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## Glossary of terms used in UNECE standards on fresh fruits and vegetables

1.	Definition of the product	3
2.	Minimum requirements	3
3.	Classification	4
4.	Presentation	5
5.	Marking	7
	Annex 1 – Alphabetic list of the terms	8
	Bibliography	9

## Domain of application

The work on these definitions has for objective to facilitate the interpretation and implementation of the provisions within UNECE and Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables.

## Terms and definitions

Defined terms follow below the same sequential order as the UNECE standards. An alphabetical classification of the defined terms is given in annex 1.

### 1. Definition of the product

**1.1. Variety (cultivated variety, cultivar):** taxon that has been selected for a particular attribute or combination of attributes, and this is clearly distinct, uniform, and stable in its characteristics that propagated by appropriate means, retains those characteristics<sup>1</sup>. In some particular cases, the term “cultivar” is equivalent to “variety” which is a single botanic taxon of the lowest known rank.

**1.2. Synonym:** other officially functioning variety name which can replace a basic variety name.

Elise and Red Delight

Reine des Reinettes and Gold Parmoné or Goldparmäne.

**1.3.a : Trademark :** a name registered by a trader for which protection has been sought or obtained in one or more countries. Such proprietary products may only be produced or traded by those authorized by patent holder to do so under an appropriate licence. The use of such a name by another without permission may lead to legal action.

Example : Orangered® is a trademark of apricot in France.

**1.3.b : Tradename :** name or denomination developed or selected by a trader for which no protection has been sought or obtained in any country. However, the use of such a name should not be misleading.

Example: Coeur de boeuf for the tomatoes in France.

**1.4. Commercial type:** Produce with similar technical characteristics and/or appearance, but which may belong to different varieties.

Example: inshell nuts, nut kernels belong to different varieties but have similar technical characteristics.

Cherry tomatoes have the same commercial type even if different varieties exist.

**1.5. Industrial processing:** Operation distinct from conditioning or packaging which involves a substantial modification of the product or its form of presentation, such as freezing, heating, smoking, curing, maturing, drying, marinating, extraction, extrusion or a combination of those processes; prior to being packaged for sale.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants.

<sup>2</sup> EU Regulation No 853/2004 of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs: “ article 2 : (m) "**processing**" means any action that substantially alters the initial product, including heating, smoking, curing, maturing, drying, marinating, extraction, extrusion or a combination of those processes;”

## 2. Minimum requirements

**2.1. Intact:** The whole fruit or vegetable or part of a vegetable as it was harvested. The edible part of the fruit or vegetable is not damaged and does not have any mutilations or injury spoiling the integrity of the produce by any means. Trimming is allowed as long as the edible part is not affected or the relevant standard expressly allows the trimming of the edible part.

**2.2. Sound:** Product free from disease or serious deterioration (such as decay, breakdown, damages caused by any reasons, physiological disorders) that appreciably affects their appearance, edibility, the keeping quality of the produce or market value.

**2.3. Clean:** free of visible soil, substrate or pesticides residues, dust, or other visible foreign matter. The foreign matter is hardly to be seen on the product and is mainly not spread over the edible part (small amount of foreign matter near the calyx or peduncle area).

**2.4. Practically free:** Product of a consignment, lot or shipment, whose defined defects are under the limits fixed by the standard and consistent with good cultural and handling practices employed in the production and marketing of the commodity.

**2.5. Visible foreign matter:** Any visible and/or apparent matter or material not usually associated with fruits and vegetables.

**2.6. Pests:** any species of animal, mites or insects, who is injurious or potentially injurious, whether directly or indirectly to fruits and vegetables.

[“Practically free from pests”: not more than 3 insects or mites are to be detected on one unit, unless there is another indication in the standard.]

**2.7. Damage caused by pests:** Injury caused by pests resulting in holes, or unhealed scarring, affecting the skin or the flesh or the presence of dead pests and/or excrements. The loss of value, usefulness or having an effect on the soundness of the produce may be economic, or affect the esthetics of the produce. These damages can affect the flesh, exposing it to exterior contact.

**2.8. Fresh appearance:** Appearance of fruits and vegetables displaying, at the time of sale, similar visual characteristics to recently harvested products (i.e., colour, texture, firmness, turgescence, and absence of shrivelling, wilting nor senescence).

**2.9. Development:** Physiological and biochemical changes of fruits and vegetables resulting in growth. Development is dependent of the characteristics of each product. Moreover, factors such as product innate characteristics, its ability to withstand handling, transportation and storage determine the “market stage of development” at which the product is harvested

**2.10 Firmness:** attribute of flesh texture expressing resistance to deformation which depends on variety, stage of ripeness and on length of storage. Firmness is one of the indicators useful in assessment of stage of ripeness and can be measured by a penetrometer or by sensory assessment.

**2.11 Firm:** level of firmness enabling trading, storing and keeping acceptable eating quality of produce depending on the nature of produce (different for different products e.g. carrots, cherries or garlic).

