

Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Fifty-third session

Geneva, 21-25 May 2007

Item 3(a) of the provisional agenda

**Proposals to revise UNECE Standards**

**Early and Ware Potatoes**

This document contains the text of the Standard approved at the November 2006 meeting of the Working party.

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**UNECE STANDARD FFV-52**

concerning the marketing and  
commercial quality control of

**EARLY AND WARE POTATOES**

**2006 EDITION**



**UNITED NATIONS**  
New York, Geneva 2006

## NOTE

### **The Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards**

The commercial quality standards of the UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards 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, and 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. For more information on UNECE agricultural standards, please visit our website (<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/>).

This present edition of the Standard for Early and Ware Potatoes is based on document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2006/2.

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**UNECE STANDARD FFV-52**  
concerning the marketing and commercial  
quality control of

**EARLY AND WARE POTATOES**

**I. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE**

This standard applies to early and ware potatoes of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Solanum tuberosum L.* and its hybrids, to be supplied fresh to the consumer. Early and ware potatoes for industrial processing are excluded.

Early potatoes are obtained from early varieties and/or are harvested at the beginning of the season in the country of origin. "Early potatoes" means potatoes harvested before they are completely mature, marketed immediately after their harvesting, and whose skin can be easily removed without peeling.

**II. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY**

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements of early and ware potatoes at the export control stage, after preparation and packaging.

**A. Minimum requirements**

- (a) Subject to the tolerances allowed the tubers must be:
- Of normal appearance for the variety, according to the producing area;
  - Intact, i.e. they should not have had any part removed nor have suffered any damage making them incomplete;
  - Sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded;
  - Practically clean;
  - Firm;
  - Free of external or internal defects detrimental to the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package, such as:
    - Brown stains due to heat;
    - Cracks (including growth cracks), cuts, bites, bruises or roughness (only for varieties of which the skin is not normally rough)

exceeding 3.5 mm in depth for early potatoes and 5 mm in depth for ware potatoes;

- Green colouration; pale green flush not exceeding one eighth of the surface area and which can be removed by normal peeling does not constitute a defect;
  - Serious deformities;
  - Grey, blue or black sub-epidermal stains; exceeding 5 mm in depth in the case of ware potatoes;
  - Rust stains, hollow or black hearts and other internal defects;
  - Deep common potato scab and powdery potato scab, of a depth of 2 mm or more in the case of ware potatoes;
  - Superficial common potato scab, i.e. scab spots in all must not extend over more than a quarter of the surface of the tuber;
  - Frost damage;
- Free of abnormal external moisture, i.e. adequately "dried" if they have been washed;
  - Free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

In the case of early potatoes, a partial absence of the skin shall not be considered as a defect. Ware potatoes must be covered with well-formed skin.

In early potatoes, no sprouting is allowed. Ware potatoes must be practically unsprouted, i.e. sprouts may be no longer than 3 mm.

The development and condition of the early and ware potatoes must be such as to enable them:

- To withstand transport and handling;
- To arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

(b) Each package or lot must be free from waste, i.e. attached or loose earth, detached growth shoots, extraneous matter.

### **III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING**

Size of the tuber is determined by square mesh.

Tubers must be of:

- A minimum size such that they do not pass through a square mesh of:
  - 28 mm x 28 mm for early potatoes;
  - 35 mm x 35 mm for ware potatoes;
  - 30 mm x 30 mm for long varieties of ware potatoes defined hereafter;
- A maximum size such that they pass through a square mesh of 80 mm x 80 mm, or for long varieties, 75 mm x 75 mm.

Early and ware potatoes exceeding the maximum size shall be allowed, provided the maximum difference in size between the smallest and the largest tuber is not more than 30 mm and they are marketed under a specific denomination or commercial name.

Tubers of a size range between 18 mm and 35 mm can be marketed under the denomination of "mids" or an equivalent commercial name.

Uniformity in size is not compulsory. However, in packages up to 5 kg net weight packed for direct sale to the consumer, the maximum difference allowed between the smallest and the largest tuber must not exceed 30 mm.

