

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT

1. In October 1949, the Committee on Agricultural Problems established the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Foodstuffs.¹
2. The Working Party was entrusted with the task of "determining common standards for perishable foodstuffs" and studying the steps to be taken at the international level in order to secure the general adoption of "standards and control systems".
3. It should be noted that the standards drawn up by the Working Party concern only goods moving in trade between and to European countries and that they are applied at the dispatch stage and therefore by the competent service of the exporting countries. The standards for individual kinds of fruit and vegetables are drawn up with the framework of a Protocol, adopted in 1958 and revised at the seventeenth session of the Working Party in 1964, which contains general provisions for this type of produce.
4. At its twelfth session, held in Geneva from 12-15 June 1961 the Working Party decided that the standards which it had approved in final form should henceforth be designated as European standards recommended by the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Foodstuffs.
5. The standard contained in this document was approved in final form at the thirty-second session of the Working Party; the secretariat has been instructed to transmit this standard to Governments of member countries of the Economic Commission for Europe for official acceptance.

¹ At the twenty-seventh session of the Committee on Agricultural Problems the Committee agreed to change the name of the Working Party to the "Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce" (ECE/AGRI/20, para. 43).

UNECE STANDARD NO. 42
concerning the marketing and commercial
quality control of

EGGS-IN-SHELL
moving in international trade between and to
UN/ECE member countries

I. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This standard applies to hen eggs-in-shell fit for direct human consumption, eggs for processing, chilled eggs and eggs preserved by any other means being excluded.

Definitions used in the standard

Fresh eggs

are eggs which have not been washed or dry-cleaned and which are collected at least once weekly and which should be packed and graded not later than the first working day after arrival at the packing station.

Slight soiling

scattered superficial soilings not exceeding in all 1/8 of the total surface of the egg shell, or accumulations not exceeding 1/16 of the total surface of the egg-shell. In both cases the shell is to be free of blood rings and the contents must not be soiled.

Cracked eggs

are eggs with damaged shells visible to the naked eye, but with undamaged egg membranes.

Foreign matter

consists of organic or inorganic substances of internal or external origin within the contents.

Commodity lot

eggs of one quality class and weight grade, packed in uniform containers, from one packing plant, loaded on to one means of transportation, and presented once for control purposes.

Week number

the number referred to shall indicate the complete week beginning on Monday but it may be used from midnight on Wednesday of the previous week. Every year the numbering shall be continuous from 1 to 52 or 53. The week which includes 1 January shall bear the number 1.

II. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

General

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements which the product must satisfy at all stages of marketing, after preparation and packaging.

Classification

Shell eggs are classified into three quality classes as defined below:

(i) Extra class

This class comprises fresh eggs of the following quality:

Shell	-	normal shape, clean and undamaged
Air space	-	less than 4 mm in height at the moment of packing
Yolk	-	faintly visible, spherical, slightly mobile upon turning the egg, and returning to a central position
White	-	clear translucent
Germ	-	imperceptible development
Foreign matter	-	not permissible
Contents	-	free of foreign smell.

(ii) Class A

This class comprises fresh eggs of the following quality:

Shell	-	normal shape, clean and undamaged
Air space	-	not more than 6 mm in height, motionless
Yolk	-	faintly visible, spherical, slightly mobile upon turning the egg, and returning to a central position
White	-	clear translucent
Germ	-	imperceptible development
Foreign matter	-	not permissible
Contents	-	free of foreign smell.

(iii) Class B

This class comprises fresh eggs of the following quality:

Shell	-	normal shape, undamaged, slight soilings and slight deformations
Air space	-	not more than 9 mm in height. A mobile cavity up to 1/2 length of egg is permissible
Yolk	-	visible, slightly flattened, mobile
White	-	translucent
Germ	-	imperceptible development
Foreign matter	-	not permissible
Contents	-	free of foreign smell.