**2.12 Decay:** defect (progressive or not) affecting the edibility of the product.

**2.13 Satisfactory condition:** absence of defects due to pre and post harvest damage or poor handling such as firmness, bruise, heavy trim, cuts, cracking, picking damage, chilling, scald...

### 3. Classification

**3.1. Classification:** Distribution in classes according to a certain order. selecting fruits or vegetables with uniform characteristics as to shape, skin, colour and size (see “Standard layout for UNECE Standards on fresh fruits and vegetables – 2011).

**3.1.1. “Extra” Class:** *selection of* fruit or vegetables of superior quality. This class shall have the characteristics of the variety or commercial type, shall fulfil the minimum requirements established for the product., Product classified as “extra class” should be with:

- Superior quality and careful presentation
- Colour characteristic of the variety or commercial type
- No defects with the exception of very slight superficial

**3.1.2. Class I:** selection of fruit or vegetables of good quality. It shall have the characteristics of the variety or commercial type, shall fulfil the minimum requirements established for the product, and shall be exempt of any defect which affects the internal quality of fruit or vegetable.

Products of this class which have a defined shape may have slight deformations. Superficial defects shall not exceed 10% in weight or count of fruit or vegetable.

**3.1.3. Class II:** selection of fruit or vegetable of marketable quality. It cannot be classified in Categories Extra and I, and has to meet the minimum requirements established for the product. It shall be free from any defect which affects the internal quality of the fruit or vegetable. Products of this class which have a defined shape may have deformations. Superficial defects shall not exceed 10% of the fruit or vegetable.

**3.2. Flesh:** Edible part of a fruit or vegetable covered with the peel.

**3.3. Sizing:** The classification of fruits and vegetables based on their physical dimensions such as diameter, length or weight of each unit. . Sizing may be express with:

- minimum and/maximum size to assure sufficient development
- uniformity in size: size range expressed as minimum and maximum size in the package or number of units in the package.

**3.4. Tolerances** are provided to allow for errors during the grading and packing process. During grading and sizing it is not permitted to deliberately include out of grade produce, i.e. to exploit the tolerances deliberately. The tolerances are determined after examining all sample packages calculating the percentage (by number or weight) of all the units not conforming to the class or size indicated of all samples examined.

**3.4.1. Quality tolerances:** maximum acceptable Percentage (in weight or number) of products not meeting the requirements of the class. Not conform products have defects on physiological, morphological and pathological breakdown, physical damages affecting the appearance, organoleptic and other quality specifications such as maturity.

**3.4.2. Size tolerances:** maximum percentage (in weight or number) of the fruit or vegetable in a lot not meeting the requirements of the class concerned.

## 4. Presentation

**4.1. Presentation:** Way a product is presented for sale: (packaging, amount, weight) depending on: quality class, commercial type, size, colour, origin, type of package

**4.2. Uniformity:** Fruit or vegetable having similar characteristics mainly regarding the size or weight, maturity and colour. The overall appearance of a product is not materially affected by significant variation. Generally, uniformity implies there is consistency in the overall appearance, the quality, the size or the weight, the shape, or the colour of a product. The term uniformity imposes a level of acceptable variability in a product.”

### 4.3. Packaging:

**4.3.1 Packages:** wholesales units conceived so as to facilitate handling and transport of a number of products (loose, arranged or pre packed), in order to prevent damages by physical handling and transport. Road, rail, ship and air containers are not considered as packages.

Packages are individually packaged part of a lot, including contents. The packaging is conceived so as to facilitate handling and transport of a number of sales packages or of products loose or arranged, in order to prevent damage by physical handling and transport. The package may constitute a sales package. Road, rail, ship and air containers are not considered as packages.

**4.3.2 Sale package :** sale unit which content can be altered without opening or modifying the packaging.

Sales packages are individually packaged part of a lot, including contents. The packaging of sales packages is conceived so as to constitute a sales unit to the final user or consumer at the point of purchase.

Pre-packages are sales packages where the packaging encloses the foodstuff completely or only partially, but in such a way that the contents cannot be altered without opening or changing the packaging.<sup>3</sup>

**4.3.3. Packaging Material:** Any containers such as cartons, boxes, cases or wrapping and covering material, as film and wax-paper (see Bibliography – n°9).

**4.4. Packer:** Person or company responsible for the management of post-harvest operations (grading, sorting, sizing, waxing, grading/classifying, packing) and packing of fresh fruit and vegetables<sup>4</sup>.

**4.5. Lot:** A quantity of a food delivered at one time and known, or presumed, to have uniform characteristics such as origin, producer, variety / commercial type, packer, type of packing, markings, consignor, etc.

