentences based on draft proposal layout.

Section 2.1.2 Maturity requirements

Iran recommended section 2.1.2 must be changed and go to a new place as section 2.2 MATURITY REQUIREMENTS. The below intend is mentioned in the Proposed Standard Layout.

2.2 MATURITY REQUIREMENTS

The avocados must be picked when it has reached a physiological stage which will ensure a continuation of the ripening process to completion, in accordance with criteria proper of the variety and/ or commercial type, and to the area in which they are grown. Fruit should be free of bitterness.

We recommend amending the number of below sections:

Section 2.3 CLASSIFICATION***Section 2.3.1 Extra Class******Section 2.3.2 Class I******Section 2.3.3 Class II*****Section 2.2.2 Class I**

Iran suggests the following amended sentences as mentioned in the proposed standard layout. The phrase “edible part” specifies more precisely the intactness. It is much easier to understand by people.

The defects must not, in any case, affect ***edible part of Avocado***.

Section 2.2.3 Class II

Iran suggests the following amended sentences as mentioned in the proposed standard layout. The phrase “edible part” specifies more precisely the intactness. It is much easier to understand by people.

The defects must not, in any case, affect ***edible part of Avocado***.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand would like to thank Cuba for leading the working group on this draft, and wishes to make the following comments:

Section 2.1.2, Maturity requirements

Information is needed on how the minimum dry matter content should be interpreted, to ensure that importing countries follow consistent procedures. A sampling plan, test method and decision protocol should be included in the standard, or else reference should be made to documents prepared by other international organisations.

Section 3, Provisions concerning sizing

The standard as written presupposes a 4kg tray, as the “size code” is actually the number of fruit in a tray of (nominally) 4 kg. (In each row of the table, the size code multiplied by the mid-point of the weight range equals 4 kg.)

Part (b) should allow the option for other size codes and weight bands to be utilized based on a different unit tray weight. Many countries, New Zealand included, use a different weight tray (e.g. 5.5 kg), which is determined by commercial requirements.