III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Grades by weight

Eggs shall be graded into the following weight grades: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Weight Grade a	Weight of eggs in grams b	Minimum weight of 100 eggs in kg c	Minimum weight of 360 eggs in kg d
1	70 and over	7.0	25.20
2	less than 70 to 65	6.6	23.76
3	less than 65 to 60	6.1	21.96
4	less than 60 to 55	5.6	20.16
5	less than 55 to 50	5.1	18.36
6	less than 50 to 45	4.6	16.36
7	less than 45	no net minimum	weight laid down

IV. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

A. Quality tolerances

Quality tolerances in quantitative percentages.

Class	Tolerances
Class A	Permissible: Up to 7 per cent eggs not of Class A but inclusive of not more than : - 1 per cent eggs with blood and meat spots - 4 per cent cracked eggs
Class B	Permissible: Up to 7 per cent of eggs not meeting the requirements of Class B

B. Size tolerances

For each weight grade not more than 10 per cent of the eggs from the adjoining grade are permissible provided that not more than 6 per cent of the eggs from the lower adjoining grade are included.

V. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PACKING, TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND PRESERVATION

(i) Packs, including inner packing material must be shock resistant, dry, clean and in good repair and be of material which protect the eggs from extraneous odour and the risk of quality deterioration.

(ii) Large packs, used for transportation and despatching eggs, including inner packing material, shall not be re-used unless they are as new and meet the technical hygiene requirements of paragraph (i). Re-used large packs, must not bear any previous marking likely to lead to confusion. Small packages containing not more than 30 eggs shall not be re-used.

(iii) Eggs must be stored in clean, dry premises, free of extraneous odour.

(iv) Eggs in transport must be kept clean, dry and free of extraneous odour and effectively protected from shocks, weather and the effect of light.

(v) Eggs in store and in transport must be protected from extremes of temperature.

VI. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING

A. Marking of Eggs

(i) Except where the countries concerned agree otherwise, eggs shall carry the name of the country of origin in roman letters.

(ii) Eggs of classes "Extra" and "A" may be marked with one or more of the following distinguishing marks in roman letters:

- (a) quality class
- (b) weight grade
- (c) the number of the packing station
- (d) the name or the style of the company of the packing station
- (e) a brand name or trade mark
- (f) date or week number of packing.

(iii) Where Class A eggs are marked with the quality class the mark shall consist of a circle not less than 12 mm in diameter; similarly where Class A eggs are marked with the weight grade the mark shall consist of a figure between 2 mm and 3 mm high placed inside the circle mentioned above.

(iv) Eggs of Class B shall be marked with a circle at least 12 mm in diameter in which shall appear the letter B in roman type at least 5 mm high; in this case the weight grade may also be indicated by a number between 2 mm and 3 mm high.

(v) The marking of eggs shall be clear, indelible, in red colour and be resistant to heat. The product used shall comply with the provisions in force in respect of colouring matters which may be used in foodstuffs intended for human consumption.

B. Marking of Packages

(i) The following information printed on a white label or closing device in roman letters shall be placed over the closure or closures of the large packages so that the label or closing device is destroyed on opening and shall contain the following data:

- (a) country of origin (except where countries concerned are agreed otherwise)
- (b) packer and/or dispatcher - name, address or where countries concerned agree an officially accepted code mark
- (c) quality class

- (d) weight grade, weight in kilograms
- (e) identification number of commodity lot being sent
- (f) date or week number of packing.

(ii) Furthermore, in case of transport by sea the inscription "TOP" should be placed in the centre of the lid of the large package or on one of the cardboard flaps parallel to the longer side. At the request of the buyer, additional marking of transportation packagings is permissible.

(iii) Small packages, even where they are inside large packages, shall be marked with the following data:

- (a) country of origin (except where countries concerned are agreed otherwise)
- (b) packer and/or dispatcher - name, address or where countries concerned agree an officially accepted code mark
- (c) quality class and weight grade
- (d) number of eggs packed
- (e) identification number of commodity lot being sent
- (f) date or week number of packing.

(iv) Where the EXTRA CLASS is used the eggs shall be contained in small packages, which shall carry the date of packing. The packages shall be sealed with a band which shall carry the word "EXTRA". The band shall be removed at the latest by the seventh day after the day of packing.

The band shall be placed so that the marking on the small package is not obscured by the position of the band, which shall be broken on the opening of the package.