



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Committee on Trade

### Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

#### Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce

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Items 3 (c) and 3 (d) of the provisional agenda

#### Review of UNECE Recommendations

## Comments by the delegation of Turkey

### Submitted by the delegation of Turkey

The following comments were submitted by the delegation of Turkey and concern the following two UNECE Recommendations: UNECE Recommendation for Dried Apricots and UNECE Recommendation for Dried Figs

#### Dried Apricots

##### *1. Under item II. A. – Minimum requirements*

free of foreign smell and/or taste except for a slight smell of preservatives/additives such as sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>).

Reasons:

- Turkey leads the world in the production and export of dried apricots. As a matter of fact, Turkey commands about 80 per cent of world dried apricot exports and 90 per cent of this amount is processed with sulphur dioxide as preservative. Natural apricots are often treated with sulphur dioxide to extend the storage term as well as the shelf life of dried apricots.
- According to UNECE Standard for Dried Apricots (1996 Edition) the dried apricots must be, inter alia, “free of foreign smell and/or taste” and “a slight smell of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) is not considered abnormal”. However, in the draft standard there is no direct reference to sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>).
- It is not possible to use sodium chloride (more commonly known as table salt) in the production and treatment process of dried apricots. On the other hand, a chlorine smell, which has no relation with sodium chloride, may be felt due to the water used

for washing apricots. This smell can be easily removed by letting the water stand until it becomes clear. That's why there is also no direct reference to sodium chloride in the current UNECE Standard for Dried Apricots.

- Therefore, in the draft text it should be explicitly stated that a slight smell of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) should not be considered as "foreign smell" and the reference to sodium chloride should be removed.

## 2. Under item III –Provisions concerning sizing

Sizing is determined by the number of fruit per kilogramme (1,000 g) according to the scales:

### A. By diameter

<i>Size Code</i>	<i>Range (mm)</i>	<i>Range (inches)</i>
[Jumbo]	34 mm and larger	1 3/8 or larger
[Extra fancy]	31-34 mm	1 1/4-1 3/8
[Fancy]	28-31	1 1/8-1 1/4
[Extra choice]	25-28	1 - 1 1/8
[Choice]	20-25	13/16 - 1
[Standard]	Less than 25 mm	Less than 13/16

### B. By number of fruit per kilogramme

<i>Size Code</i>	<i>Number of whole, unpitted fruit per kilogramme</i>	<i>Number of whole, pitted fruit per kilogramme</i>	<i>Number of fruit halves per kilogramme</i>
1	Less than 80	Less than 100	Less than 200
2	81 – 100	101 – 120	201 – 240
3	101 – 120	121 – 140	241 – 280
4	121 – 140	141 – 160	281 – 320
5	141 – 160	161 – 180	321 – 360
6	161 – 180	181 – 200	361 – 400
7	181 – 200	201 – 220	401 – 440
8	201 and over	221 and over	441 and over

Reasons:

- In the draft standard a new method of sizing (i.e. by diameter) is proposed. At first sight, this method may be thought as more preferable or effective in the sense that it would provide uniformity in the size and would minimize the size range. However, practically it is not possible to determine the size by diameter. First of all, the diameter of the annual produce is inherently sensitive to seasonal changes. The diameter of the product can vary according to seasonal characteristics, variety of produce and fruit quantity on the tree. Due to the weather conditions, some years products may be fleshier. This would prevent the applicability of sizes indicated in the table concerning sizing by diameter. Secondly, it would be difficult to size precisely apricots by sifting, when they are larger in size.
- Long years of experience and knowledge proved that the method of sizing by number of fruit per kilogramme should be the only one used for determining the

size. In fact, the sector in Turkey is currently using solely this method and the producers are not yet equipped and ready to determine the size by diameter.

### 3. Under item IV. A. – Quality tolerances

<i>Defects allowed</i>	<i>Tolerances allowed, percentage of defective produce, by number or weight<sup>a</sup></i>		
	<i>Extra</i>	<i>Class I</i>	<i>Class II</i>
(b) Size tolerances*			
For product not conforming to the size indicated by diameter, if sized	10	10	10

<sup>a</sup> A minimum sample unit of one kilogramme is required for the test.

\* If the sizing is determined by the number of fruit per kilogramme (1,000g), in all classes 25 per cent of the apricots may be of the next larger or next smaller size and 20 per cent of the apricots above this difference.

Reasons:

- The tolerances for each class of 10 percent in the draft standard would be applicable only for the method of sizing by diameter.
- If the size is determined by the number of fruit per kilogramme, the size tolerances indicated in the current standard should be allowed.

