
UNECE STANDARD FFV-02

concerning the marketing and
commercial quality control of

APRICOTS

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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.

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The present revised Standard for Apricots is based on document ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2021/22, reviewed and adopted by the Working Party in 2021 (followed by a silence procedure in line with the special procedures during the COVID-19 period).

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UNECE standard FFV-02 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of apricots

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to apricots of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Prunus armeniaca* L. and inter-specific hybrids derived from apricot (*Prunus armeniaca*) and plums (*Prunus domestica* or *Prunus salicina*) showing apricot characteristics to be supplied fresh to the consumer, apricots for industrial processing being excluded.

II. Provisions concerning quality

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

- intact
- 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
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

The development and condition of the apricots 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 development and state of maturity of the apricots must be such as to enable them to continue their ripening process and to reach a satisfactory degree of ripeness. The colour characteristic of the variety, turning from the background colour, must be present on at least 30 per cent of the least ripe fruit surface.

C. Classification

Apricots are classified in three classes, as defined below:

(i) “Extra” Class

Apricots in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety allowing for the district in which the fruit is grown.

The flesh must be perfectly sound.

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

Apricots in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety allowing for the district in which the fruit is grown.

The flesh must be perfectly sound.

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
- a slight defect in development
- slight pressure marks not more than 1 cm² of the total surface area
- slight skin defects, including slight healed cracks, which must not extend over more than:
 - 1 cm in length for defects of elongated shape
 - 0.5 cm² of the total surface area for other defects
 - 10 per cent of the total surface area for russetting.

(iii) Class II

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

The flesh must be free from major defects.

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

- defects in shape
- defects in development, including split stones, provided the fruit is closed and the flesh is sound and not discoloured
- bruising not more than 1 cm² of the total surface area
- skin defects, including slight healed cracks, which must not extend over more than:
 - 2 cm in length for defects of elongated shape
 - 1 cm² of the total surface area for other defects
 - 15 per cent of the total surface area for russetting.

III. Provisions concerning sizing

Size is determined by the maximum diameter of the equatorial section.

The minimum size is 30 mm.

To ensure uniformity in size, the range in size between produce in the same package shall not exceed 5 mm in “Extra” Class and 10 mm in Classes I and II (if sized).

Uniformity in size is compulsory for Classes “Extra” and I.

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) “Extra” Class

A total tolerance of 5 per cent, by number or weight, of apricots not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class I is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 0.5 per cent in total may consist of produce satisfying the requirements of Class II quality.

(ii) Class I

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of apricots 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.

(iii) Class II

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

Within the 10 per cent tolerance, fruit split at the stalk cavity and fruit with split stones are allowed.

B. Size tolerances

For all classes (if sized): a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of apricots 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 apricots of the same origin, variety, quality and size (if sized) and, for “Extra” Class, be uniform in colouring.

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

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 application of the OECD Operating Rules for Conformity Checks is recommended for application – also by operators – at the stages of dispatch as well as in wholesale and distribution centres and storerooms of food retail.

B. Packaging

The apricots 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 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

- “Apricots” or, where appropriate, “apricot-plum hybrids” or an equivalent denomination if the contents are not visible from the outside
- Name of the variety for Classes “Extra” and I. A trade name⁶ can only be given in addition to the variety.

C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin⁷ and, optionally, district where grown or national, regional or local place name.

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.

⁶ A trade name can be a trademark for which protection has been sought or obtained or any other commercial denomination.

⁷ The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size (if sized) expressed as minimum and maximum diameter.

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.
