

Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes

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### **PROMOTION OF THE STANDARD**

This note presents draft text for a leaflet to promote the Standard.

## **UNECE Standard for Seed Potatoes**

Potatoes are the world's fourth most important food after wheat, maize and rice. The quality of seed potatoes planted to produce potatoes for consumption is integral to productivity and health of crop.

The UNECE Standard for Seed Potatoes sets common terminology and minimum commercial quality requirements for the certification of high-quality seed intended for marketing internationally.

It is a unique international frame of reference, covering all aspects related to seed-potato certification:

- varietal identity and purity
- genealogy and traceability
- diseases and pests
- external quality
- sizing
- labelling.

A List of Diseases and Pests, containing a basic description of each disease with illustrative photographs, supplements the Standard.

The Standard takes into account issues falling under the WTO Agreements on Technical Barriers to Trade and on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. It is intended to be used by national certification authorities to ensure that seed potatoes produced for international markets comply with agreed norms.

The use of the Standard's common terminology and harmonized quality requirements assists buyer and seller in understanding the quality of seed potatoes being marketed in different parts of the world and minimises the risk of technical barriers to trade.

The Standard provides a framework for joint work of public- and private-sector operators.

The UNECE Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes, made up of national certification experts, regularly reviews and updates the Standard to reflect changes in production and marketing, in the evolution of harmful organisms and in the development of new techniques for certification.

You can download the Standard free of charge and learn more about the UNECE work on seed potatoes by visiting our website:

<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm>

Contact: [agrstandards@unece.org](mailto:agrstandards@unece.org)

## **Contents of the Standard**

### **Varieties**

Varieties are accepted into the Standard only if an official description and a reference sample are available from the national Designated Authority. The variety should be distinct, uniform and stable according to the guidelines of UPOV (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants) and have a denomination so that it can be identified.

### **Quality requirements**

The Standard defines minimum requirements for seed potatoes at the export-control point, after preparation and packaging (see table). Countries may set additional requirements to reflect their specific soil, climatic and other conditions.

### **Classification**

The requirements are set for three main categories of seed potatoes: Pre-basic, Basic and Certified, in descending order of quality. Additional choice of quality is offered by two optional classes within each of the three categories. Classification by field generation is optional.

Within these categories, countries producing seed potatoes are free to create national classes that are subject to specific national requirements. The Designated Authority is responsible for the maintenance of classification data to provide traceability.

### **Minimum conditions**

The Standard specifies minimum conditions to be satisfied:

- in the production of Pre-basic TC (tissue culture) seed potatoes
- by crop (limits for the proportion of growing plants not true to the variety, affected by blackleg and showing symptoms of virus diseases)
- by lot
- by direct progeny (succeeding crop; limits for the proportion of growing plants not true to the variety and showing symptoms of virus diseases).

It prescribes rules on packaging, sealing and labelling to ensure the identity of the seed.

It provides guidelines for comparative trials of plots grown from samples collected from lots of seed potatoes.

**Minimum tolerances for seed potato pests**  
(Percentage)

	Pre-basic TC	Pre-basic	Basic class I	Basic class II	Certified class I	Certified class II
<b>1. Crop tolerances</b>						
Globodera rostochiensis (soil tolerance)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Globodera pallida (soil tolerance)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black leg	0	0	0.5	1	1.5	2
Synchytrium endobioticum	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clavibacter michiganensis	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ralstonia solanacearum	0	0	0	0	0	0
Potato spindle tuber viroid	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tomato stolbur	0	0	0	0	0	0
Virus tolerance	0	0.1	0.4 (0.2 severe)	0.8 (0.4 severe)	2 (1 severe)	10 (2 severe)
Other varieties and off types	0	0.01	0.25	0.25	0.5	0.5
<b>2. Lot tolerances</b>						
Earth and extraneous matter	1	1	2	2	2	2
Dry and wet rot (not caused by Synchytrium e., Clavibacter m., Ralstonia s.)	0	0.2	1	1	1	1
External defects	3	3	3	3	3	3
Shrivelled tubers	0	0.5	1	1	1	1
Scab (common and netted)	0	5 (33.3)*	5 (33.3) *	5 (33.3) *	5 (33.3) *	5 (33.3) *
Powdery scab	0	1 (10) *	3 (10) *	3 (10) *	3 (10) *	3 (10) *
Rhizoctonia	0	1 (1) *	5 (10) *	5 (10) *	5 (10) *	5 (10) *
Total tolerances	3	5	6	6	6	6
Globodera rostochiensis	0	0	0	0	0	0
Globodera pallida	0	0	0	0	0	0
Synchytrium endobioticum	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clavibacter michiganensis	0	0	0	0	0	0
Potato spindle tuber viroid	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tomato stolbur	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meloidogyne chitwoodi and fallax	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ditylenchus destructor	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>3. Direct progeny tolerances</b>						
Other varieties and off types	0	0.01	0.25	0.25	0.5	0.5
Virus	0	0.5	2 (1 severe)	4 (2 severe)	10 (5 severe)	10
* The figure in brackets is the allowable percentage surface area covered: a tuber is deemed to be affected by the disease only if surface area affected exceeds the specified allowable surface tolerance.						