### 4. Under item IV. A. – Quality tolerances

<i>Defects allowed</i>	<i>Tolerances allowed, percentage of defective produce, by number or weight</i>		
	<i>Extra</i>	<i>Class I</i>	<i>Class II</i>
(c) Tolerances for other defects			
Presence of pits and fragments of pits in pitted fruit	[1	1	2]

Reasons:

- Turkey is in favour of percentage tolerances as indicated in brackets.

### 5. Under item VI. – D. Commercial specifications; F. Lot No.

Crop year;

Packages in the same consignment and/or subject to control at the same time by the official control service should be marked with a unique lot number.

Reasons:

- In marking “crop year” should be mandatory.
- In order to provide traceability in production and effectiveness in official controls, packages in the same consignment and/or subject to control at the same time by the official inspection service should bear a unique “Lot no.”.

## Dried Figs

### 1. Under item II. B. – Moisture content

The dried figs shall have a moisture content not exceeding 26.0 per cent unless treated with suitable preservatives in accordance with the legislation of the importing country, in which case the moisture content should not exceed 30.0 per cent<sup>5</sup>.

The dried figs rehydrated or pasteurized with suitable preservatives such as potassium sorbate and prepared in cello bags in accordance with the legislation of the importing country shall have a moisture content not exceeding 40.0 per cent.

<sup>5</sup> Reservation of Greece in favour of 24 per cent for untreated dried figs (26 per cent for treated dried figs).

Reasons:

- Turkey does not agree with the reservation of Greece in favour of 24 per cent of moisture content for untreated dried figs and 26 per cent for treated dried figs. These levels are very low, and hence, the levels of 26.0 and 30.0 per cent for untreated and for treated dried figs would be appropriate, respectively.
- On the other hand, there is an increasing demand for dried figs prepared in consumer packages such as cello bags. These figs are treated with potassium sorbate to inhibit fermentation and mould attack. The moisture level of dried figs prepared in this way may increase up to 40 per cent. Therefore, Turkey proposes a maximum 40.0 per cent of moisture content for dried figs rehydrated or pasteurized with suitable preservatives such as potassium sorbate and packed in cello bags in accordance with the legislation of the importing country.

## 2. Under item III. – Provisions concerning sizing<sup>6</sup>

<i>Size number</i>	<i>Number of fruit per kilogramme<sup>a</sup></i>
1	Up to 40
2	41-45
3	46-50
4	51-55
5	56-60
6	61-65
7	66-70
8	71-80
9	81-100
10	101-120
11	121 and over

<sup>6</sup> Reservation by Greece against the table on sizing which it considered created sub-divisions of quality classifications.

<sup>a</sup> The number of fruit per kilogramme must not exceed 65 for “Extra” Class and 120 for Class I. Dried figs in each class must also satisfy the minimum quality requirements specified in the table of “Quality Tolerances”.

Reasons:

- Turkey does not agree with the reservation of Greece putting forward that the table on sizing create sub-divisions of quality classifications and proposes to use the above-mentioned table.
- Turkey is in favour of the table on sizing of dried figs, which is both in the current and draft standards. These size numbers from 1 to 11 and corresponding scales have been well known and used in international trade for a long time.
- In the UNECE Standard for Dried Figs (2004 Edition) the maximum numbers of dried figs allowed in one kilogramme are mentioned for both “Extra” Class and

Class I. However, in the draft standard there is no direct reference to these maximum numbers. Therefore, it should be explicitly stated in the standard that the number of fruit per kilogramme must not exceed 65 and 120 for “Extra” Class and Class I respectively.

### 3. Under item IV. A. – Quality tolerances

<i>Defects allowed</i>	Tolerances allowed, percentage of defective produce, by weight <sup>a</sup>		
	<i>Extra</i>	<i>Class I</i>	<i>Class II</i>
(b) Size tolerances*			
For product not conforming to the size indicated, if sized	20	20	20

<sup>a</sup> A minimum sample unit of one kilogramme is required for the test.

Reasons:

- Turkey is in favour of 20 per cent size tolerances for produce not conforming to the size indicated.
- On the other hand, the proposed text does not state clearly how to measure the quality tolerances allowed as percentage of defective produce by weight. Therefore, it should be explicitly stated that a sample of one kilogramme is required for the test of quality tolerances as in the current standard.

### 4. Under item VI. – D. Commercial specifications; – F. Lot No.

Crop year;

Packages in the same consignment and/or subject to control at the same time by the official control service should be marked with a unique lot number.

Reasons:

- In marking “crop year” should be mandatory.
- In order to provide traceability in production and effectiveness in official controls, packages in the same consignment and/or subject to control at the same time by the official inspection service should bear a unique “Lot no.”