A variety is considered as long if it is listed as long or long oval in the national list of varieties of the country where it has been bred.

The sizing requirements do not apply to long varieties of irregular shape (e.g. Stella, Ratte or Pink Fir Apple).

#### **IV. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES**

Tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each package (or in each lot for produce presented in bulk in containers) for produce not satisfying the minimum requirements.

##### **A. Quality tolerances**

- (i) Tubers not satisfying the minimum requirements shall be allowed:
  - 4 per cent by weight of tubers of early potatoes;
  - 6 per cent by weight of tubers of ware potatoes.

However, within this tolerance, a maximum of 1 per cent by weight of tubers affected by dry or wet rot shall be allowed.

- (ii) In addition shall be allowed:
  - 1 per cent by weight of waste for early potatoes;
  - 2 per cent by weight of waste, of which a maximum of 1 per cent attached earth, for ware potatoes.

**B. Size tolerances**

Five per cent by weight of tubers not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing and if sized, above and/or below the size range indicated, shall be allowed.

**C. Tolerances of other varieties**

Two per cent by weight of other varieties in each package (or lot for produce presented in bulk in containers) shall be allowed.

**V. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION**

**A. Uniformity**

The contents of each package (or lot for produce presented in bulk in containers) must be uniform and contain only early or ware potatoes of the same origin, variety, quality, colour of the skin, colour of the flesh and size (if sized).

The visible part of the contents of the package (or lot for produce presented in bulk in containers) must be representative of the entire contents.

**B. Packaging**

Early and ware potatoes must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly and to ensure adequate ventilation.

The materials used inside the package must be new (if requested), 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 and labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

In the case of early potatoes, special packaging materials (e.g. peat) may be used in order to better protect the produce during long distance transport.<sup>1</sup>

**C. Presentation**

Early and ware potatoes must be packed in appropriate packages. The potatoes may be packed in bulk containers, which take into account the characteristics of the produce.

Early and ware potatoes are marketed by lot. A "lot" is a quantity of early or ware potatoes, which are uniform as concerns the following characteristics:

- Packer and/or dispatcher;
- Country of origin;
- Variety;

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<sup>1</sup> The use of some packaging materials (e.g. peat) is not permitted in some countries.

- Size (if sized);
- Type and net weight of package (if packed).

A consignment may consist of several lots.

## **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, either printed on the package itself or on a label secured to the fastening. If the labels are placed inside the packages (string bags), this should be done in such a way that the indications concerning marking are readable from the outside.

For early and ware potatoes transported in bulk in containers, these particulars must appear on a document accompanying the goods and attached in a visible position inside the transport vehicle.

### **A. Identification**

Packer            ) Name and address or  
and/or            ) officially issued or  
Dispatcher       ) accepted code mark<sup>3</sup>

### **B. Nature of produce**

- "Early Potatoes", "New Potatoes" or equivalent denomination or "Ware Potatoes", if the contents are not visible from the outside;
- Name of the variety;
- Specific denomination or commercial name for early or ware potatoes which do not comply with the maximum size, where appropriate;
- "Mids" or an equivalent commercial name, where appropriate.

### **C. Origin of produce**

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

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<sup>2</sup> Package units of produce prepacked for direct sale to the consumer shall not be subject to these marking provisions but shall conform to the national requirements. However, the markings referred to shall in any event be shown on the transport packaging containing such package units.

<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.



**D. Commercial specifications**

- Size (if sized) expressed as minimum size followed by the words “and over” or as minimum and maximum size.
- Net weight.
- Optional indications: colour of flesh (e.g., yellow or white), colour of skin, shape of tuber (round or long) and cooking type (e.g., floury or firm).

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

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The UNECE Standard for Early Potatoes (FFV-30)  
was first published in 1961

Last revised 1997

The UNECE Standard for Ware Potatoes (FFV-31)

was first published in 1967  
as AGRI/WP.1/EUR.STAN.30.  
Revised 1974, 1988, 1997, 2001

These Standards were combined as the UNECE Standard for Early and Ware Potatoes (FFV-52)  
in 2006.