
UNECE STANDARD FFV-22

concerning the marketing and
commercial quality control of

LETTUCES, CURLED-LEAVED ENDIVES AND BROAD-LEAVED (BATAVIAN) ENDIVES

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NOTE

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

The commercial quality standards developed by the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) help facilitate international trade, encourage high-quality production, improve profitability and protect consumer interests. UNECE standards are used by Governments, producers, traders, importers and exporters, and other international organizations. They cover a wide range of agricultural products, including fresh fruit and vegetables, dry and dried produce, seed potatoes, meat, cut flowers, eggs and egg products.

Any member of the United Nations can participate, on an equal footing, in the activities of the Working Party. For more information on agricultural standards, please visit our website <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.html>.

The present Standard for Lettuces, curled-leaved endives and broad-leaved (batavian) endives is based on documents ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2008/7 and ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2012/8, reviewed and adopted by the Working Party at its sixty-sixth and sixty-eighth sessions.

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UNECE standard FFV-22 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of lettuces, curled-leaved endives and broad-leaved (batavian) endives

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to:

- lettuces of varieties (cultivars) grown from:
 - *Lactuca sativa* var. *capitata* L. (head lettuces including crisphead and "Iceberg" type lettuces),
 - *Lactuca sativa* var. *longifolia* Lam. (cos or romaine lettuces),
 - *Lactuca sativa* var. *crispa* L. (leaf lettuces),
 - crosses of *these* varieties
- curled-leaved endives of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Cichorium endivia* var. *crispum* Lam.
- broad-leaved (Batavian) endives (escaroles) of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Cichorium endivia* var. *latifolium* Lam.

to be supplied fresh to the consumer.

This standard does not apply to produce for industrial processing, produce presented as individual leaves, lettuces with root ball or lettuces in pots.

II. Provisions concerning quality

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for produce 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
- 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 produce must be:

- intact
- sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- clean and trimmed, i.e. practically free from all earth or other growing medium and practically free of any visible foreign matter
- fresh in appearance
- practically free from pests

- practically free from damage caused by pests
- turgescence
- not running to seed
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

In the case of lettuce, a reddish discolouration, caused by low temperature during growth, is allowed, unless it seriously affects the appearance of the lettuce.

The roots must be cut close to the base of the outer leaves and the cut must be neat.

The produce must be of normal development. The development and condition of the produce must be such as to enable it:

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

B. Classification

The produce is classified in two classes, as defined below:

(i) Class I

Produce in this class must be of good quality. It must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

The produce must also be:

- well formed
- firm, taking into account the cultivation methods and the type of produce
- free from damage or deterioration impairing edibility
- free from frost damage.

Head lettuces must have a single well-formed heart. However, in the case of head lettuces grown under protection, the heart may be small.

Cos lettuces must have a heart, which may be small.

The centre of curled-leaved endives and broad-leaved (Batavian) endives must be yellow in colour.

(ii) Class II

This class includes produce which do not qualify for inclusion in Class I, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified above.

The produce must be:

- reasonably well-formed
- free from damage and deterioration which may seriously impair edibility.

The following defects may be allowed provided the produce retains its essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- slight discolouration
- slight damage caused by pests.

Head lettuces must have a heart, which may be small. However, in the case of head lettuces grown under protection, absence of heart is permissible.

Cos lettuces may show no heart.

III. Provisions concerning sizing

Size is determined by the weight of one unit.

To ensure uniformity in size, the range in size between produce in the same package shall not exceed:

- (a) **Lettuces**
 - 40 g when the lightest unit weighs less than 150 g per unit
 - 100 g when the lightest unit weighs between 150 g and 300 g per unit
 - 150 g when the lightest unit weighs between 300 g and 450 g per unit
 - 300 g when the lightest unit weighs more than 450 g per unit.
- (b) **Curled-leaved and broad-leaved (Batavian) endives**
 - 300 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

A. Quality tolerances

(i) Class I

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number, of produce not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 1 per cent in total may consist of produce satisfying neither the requirements of Class II quality nor the minimum requirements, or of produce affected by decay.

(ii) Class II

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number, of produce satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements is allowed. With this tolerance not more than 2 per cent in total may consist of produce affected by decay.

B. Size tolerances

For all classes: a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number, of produce not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing is allowed.

V. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only produce of the same origin, variety or commercial type, quality and size.

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.

However, a mixture of lettuces and/or endives of distinctly different varieties, commercial types and/or colours may be packed together in a package, provided they are uniform in quality and, for each variety, commercial type and/or colour concerned, in origin. However, in case of those mixtures uniformity in size is not required.

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

B. Packaging

The produce must be packed in such a way as to protect it properly. It must be reasonably packed having regard to the size and type of packaging, without empty spaces or crushing.

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 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:

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

- "Lettuces", "butterhead lettuces", "batavia", "crisphead lettuces (Iceberg)", "cos lettuces", "leaf lettuce" (or, for example and where appropriate, "Oak leaf", "Lollo bionda", "Lollo rossa"), "curled-leaved endives", "broad-leaved (Batavian) endives", or equivalent denomination if the contents are not visible from the outside
- "Grown under protection", or equivalent denomination, where appropriate
- Name of the variety (optional)

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.

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.

- “Mixture of lettuces/endives”, or equivalent denomination in the case of a mixture of lettuces and/or endives of distinctly different varieties, commercial types and/or colours. If the produce is not visible from the outside, the varieties, commercial types and/or colours and the quantity of each in the package must be indicated.

C. Origin of produce

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

In the case of a mixture of lettuces and/or endives of distinctly different varieties, commercial types and/or colours of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the variety, commercial type and/or colour concerned.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size, expressed by the minimum weight per unit, or number of units.

E. Official control mark (optional)

Adopted 1961

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Aligned with the Standard Layout 2023

The OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables has published an explanatory illustrated brochure on the application of this standard. The publication may be obtained from the OECD bookshop at: www.oecdbookshop.org.

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