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TEXTS FOR ADOPTION AS NEW/REVISED UNECE STANDARDS

Inshell Almonds

Note by the secretariat

This text is submitted to the Working Party for approval as a new UNECE Standard for Inshell Almonds.

It is based on document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.2/2006/10/Add.3, the text of which was agreed upon at the June 2007 session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce.

UNECE STANDARD DDP-18
concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of

INSHELL ALMONDS

I. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This standard applies to sweet inshell almonds of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Prunus dulcis* (Mill.) D.A. Webb, from which the fleshy hull (epicarp and mesocarp) has been removed, intended for direct consumption or for food when they are intended to be mixed with other products for direct consumption without further processing.

This standard does not apply to inshell almonds for industrial processing.

Inshell almonds are classified into two types according to the hardness of the shell, as defined below

- Soft/semi-soft ¹: inshell almonds that can be easily cracked with the fingers or with a nutcracker.
- Hard: inshell almonds that can be cracked only with a hammer or similar devices.

II. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements of inshell almonds at the export-control stage, after preparation and packaging.

However, if applied at stages following export, the holder shall be responsible for observing the requirements of the standard. The holder/seller of products not in conformity with this standard may not display such products or offer them for sale, or deliver or market them in any other manner.

A. Minimum requirements ²

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the inshell almonds must display the following characteristics:

- (a) The shell must be:
 - intact; however, cracks, superficial damage and small outer parts of the shell missing are not considered as a defect provided the kernel is physically protected;

¹ Other equivalent denominations commonly used in international trade for the soft/semisoft type are accepted, as are “Paper type”, “Mollares”, “Fitas”, etc.

² Definitions of terms and defects are listed in annex III of the Standard Layout – Recommended terms and definition of defects for standards of dry (Inshell Nuts and Nut Kernels) and dried produce http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/dry/StandardLayout/StandardLayout_DDP_e.doc.

- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter, including residues of adhering hull affecting in aggregate more than 5 per cent of the total shell surface
- free from blemishes, areas of discoloration or spread stains in pronounced contrast with the rest of the shell affecting in aggregate more than 25 per cent of surface of the shell
- well formed; not noticeably misshapen.

(b) The kernel must be:

- free from rancidity
- sufficiently developed. Shrunken or shrivelled kernels, when the affected portion represents more than 25 per cent of the kernel and empty shells are to be excluded
- free from damage caused by pests, including the presence of dead insects and/or mites, their debris or excreta
- free from blemishes, areas of discoloration or spread stains in pronounced contrast with the rest of the kernel affecting in aggregate more than 25 per cent of the surface of the kernel
- free from gum (resinous substance) exceeding an aggregate area of 6 mm in diameter
- free from brown spot (slightly depressed brown spots, either single or multiple, caused by insects, exceeding an aggregate area of 3 mm in diameter
- well formed; however, twin or double kernels, i.e. kernels of characteristic shape with one side flat or concave, as a consequence of the development of two kernels in the same shell, are not considered as a defect.

(c) The whole produce (shell and kernel) must be:

- dried in accordance with section “B. Moisture content”
- sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for human consumption is excluded
- free from mould filaments visible to the naked eye
- free from living pests whatever their stage of development
- free from damage caused by pests, including the presence of dead insects and/or mites, their debris or excreta
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of foreign smell and/or taste.

The condition of the inshell almonds must be such as to enable them:

- to withstand transportation and handling
- to arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

B. Moisture content³

The inshell almonds shall have a moisture content not exceeding 11.0 per cent for the whole nut, or 7.0 per cent for the almond kernel.

C. Classification

In accordance with the defects allowed in section “IV. Provisions concerning tolerances”, inshell almonds are classified into the following classes:

“Extra Class”, “Class I”, “Class II”.

The defects allowed must not affect the general appearance of the produce as regards quality, keeping quality and presentation in the package.

III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Sizing is optional.

When sized, size is determined by count, i.e. the number of inshell almonds per 1000 g or per pound (453.6 g).

³ The moisture content is determined by one of the methods given in Annex II of the Standard Layout - Determination of the moisture content for dry produce
<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/dry/StandardLayout/StandardLayout_DDP_e.doc>.. The laboratory reference method shall be used in cases of dispute.

IV. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

Tolerances in respect of quality and size are allowed in each lot for produce not satisfying the minimum requirements of the class indicated.

A. Quality tolerances

Defects allowed	Tolerances allowed percentage of defective produce by count, unless otherwise specified		
	Extra	Class I	Class II
(a) Tolerances for inshell almonds not satisfying the minimum requirements,	[10]	[15]	[25]
Of which no more than			
- Almonds kernels affected by gum or brown spot	3	7	10
- Mouldy, rancid or damaged by pests, rotting or deterioration	2	5	7
of which: mouldy not more than	0.5	1	2
- Living pests	0	0	0
(b) Size tolerances			
- For produce not conforming to the size indicated, if sized	10	10	10
(c) Tolerances for other defects			
- Foreign matter, loose shells, shell fragments, fragments of hull, dust (by weight)	3	3	3
- Bitter almonds	1	3	4
- Inshell almonds belonging to varieties or commercial types other than that indicated	5	5	5

V. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only inshell almonds of the same origin, crop year, quality, and shell type (soft/semisoft, hard), size (if sized) and variety or commercial type (if indicated).

The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of its entire contents.

B. Packaging

Inshell almonds must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

The materials used inside the package must be 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.

Packages must be free of all foreign matter in accordance with the table of tolerances in section “IV. Provisions concerning tolerances”.

C. Presentation

Inshell almonds must be presented in bags or solid containers. All sales packages within each package must be of the same weight.

The almond shell may be cleaned/treated with authorized agents, provided that they do not affect the quality of the kernel.

VI. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING

Each package⁴ must bear the following particulars in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked and visible from the outside:

A. Identification

Packer and/or Dispatcher: Name and physical address (e.g. street/city/region/postal code and, if different from the country of origin, the country) or a code mark officially recognized by the national authority⁵.

B. Nature of produce

- “Inshell almonds” or “Almonds in the shell” or equivalent denomination
- Shell type (optional)
- Name of the variety and/or commercial type (optional).

C. Origin of produce

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

⁴ Package units of produce prepacked for direct sale to the consumer shall not be subject to these marking provisions, but shall conform to national requirements. However, the markings referred to shall in any event be shown on the transport packaging containing such package units.

⁵ The national legislation of a number of countries requires the explicit declaration of the name and address. However, in cases where a code mark is used, the reference “packer and/or dispatcher” (or equivalent abbreviations) must be indicated in close connection with the code mark, and the code mark should be preceded with the ISO 3166 alpha country code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

D. Commercial specifications

- class
- size (if sized); expressed in count 1000 g or 1 pound (453.6 g)
- crop year (optional)
- “Best before” followed by the date (optional).

E. Official control mark (optional)

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