

Economic Commission for Europe

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Sixty-sixth session

Geneva, 30 April – 2 May 2018

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda

Revision of standards

Revised Standard for Citrus fruit - Comments by Spain

The following informal document, submitted by Spain, contains its comments on the revised standard for citrus fruit (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.1/2018/3)

Comments by Spain on specific parts of the standard are highlighted in red font and proposed deletions are ~~crossed-out~~.

General remarks:

Spain thanks the Specialized Section on Standardization on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables for its work done on the UNECE Standard on Citrus Fruit. Spain also wants to thank South Africa and Germany for the amendments proposed on the standard.

Regarding the UNECE Standard for citrus fruit, Spain wants to underline that this standard is one of the most important standards for Spain due to its high production on citrus fruit. Therefore, Spain considers that the time, less than two months, given by the Specialized Section is not enough time in order to study this document correctly.

The document presented by the Specialized Section:

- Separate the standard into each species, when it was agreed to keep the integrity of the citrus fruit standard possibly with species-specific annexes;
- the document also contains references to the respective Codex standard, but not all reference (i.e., post-harvest treatment is not foreseen in the Codex standard for oranges or limes but this difference in content between CODEX standard and UNECE standard is not reflected in the proposal)
- the document only contains reference of the exiting CODEX Standard but there are no CODEX Standard for all citrus fruit, therefore is not clear the scope of harmonize the texts of the two standards UNECE and CODEX;

In addition, Spain wants to underline that actors involved in citrus trade (producers, exporters, importers as well as the Spanish Inspection Body) have been working with the current standard on citrus fruit without any problem.

The document presented by the Specialized Section is more confusing than the previous one, so it will complicate trade and work carried out by inspection bodies.

Therefore Spain wants to maintain the standard for citrus fruit as it is at the moment.

Specific remarks:

Grapefruit and pummelos

Under II., Provisions concerning quality, B., Maturity requirements:

	Minimum juice content (per cent)	Minimum sugar content (°Brix)	Colouring
Grapefruit and hybrids with grapefruit appearance	35	7 [Proposal by South Africa]	Must be typical of the variety. Fruit with a greenish colour (green in Oroblanco) is allowed, provided it satisfies the minimum requirements as to juice content
Oroblanco	35	9	
Pummelos (Shaddock) and hybrids with pummelo appearance	35 [Proposal by South Africa]	8	Must be typical of the variety on at least two thirds of the surface of the fruit

Comments by Spain: Spain is against to include minimum sugar content (°Brix) of 7 because the current maturity requirements are appropriate for placing fully developed fruit in markets.

Under III, Provisions concerning sizing:

(c) For fruit sized by count, the difference in size should be consistent with (a).

Remark by Germany: Uniformity in size is not required in mixtures of grapefruit and/or pummelos with distinctly different citrus fruit species.

Comments by Spain: Spain would like Germany to explain this proposal,.

Under IV., Provisions concerning tolerances, B. Size tolerances:

For all classes: a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of grapefruit and pummelos not corresponding to the requirements as regards sizing is allowed. ~~the size immediately below and/or above that (or those, in the case of the combination of three sizes) mentioned on the package is allowed.~~

~~In any case, the tolerance of 10 per cent applies only to fruit not smaller than 67 mm for grapefruit and hybrids and 98 mm for pummelos and hybrids.~~

Remark by Germany: This proposal is to align the size tolerances with the Standard Layout.

Remark by South Africa: proposes retaining this sentence as there is currently an allowance for minimum size.

Comments by Spain: Spain strongly opposes this proposal, because it's important to maintain the allowed size tolerances range. Otherwise, the difference in size can be enormous if there are no limits.

Under VI., Provisions concerning marking, D., Commercial specifications:

- ~~• Post harvest treatment (optional, based on the national legislation of the importing country).~~

The CODEX Standard for grapefruit doesn't include the requirement to mark the post-harvest treatment in the package.

Limes

Under III., Provisions concerning sizing:

(a) When sized by diameter

- ~~20 mm, if the diameter of the smallest fruit (as indicated on the package) is \geq 80 mm but $<$ 110 mm~~ [proposal by South Africa]
- no limitation of difference in diameter for fruit \geq 110 mm. [proposal by South Africa]

Remark by South Africa: this section is redundant for lime fruit.

