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Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

**Specialized Section on Standardization
of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables**

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**Sustainable Development Goal 12 and sustainable
practices: Food loss related to the use of standards**

Draft baseline quality requirements *

The following document contains the proposals of the delegations from Germany and the United Kingdom on baseline quality requirements. The United Kingdom's proposals have been integrated into the text and placed in square brackets. The Specialized Section is invited to review the document.

* Submitted on the above date to integrate the proposals.

Baseline quality for fresh fruit and vegetables

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to fresh fruit and vegetables [**and in-shell nuts**] (hereafter: produce) to be supplied fresh to the consumer, produce for industrial processing being excluded.

II. Provisions concerning quality

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

However, if applied at stages following export, produce 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; however
 - a product specific preparation or trimming,
 - hollow stems or hollowness provided the surrounding tissue is sound, fresh and not discoloured,
 - slight damages and cracks
 - missing peduncle/calyx provided the adjacent tissue is not damagedare allowed, provided the edibility and keeping quality is not affected.
- 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
- <free from damage caused by pests affecting the flesh>
- <practically free from damage caused by pests>
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

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

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

B. Maturity requirements

The produce must be sufficiently developed, but not over-developed.

The fruit of non-climacteric species must be sufficiently developed and display satisfactory maturity and/or ripeness.

For fruit of climacteric species, the development and state of maturity must be such as to enable them to continue their ripening process and to reach a satisfactory degree of ripeness.

Fruit must not be overripe.

III. Provisions concerning quality 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.

A total tolerance of 10 [20] per cent, by number or weight, of produce not satisfying the minimum requirements is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 2 per cent in total may consist of produce affected by decay.

IV. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only produce of the same botanical species and origin.

However, a mixture of produce of distinctly different [**species,**] varieties, commercial types and/or colours may be packed together in a package and/or sales package, provided they are uniform in quality and, for each variety, commercial type and/or colour concerned, in origin.

The visible part of the contents of the package [(or lot for produce presented in bulk in the transport vehicle)] must be representative of the entire contents.

B. Packaging

The produce 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.

Stickers individually affixed to the produce shall be such that, when removed, they neither leave visible traces of glue nor lead to skin defects. Information lasered on single fruit should not lead to flesh or skin defects.

Packages [(or lot for produce presented in bulk in the transport vehicle)] must be free of all foreign matter.

V. Provisions concerning marking

Each package¹ must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside. For produce transported in bulk (direct loading into a transport vehicle), these particulars must appear on a document accompanying the goods, and attached in a visible position inside the transport vehicle:

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 authority² if the country applying such a system is listed in the UNECE data base.

B. Nature of produce

- “Name of the produce” if the contents are not visible from the outside.
- Name of the variety (optional).

The name of the variety can be replaced by a synonym. A trade name³ can only be given in addition to the variety or the synonym.

- “Mixture of {name of produce}” or equivalent denomination, in the case of a mixture of distinctly different [species,] varieties, commercial types and/or colours of the same species, names of the different varieties commercial types and/or colours, if the produce is not visible from the outside.

C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin⁴ and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name.

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

D. Commercial specifications

- UNECE-baseline or the UNECE-Baseline-Quality logo

E. Official control mark (optional)

¹ These marking provisions do not apply to sales packages presented in packages. However, they do apply to sales packages (pre-packages) presented individually.

² 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) country/area code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

³ A trade name can be a trade mark for which protection has been sought or obtained or any other commercial denomination.

⁴ The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.