
UNECE STANDARD FFV-39

concerning the marketing and
commercial quality control of

SWEET CHESTNUTS

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NOTE

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

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This revised Standard for Sweet chestnuts is based on document ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2023/13 reviewed and adopted by the Working Party at its seventy-eighth session.

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UNECE standard FFV-39 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of sweet chestnuts

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to sweet chestnuts in the shell but with the spiny husk removed of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Castanea sativa* Mill. (sweet chestnut), *Castanea crenata* Siebold et Zucc. (Japanese chestnut), *Castanea mollissima* Blume (Chinese chestnut) and their hybrids, to be supplied fresh to the consumer, sweet chestnuts for industrial processing being excluded.

Sweet chestnuts with non-septate nuts may be marketed under a special commercial denomination (e.g. marrons).

II. Provisions concerning quality

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for sweet chestnuts after preparation and packaging.

However, if applied at stages following export/dispatch, products may show in relation to the requirements of the standard:

- a slight lack of freshness and turgidity
- for products graded in classes other than the “Extra” Class, a slight deterioration due to their development and their tendency to perish.

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 such conformity.

A. Minimum requirements

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the sweet chestnuts must be:

- intact; however, slight superficial cracks are not considered as a defect, provided the kernel is physically protected
- sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter
- practically free from pests
- practically free from damage caused by pests, including the presence of dead insects and/or mites, their debris or excreta
- free of shrivelling or drying out
- free of externally visible sprouting
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

The development and condition of the sweet chestnuts must be such as to enable them:

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

B. Classification

Sweet chestnuts are classified in three classes, as defined below:

(i) “Extra” Class

Sweet chestnuts in this class must be of superior quality. They must be 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.

(ii) Class I

Sweet chestnuts in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

The following slight defects, however, may be allowed, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package:

- a slight defect in shape
- slight defects in colouring.

(iii) Class II

This class includes sweet chestnuts that do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes but satisfy the minimum requirements specified above.

The following defects may be allowed, provided the sweet chestnuts retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- defects in shape
- defects in colouring.

III. Provisions concerning sizing

Size is determined by the number of nuts per kg or by diameter i.e. the diameter of each nut or a diameter range.

- When sized by number, the minimum size shall be 125 nuts per kg
- When sized by diameter the minimum size shall be 20 mm.

To ensure uniformity in size, the difference in weight between the 10 smallest and the 10 largest nuts taken in a sample of 1 kg in each package shall not be more than 100 g.

IV. Provisions concerning tolerances

At all marketing stages, tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each lot for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.¹

¹ A conformity check shall be made by assessing primary or composite samples. It is based on the principle of presumption that the quality of the randomly taken samples is representative of the quality of the lot. The OECD Operating Rules for Conformity Checks are recommended for application – also by operators – at the stages of dispatch as well as in wholesale and distribution centres and storerooms of food retail.

<i>Defects allowed</i>	<i>Tolerances allowed, percentage of defective produce, by count</i>		
	<i>“Extra” Class</i>	<i>Class I</i>	<i>Class II</i>
(a) Tolerances for sweet chestnuts not satisfying the quality requirements of which no more than:			
– damaged, dried and/or shrivelled	6	10	15
– affected by decay (mould, rot)	2	4	7
– living pests	1	3	5
– damage caused by pests	0	0	1
– slight externally visible sprouting	0	3	7
(b) Size tolerances	0	0	5
(c) Tolerances for other defects			
– septate nuts if the commercial type “non-septate nuts” is indicated	10	10	10
	20	20	20

V. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only sweet chestnuts of the same origin, variety or commercial type, quality and size and appreciably of the same degree of development.

For “Extra” Class, the sweet chestnuts must be of uniform colouring.

The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

B. Packaging

Sweet chestnuts must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

The materials used inside the package must be clean and of a quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce. The use of materials, particularly of paper or stamps bearing trade specifications, is allowed, provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Packages must be free of all foreign matter.

VI. Provisions concerning marking

Each package² must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside:

A. Identification

Packer and/or dispatcher/exporter:

² These marking provisions do not apply to sales packages presented in packages bearing these particulars. However, they do apply to sales packages (pre-packages) presented individually.

Name and physical address (e.g. street/city/region/postal code and, if different from the country of origin, the country) or a code mark officially recognized by the national authority³ if the country applying such a system is listed in the UNECE Code Mark Registry⁴. In the case where there is no street address available, the physical address can be made up of the name of the farm or facility, the nearest village, town, region, and postal code; or GPS coordinates and a PO Box address together with nearest town, region and country shall be accepted as a physical address.⁵

B. Nature of produce

- “Sweet chestnuts”, “Japanese chestnuts” or “Chinese chestnuts” if the contents are not visible from the outside
- “Marrons” for non-septate nuts where applicable
- Name of the variety (optional).

C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin⁶ and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size expressed as
 - number of nuts contained in 1 kg
 - minimum and maximum diameter in mm.

E. Official control mark (optional)

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³ The national legislation of a number of countries requires the explicit declaration of the name and address. However, in the case where a code mark is used, the reference “packer and/or dispatcher (or equivalent abbreviations)” has to be indicated in close connection with the code mark, and the code mark should be preceded by the ISO 3166 (alpha-2) country/area code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

⁴ See <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/codemarkregistry.html>.

⁵ Reservation by the United States of America on the use of a PO Box address, as it may not allow facility inspections or rapid intervention in case of recalls, and is not part of its national labelling requirement related to packer and/or dispatcher/exporter.

⁶ The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.