The lot is the quantity of produce which, at the time of inspection at one place, has similar characteristics with regard to:

<sup>3</sup> EU Regulation No 1169-2011 of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers “ article 2 – 2.(e) ‘**prepacked food**’ means any single item for presentation as such to the final consumer and to mass caterers, consisting of a food and the packaging into which it was put before being offered for sale, whether such packaging encloses the food completely or only partially, but in any event in such a way that the contents cannot be altered without opening or changing the packaging; ‘prepacked food’ does not cover foods packed on the sales premises at the consumer’s request or prepacked for direct sale;

<sup>4</sup> Codex CAC/RPC 53-2003 Code of hygienic practice for fresh fruits and vegetables: “**Packer** – the person responsible for the management of post-harvest processing and packing of fresh fruits and vegetables.”

- packer, dispatcher and/or shipper
- country of origin
- nature of produce
- class of produce
- size (if the produce is graded according to size)
- variety or commercial type (according to the relevant provisions of the standard)
- type of packaging and presentation.<sup>5</sup>

**4.6. Bulk:** unpackaged product which may be in direct contact with the contact surface of the food transportation unit and the atmosphere (can be powdered, granulated or in a liquid form or not). Bulk is use for the transportation of products for processing and to the packer's units.

## 5. Marking

**5.1. Accompanying documents:** Sheets, bills of loading or commercial documents when they accompany foodstuffs to which they are related or when they are sent prior to or concurrent with the delivery (see bibliography – n°9).

**5.2. Dispatcher:** Name of the company which sends the product.

**5.3. Identification code:** A code given by the competent authority of the country concerned uniquely identifying packer / dispatcher of the lot. This consists of a variety of numbers and/or letters and may be present on a package or container within a lot in place of the name and address of the packer / dispatcher. The national legislation of a number of countries requires the explicit declaration of the name and address.

**5.4. Country of origin:** Country in which the fruit or vegetable was grown and harvested.<sup>6</sup>

**5.5. Official control mark:** Stamp or signature to guaranty the quality control of a lot.

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<sup>5</sup> Codex CAC/GL 33-1999 Recommended methods of sampling "Lot : A quantity of a food material delivered at one time and known, or presumed, by the sampling officer to have uniform characteristics such as origin, producer, variety, packer, type of packing, markings, consignor, etc."

<sup>6</sup>UE regulation No 2913/92 of 12 October 1992 establishing the Community Customs Code :

"Article 23 : 1. Goods originating in a country shall be those wholly obtained or produced in that country.

2. The expression 'goods wholly obtained in a country' means:

(a) mineral products extracted within that country;

(b) vegetable products harvested therein; "

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**Annex 1 – Alphabetic list of the terms****A**

5.1 Accompanying documents

**B**

4.6 Bulk

**C**

3.1.2 Class I

3.1.3 Class II

3.1 Classification

2.3 Clean

1.4 Commercial Type

5.4 Country of origin

**D**

2.7 Damage caused by pests

2.12 Decay

2.9 Development

5.2 Dispatcher

**E**

3.1.1 « Extra » class

**F**

2.11 Firm

2.10 Firmness

3.2 Flesh

2.8 Fresh appearance

**I**

5.3 Identification code

1.5 Industrial processing

2.1 Intact

**L**

4.5 Lot

**O**

5.5 Official control mark

**P**

4.3.1 Packages

4.3.3 Packaging material

4.4 Packer

2.6 Pests

2.4 Practically free

4.1 Presentation

**Q**

3.4.1 Quality tolerances

**S**

4.3.2 Sale package

2.13 Satisfactory condition

3.4.2 Size tolerances

3.3 Sizing

2.2 Sound

1.2 Synonym

**T**

1.3 a – Trademark

1.3 b – Tradename

3.4 Tolerances

**U**

4.2 Uniformity

**V**

1.1 Variety

2.5 Visible foreign matter

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Resolución de la Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería de la República Argentina N° 297/83. Normas de calidad para hortalizas frescas:

International standards for phytosanitary measures ISPM 5 – glossary of phytosanitary terms – produced by the

Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention. FAO, 1990, revised FAO, 1995, IPPC, 1997.

Standard layout for UNECE standards on fresh fruit and vegetables-2008.

EU regulation – Directive 2000/13 du 20/03/2000 concerning the labelling and the presentation of food products as well as the publicity.

Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for the Collecting, Processing and Marketing of Natural Mineral Waters (CAC/RCP 33-1985).

Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CAC/RCP53 -2003)

Codex Recommended Methods of Sampling for the Determination of Pesticide Residues for Compliance with MRLs (CAC/GL 33-1999).

Code of Hygienic Practice for the Transport of Food in Bulk and Semi-Packed Food (CAC/RCP 47-2001).

(EC) Regulation 178/2008 establishing the general principles and the general prescriptions of the food legislation, establishing the European authority of safety of food and fixing procedures relative to the safety of food products.

The CODEX General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods, CODEX STAN 1-1985.

The General Standard for Food Additives Online glossary of terms.

Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene -Codex Alimentarius.