

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 4(d)

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

9th Session,

Mexico City, Mexico, 9-13 October 2000

PROPOSED DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR TOMATOES

Governments and interested international organizations wishing to submit comments on the attached *Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Tomatoes* (see ALINORM 99/35A, paras. 186 & 188) are invited to do so **no later than 30 June 2000** to Lic. Carmen Quintanilla Madero, Directora General de Normas, Secretaría de Comercio y Fomento Industrial, Av. Puente de Tecamachalco No. 6, Sección Fuentes, Naucalpan de Juárez, Estado de México, C.P. 53950 México (Telefax No. 52.5.729.9484 or E-mail mmurfin@correo.secofi.gob.mx), with a copy to the Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 Rome, Italy (Fax No. 39.06.5705.4593 or E-Mail Codex@FAO.Org).

BACKGROUND

1. The 8th Session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (Mexico City, Mexico, 1-5 March 1999) accepted the offer of the Government of Mexico assisted by the United States to prepare a *Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Tomatoes* subjected to approval by the 23rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 28 June – 3 July 1999).¹
2. The elaboration of the *Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Tomatoes* was approved by the 23rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission as new work, with the understanding this task should be done in close collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE).²

¹ ALINORM 99/35A, paras. 186 & 188.

² ALINORM 99/37, para. 206

3. The Codex Secretariat has revised the text and aligned some sections of the proposed draft with the standard language used throughout the Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables.

4. Governments and interested international organizations are invited to comment at Step 3 on the attached ***Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Tomatoes*** as directed above.

PROPOSED DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR TOMATOES
(At Step 3 of the Procedure)

1. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This standard applies to the commercial varieties of tomatoes grown from *Lycopersicon esculentum* Mill. of the *Solanaceae* family, to be supplied fresh to the consumer, after preparation and packaging. Tomatoes for industrial processing are excluded.¹

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the tomatoes must be:

- whole;
- fresh in appearance;
- of characteristic appearance and development of the variety;
- sound, produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded;
- free of damage caused by exposure to the sun;
- free of damage caused by frost or freezing;
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter;
- free of abnormal external moisture, excluding condensation following removal from cold storage;
- practically free of pests and disease affecting the general appearance of the produce;
- practically free of damage caused by pests and disease;
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

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

- to withstand transport and handling, and
- to arrive in satisfactory condition at place of destination.

¹ Governments, when indicating the acceptance of the Codex Standard for Tomatoes, should notify the Commission which provisions of the Standard would be accepted for application at the point of import, and which provisions would be accepted for application at the point of export.

2.2 CLASSIFICATION

Tomatoes are classified in three classes defined below:

2.2.1 “Extra” Class

Tomatoes in this class must be of superior quality and must have the characteristic shape of the variety.

They must be uniform in terms of size and colouring relative to state of ripeness, and must fully meet the specifications set out in Section 2.1 above, in addition to the following requirements:

- properly shaped;
- firm;
- free of damage.

They must be free of 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.

2.2.2 Class I

This class includes tomatoes which do not qualify as “Extra”, but that satisfy the minimum sensorial specifications detailed in Section 2.1 above. They must be reasonably well shaped, firm or slightly soft, and free of cracks or splits and greenback.

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:

- longitudinal scars with a cumulative length of more than 16 mm,
- growth ribbing (basal) no more than 19 mm long,
- internal discoloration (coffee stain) with cumulative diameter of no more than 25 mm,
- no more than one healed scar not seriously affecting appearance,
- umbilical lignified scars no greater than 1 cm² or one linear scar no longer than two thirds of the greatest diameter of the fruit.

2.2.3 Class II

This class includes tomatoes which do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfy the minimum sensorial requirements specified in Section 2.1 above.

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

- slight defects in shape,
- longitudinal scars with a cumulative length of no more than 25 mm,
- growth ribbing (basal) no more than 73 mm in length,
- internal discoloration (coffee stain) with a cumulative diameter of no more than 32 mm,
- no more than one healed scar not seriously affecting appearance,
- umbilical lignified scars no greater than 2 cm² or a linear scar no longer than 25 mm.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

The size of round tomatoes is determined by their maximum diameter of the equatorial section. The size of oblong varieties needs to be specified according to minimum and maximum diameter and the following size code. These specifications do not apply to “cherry” tomatoes.

Size Code	Diameter (mm)	
	Minimum ²	Maximum ³
1	30	34
2	35	39
3	40	46
4	47	56
5	57	66
6	67	81
7	82	101
8	102	and over

² When the tomato in vertical position can pass through a circular opening of the designated diameter.

³ When the tomato in any position can pass through a circular opening of the designated diameter.

4. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

Tolerances in respect of defects, colouring and size of tomatoes that do not satisfy the specifications of the class indicated are determined as a percentage by number or weight of the total contained in one package, by counting units or determining their weight relative to the package total, in accordance with the following specifications.

4.1 QUALITY TOLERANCES

4.1.1 “Extra” Class

4.1.1.1 At Point of Shipment

Ten percent by number or weight of tomatoes of any consignment not satisfying the requirements of the class, provided that no more than 5% have defects caused by very severe damage.

4.1.1.2 In Transit or at Point of Arrival

Fifteen percent by number or weight of tomatoes of any consignment not satisfying the requirements of the class, provided that the defects of the tomatoes within this percentage do not exceed the following:

- 5% of tomatoes slightly soft,
- 10% of tomatoes damaged by external bruising, discoloration or scars on any part,
- 10% of tomatoes have other defects, provided that no more than 5% are seriously damaged for any reason.

4.1.2 Class I

4.1.2.1 At Point of Shipment

Ten percent by number or weight of tomatoes of any consignment not satisfying the requirements of the class, provided that no more than 5% have defects caused by very severe damage.

4.2.1.2 In Transit or at Point of Arrival

Fifteen percent by number or weight of tomatoes of any consignment not satisfying the requirements of the class, provided that the defects of the tomatoes within this percentage do not exceed the following:

- 5% of tomatoes soft or affected by rotting,
- 10% of tomatoes damaged by external bruising, discoloration or scars on any part,
- 10% of tomatoes with other defects provided that no more than 5% are very seriously damaged for any reason.

4.1.3. Class II

4.1.3.1 At Point of Shipment

Ten percent by number or weight of tomatoes of any consignment not satisfying the requirements of the class, provided that no more than 5% have defects caused by very severe damage by insects and no more than 1% are squashy or rotten.

4.1.3.2 In Transit or at Point of Arrival

Fifteen percent by number or weight of tomatoes of any consignment not satisfying the requirements of the class, provided that the defects of the tomatoes within this percentage do not exceed the following:

- 5% of tomatoes soft or damaged by rotting or 10% of tomatoes damaged by external bruising, discolouring or scarring on any part,
- 10% of tomatoes with other defects provided that no more than 5% are seriously damaged by insects.

4.2. SIZE TOLERANCES

For all consignments and quality classes, 10% of tomatoes may be smaller than the stipulated minimum diameter or larger than the stipulated maximum diameter.

4.3. COLOURING TOLERANCES

For all consignments and quality classes, 10% of tomatoes may not satisfy the required colouring, including 5% of tomatoes that are green in colour provided that this is not the declared colour.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 UNIFORMITY

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only tomatoes of the same origin, variety and/or commercial type, quality and size. For “Extra” Class, colour and ripeness should be uniform. The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

5.2 PACKAGING

Tomatoes must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly. The materials used inside the package must be new,⁴ 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.

Tomatoes shall be packed in each container in compliance with the Recommended International Code of Practice for Packaging and Transport of Tropical Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 44-1995).

5.2.1 Description of Containers

The containers shall meet the quality, hygiene, ventilation and resistance characteristics to ensure suitable handling, shipping and preserving of the tomatoes. Packages must be free of all foreign matter and smell.

⁴ For the purposes of this Standard, this includes recycled material of food-grade quality.

6. MARKING OR LABELLING

6.1. CONSUMER PACKAGES

In addition to the requirements of the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 2-1999), the following specific provisions apply:

6.1.1 Nature of Produce

If the produce is not visible from the outside, each package shall be labelled as to the name of the produce and may be labelled as to the name of the variety and/or commercial type.

6.2 NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS

Each package must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside, or in the documents accompanying the shipment.⁵

6.2.1 Identification

Name and address of Exporter, Packer and/or Dispatcher. Identification code (optional).⁶

6.2.2 Nature of Produce

Name of produce if the contents are not visible from the outside. Name of variety (round, oblong).

6.2.3 Origin of Produce

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

⁵ Governments, when indicating their acceptance of this Standard, should notify the Commission as to which provisions of this Section apply.

⁶ 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.

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

- Class;
- Size (size code or minimum or maximum diameter in mm);
- Net weight when packing.

6.2.5 OFFICIAL INSPECTION MARK (optional)

7. CONTAMINANTS

7.1 HEAVY METALS

Tomatoes shall comply with those maximum levels for heavy metals established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

7.2 PESTICIDE RESIDUES

Los tomates deberán ajustarse a los límites máximos para residuos establecidos por la Comisión del Codex Alimentarius para este producto.

8. HYGIENE

8.1 It is recommended that the produce covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 3-1997), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

8.2 The produce should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).