Comments by Spain: Which are the limits for fruits between 80-110? If there are no specification in the proposal made by South Africa. Spain wants to maintain the range in size between produce in the same package as it's in the current standard.

Under IV., Provisions concerning tolerances, B. Size tolerances:

For all classes: a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of limes not meeting the requirements as regards to sizing, corresponding to the size immediately below and/or above that (or those, in the case of the combination of three sizes) mentioned on the package is allowed.

In any case, the tolerance of 10 per cent applies only to fruit not smaller than 40 mm for Persian limes.

Remark by Germany: This proposal is to align the size tolerances with the Standard Layout.

Comments by Spain: Spain strongly opposes to this proposal, because it's important to maintain the allowed size tolerances range. Otherwise, the difference in size can be enormous if there are no limits.

Under VI., Provisions concerning marking, D., Commercial specifications:

- ~~Post harvest treatment (optional, based on the national legislation of the importing country).~~

Comments by Spain: The Codex standard for limes does not include the requirement to mark the post-harvest treatment on the package.

Lemons (Comment by Spain: there is no CODEX standard for this product)

Under II., Provisions concerning quality, B., Maturity requirements:

Remark by South Africa: 20 per cent minimum juice content is exceptionally low; proposed to increase to ~~36 per cent.~~

Comments by Spain: there is no reason to increase the minimum juice content from 20 to 36% for lemons. Spain wants to keep the current minimum juice content.

Under III., Provisions concerning sizing:

- there is no limitation of difference in diameter for fruit \geq 110 mm. [proposal by South Africa]

Remark by South Africa: delete, as these provisions are redundant for lemons.

Comments by Spain: It's not redundant: it's important to keep the specification that if lemons have a diameter bigger than 110mm there is no limitation, otherwise it will seem that the maximum range in size is 20mm for lemons bigger than 80 (including 110) and that is not what the provisions concerning sizing say.

(c) For fruit sized by count, the difference in size should be consistent with (a).

Uniformity in size is not required in mixtures of lemons with distinctly different citrus fruit species.

Comments by Spain: Spain doesn't understand the proposal made by Germany.

Under IV., Provisions concerning tolerances, B. Size tolerances:

For all classes: a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of lemons not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing, but not smaller than 43 mm [proposal by South Africa], ~~corresponding to the size immediately below and/or above that (or those, in the case of the combination of three sizes) mentioned on the package is allowed.~~

~~In any case, the tolerance of 10 per cent applies only to fruit not smaller than 43 mm.~~

Remark by Germany: This proposal is to align the size tolerances with the Standard Layout.

Comments by Spain: Spain strongly opposes to this proposal, because it's important to maintain the allowed size tolerances range. Otherwise the difference in sizes can be enormous if there is no limits.

Under VI., Provisions concerning marking, C., Origin of produce:

- In the case of a mixture of lemons with citrus fruit [proposal by South Africa] of distinctly different species of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the species concerned.

Comments by Spain: This proposal by South Africa is not acceptable because the provision regarding the origin of produce specifies that the mixture of lemons (only lemons) has to specify the origin of each lemon,

Mandarins (easy peelers)

Comments by Spain: The reference of mandarins as easy peelers is not in the current UNECE Standard for citrus fruits. Therefore it should be discussed before including this term.

Spain wants to remove all references to the term easy peelers because the term of easy peelers is not a botanical name of this product, therefore it can lead to confusion. In addition not all mandarins are easy peelers.

Under II., Provisions concerning quality, B., Maturity requirements:

	<i>Minimum juice content (per cent)</i>	<i>Minimum sugar/acid ratio</i>	<i>Minimum Brix</i>	<i>Colouring</i>
Satsumas	33	6.5:1	8.5 [Remark by South Africa: add a table column to indicate minimum Brix for all mandarin varieties]	The colouring must be typical of the variety on at least one third of the surface of the fruit.
Clementines	40	7.0:1		
Other mandarin varieties and their hybrids	33	7.5:1		

The colouring must be typical of the variety on at least one third of the surface of the fruit. [Proposal by South Africa to move sentence about colouring below table.]

