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**SPECIALIZED SECTION ON STANDARDIZATION OF  
FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES**

Alignment of standards with the revised standard  
layout and other non-substantive changes to standards

Potatoes

Note by the secretariat

This text contains minor changes introduced as a consequence of the OECD work on the explanatory brochure for pears.

This document is being issued pursuant to paragraph 5 of the Working Party's Terms of Reference.

**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.

However, if applied at stages following export, products may show in relation to the requirements of the standard:

- a slight lack of freshness and turgidity
- a slight deterioration due to their development and their tendency to perish.

The holder/seller of products may not display such products or offer them for sale, or deliver or market them in any manner other than in conformity with this standard. The holder shall be responsible for observing such conformity.

**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 4 mm in depth
  - 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 and freezing injuries
- 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, i.e. the skin has to be fully developed and mature and cover the whole surface of the tuber.

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 transportation 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 lot for produce not satisfying the minimum requirements.

**A. Quality tolerances**

- (a) 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.

- (b) 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**

5 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**

2 per cent by weight of other varieties 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 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/shipper;
- Country of origin;
- Variety;
- 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.

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

<sup>2</sup> According to the Geneva Protocol, footnote 2, “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”.

**A. Identification**

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

**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).

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<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, and the code mark should be preceded by the ISO 3166 (alpha) country/area code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

**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.

Last revised 2001

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

Last revised 2008