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Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Texts for adoption as revised/new UNECE standards

UNECE Standard FFV-57 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of berry fruits

Submitted by the secretariat

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to berry fruits of species and varieties (cultivars) grown from the following species to be supplied fresh to the consumer, berry fruits for industrial processing being excluded:

- raspberries (*Rubus idaeus* L.),
- blackberries (*Rubus* sect. *Rubus*),
- loganberries (*Rubus loganobaccus* L. H. Bailey),
- currants (*Ribes rubrum* L., *Ribes nigrum* L.),
- gooseberries (*Ribes uva-crispa* L. var. *sativum* DC.),
- bilberries (*Vaccinium myrtillus* L.),
- blueberries (*Vaccinium corymbosum* L., *Vaccinium australe* Small, *Vaccinium angustifolium* Aiton, *Vaccinium ashei* J. M. Reade),
- cowberries (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea* L.), also known as lingonberries,

- cranberries (*Vaccinium macrocarpon* Aiton.),
- wild cranberries (*Vaccinium oxycoccos* L.),
- hybrids of these species such as boysenberries (*Rubus ursinus* Cham. et Schltdl. x *Rubus idaeus* L.), tayberries (*Rubus* sect. *Rubus* x *Rubus idaeus* L.), jostaberries (*Ribes nigrum* L. x *Ribes uva-crispa* L. var. *sativum* DC.).

II. Provisions concerning quality

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for berry fruits 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
- for products graded in classes other than the “Extra” Class, 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

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

- intact
- sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter
- practically free from pests
- free from damage caused by pests affecting the flesh
- fresh in appearance
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste, including bitter taste in case of bilberries.

The development and condition of the berry fruits must be such as to enable them:

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

B. Maturity requirements

Berry fruits must be sufficiently developed and display satisfactory ripeness according to the species but must not be overripe.

Gooseberries may be presented hard ripe.

C. Classification

Berry fruits are classified in three classes, as defined below:

(i) "Extra" Class

Berry fruits in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety or in the case of wild berries characteristic of the species concerned.

Bilberries and blueberries must be practically free of agglomerated berries and must be practically covered with bloom, according to the varietal characteristics.

Red and white currant panicles must be completely filled. Black currant panicles may not be completely filled and single berries are allowed.

Berry fruits must be free from 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.

(ii) Class I

Berry fruits in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety or in the case of wild berries characteristic of the species concerned.

Bilberries and blueberries must be practically free of agglomerated berries. Blueberries must be practically covered with bloom, according to the varietal characteristics.

Red and white currant panicles must be nearly filled. Black currant panicles may not be completely filled and single berries are allowed.

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.

(iii) Class II

This class includes berry fruits that do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes but satisfy the minimum requirements specified above.

Currant panicles may be less evenly spaced.

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

- slight leakage of juice
- slight early signs of mildew in the case of gooseberries
- slight bruising.

III. Provisions concerning sizing

There is no size uniformity requirement for berry fruits.

IV. Provisions concerning tolerances

At all marketing stages, tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each lot for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.

Quality tolerances

(i) "Extra" Class

A total tolerance of 5 per cent, by number or weight, of berry fruits not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class I is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 0.5 per cent in total may consist of produce satisfying the requirements of Class II quality.

(ii) Class I

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of berry fruits not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class II is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 1 [2] per cent in total may consist of produce neither satisfying the requirements of Class II quality nor the minimum requirements, or of produce affected by decay, and in the case of wild berries of leaves and twigs.

(iii) Class II

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of berry fruits satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 2 [3] per cent in total may consist of produce affected by decay, and in the case of wild berries of leaves and twigs, and 2 per cent may consist of split or worm-eaten fruit.

V. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only berry fruits of the same origin, variety or, in the case of wild picked berry fruits, species, and quality.

Berry fruits in Classes "Extra" and I must be uniform in size and practically uniform in ripeness.

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

B. Packaging

Berry fruits 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, except for leaves and twigs allowed under the tolerances.

VI. Provisions concerning marking

Each package¹ 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/shipper:

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 authority².

B. Nature of produce

- "Raspberries", "black berries", "loganberries", "currants", "gooseberries", "bilberries", "blueberries", "cowberries", "cranberries", "boysenberries", "tayberries", "jostaberries" or synonym denomination, if the contents are not visible from the outside.
- name of the variety (optional).

C. Origin of produce

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

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- "Wild picked", where appropriate.

¹ 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".

² 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)

Adopted 2010