~~However, the degree of colouring shall be such that following normal development the mandarins (easy peelers) reach the colour typical of the variety at their destination point.~~

Comments by Spain: Spain wants to maintain the previous sentence as it's important to define the degree of coloring.

Remark by Germany: Whether the sentence proposed for deletion is necessary while the minima of colouring are defined should be discussed.

Remark by South Africa: South Africa supports the inclusion of this paragraph since sometimes when Satsumas are harvested mature but not yet fully coloured, they can then be shipped slightly greener (instead of degreening) to still “reach the colour typical of the variety at their destination point.

Comments by Spain: the proposal by South Africa is not acceptable because the current maturity requirements for citrus fruit are appropriate in order to place fruit perfectly developed in markets. The Spanish Sector of mandarins has no problem to place fruit in the market perfectly developed with the current requirements.

In addition, Spain wants to underline that the minimum sugar/acid ratio is the requirement that provides that the fruit is fully developed

Under III., Provisions concerning sizing, B. Uniformity:

~~20 mm, if the diameter of the smallest fruit (as indicated on the package) is \geq 80 mm but $<$ 110 mm [proposal by South Africa]~~

Spain is against this proposal of South Africa. It's very important to keep uniformity requirements for mandarins.

(b) When size codes are applied, the codes and ranges in the following tables must be respected:

<i>Size code</i>	<i>Diameter (mm)</i>
1 - XXX	78 and above
1 - XX	67 - 78
1 or 1 - X	63 - 74
2	58 - 69
3	54 - 64
4	50 - 60
5	46 - 56
6	43 - 52
7	41 - 48
8	39 - 46
9	37 - 44
10	35 - 42

[Proposal by South Africa: delete size codes 9 and 10.]

Comments by Spain: Codes 9 and 10 have to remain in the standard for citrus fruit as Spain trade with clementine of these sizes. Clementine traded with these sizes are perfectly correct and edible.

~~Uniformity in size is not required in mixtures of distinctly different varieties of easy peelers with distinctly different citrus fruit species.~~

Under IV., Provisions concerning tolerances, B., Size tolerances:

For all classes: a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of mandarins (easy peelers) ~~not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing, but not smaller than 43 mm. [Proposal by South Africa] corresponding to the size immediately below and/or above that (or those, in the case of the combination of three sizes) mentioned on the package is allowed.~~

~~In any case, the tolerance of 10 per cent applies only to fruit not smaller than 34 mm for clementines or 43 mm for satsumas, other mandarin varieties and hybrids.~~

Remark by Germany: This proposal is to align the size tolerances with the Standard Layout.

Comments by Spain: Spain strongly opposes to this proposal, because it's important to maintain the range of size tolerances that is allowed. Otherwise the difference in sizes can be enormous if there are no limits.

Spain considers the proposal by South Africa unacceptable because clementines have a small diameter So the tolerance of 34mm as minimum diameter for clementine has to remain in the standard.

Otherwise we will be removing perfectly edible clementines from the market

Oranges

Under II. Provisions concerning quality B. Maturity requirements:

	Minimum juice content (per cent)	Minimum sugar/acid ratio	Minimum Brix
Blood oranges	30	6.5:1	<i>[8.5] Remark by South Africa: add a table column to indicate minimum Brix for all orange varieties</i>
Navels group	33	6.5:1	
Other varieties	35	6.5:1	
Mosambi, Sathgudi and Pacitan with more than one fifth green colour	33		
Other varieties with more than one fifth green colour	45		

Oranges produced in areas with high temperatures and high relative humidity conditions during the developing period having a green colour exceeding one fifth of the surface area of the fruit are allowed, provided they satisfy the minimum requirements as to juice content ~~(45%)~~ [proposal by South Africa] ~~and sugar acid ratio.~~

Comments by Spain: This remark by South Africa is not acceptable because the current maturity requirements are appropriate to place perfectly mature fresh fruit

Under III., Provisions concerning sizing:

~~no limitation of difference in diameter for fruit ≥ 110 mm.~~ [proposal by South Africa]

Spain doesn't understand this proposal made by South Africa.

Under VI. Provisions concerning marking, D., Commercial specifications:

~~Post harvest treatment (optional, based on the national legislation of the importing country).~~

Comments by Spain: This is not included in the CODEX Standard for oranges.
