

---

# **UNECE STANDARD FFV-05**

concerning the marketing and  
commercial quality control of

## **AUBERGINES**

**2023 EDITION**



**UNITED NATIONS**  
New York and Geneva, 2023

## 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 revised Standard for Aubergines is based on document ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2016/17, reviewed and adopted by the Working Party at its seventy-second session.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the United Nations Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Mention of company names or commercial products does not imply endorsement by the United Nations.

All material may be freely quoted or reprinted, but acknowledgement is requested.

Please contact us at the following address with any comments or enquiries:

Agricultural Standards Unit  
Economic Cooperation and Trade Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland  
Email: [agrstandards@un.org](mailto:agrstandards@un.org)

# UNECE standard FFV-05 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of aubergines

## I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to aubergines of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Solanum melongena* L. to be supplied fresh to the consumer, aubergines for industrial processing being excluded.

According to their shape a distinction is made between:

- elongated aubergines (including club shaped, cylindrical, ellipsoid and pear shaped), and
- round aubergines (including oval shaped).

## II. Provisions concerning quality

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for aubergines 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 aubergines 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
- fresh in appearance
- firm
- sufficiently developed without the flesh being fibrous or woody and without over-development of the seeds
- provided with a calyx and peduncle which may be slightly damaged
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

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

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

## **B. Classification**

Aubergines are classified in three classes, as defined below:

### **(i) “Extra” Class**

Aubergines in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

They must be firm. The stalk must be intact and 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**

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

They must also be practically free from sun-scorch.

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
- slight defects in colouring but not greenish in case of violet varieties
- slight skin defects including slight bruising and/or slight healed cracks provided that they do not exceed a total surface area of 3 cm<sup>2</sup>.

### **(iii) Class II**

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

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

- defects in shape
- defects in colouring but not greenish in case of violet varieties
- skin defects including slight bruising, slight healed cracks and/or slight sunscorch provided that they do not exceed a total surface area of 4 cm<sup>2</sup>.

## **III. Provisions concerning sizing**

Size is determined by either:

- the maximum diameter of the equatorial section on the longitudinal axis, or
- by weight, or
- by count

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

- (a) For sizing by diameter
- 20 mm for elongated aubergines

- 25 mm for round aubergines.
- (b) For sizing by weight
- 10 g for aubergines between 20-50 g
  - 20 g for aubergines between 50-100 g
  - 75 g for aubergines between 100 to 300 g
  - 100 g for aubergines between 300 to 500 g
  - 250 g for aubergines above 500 g.
- (c) For sizing by count
- The difference in size should be consistent with point (a) or (b).

Uniformity in size is compulsory for Extra Class and Class 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.<sup>1</sup>

### A. Quality tolerances

(i) “Extra” Class

A total tolerance of 5 per cent, by number or weight, of aubergines 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 aubergines 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 aubergines 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.

### B. Size tolerances

For all classes (if sized): a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of aubergines not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing is allowed.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## **V. Provisions concerning presentation**

### **A. Uniformity**

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only aubergines of the same origin, variety or commercial type, quality, size (if sized), and appreciably the same degree of development and colouring.

However, a mixture of aubergines of distinctly different commercial types and/or colours may be packed together in a package, provided they are uniform in quality and, for each 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**

Aubergines 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 package<sup>2</sup> 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 authority<sup>3</sup> if the country applying such a system is listed in the UNECE Code Mark Registry<sup>4</sup>. 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.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/codemarkregistry.html>.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

**B. Nature of produce**

- “Aubergines” if the contents are not visible from the outside
- Name of the variety (optional)
- “Mixture of aubergines”, or equivalent denomination, in the case of a mixture of distinctly different commercial types and/or colours of aubergines. If the produce is not visible from the outside, the commercial types and/or colours and the quantity of each in the package must be indicated.

**C. Origin of produce**

- Country of origin<sup>6</sup> and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name.
- In the case of a mixture of distinctly different commercial types and/or colours of aubergines of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the commercial type and/or colour concerned.

**D. Commercial specifications**

- Class
- Size (if sized) expressed as:
  - minimum and maximum diameter if sized by diameter
  - minimum and maximum weight if sized by weight.
  - count followed by the minimum and maximum diameter or weight if sized by count.

**E. Official control mark (optional)**

Adopted 1970

Last revised 2016

Aligned with the Standard Layout 2023

---

<sup>6</sup> The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.

## Reference annex - Aubergine shapes

### Club-shaped



### Cylindrical



### Ellipsoid



### Pear-shaped

