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Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

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UNECE Standard for Sweet Chestnuts

This text is submitted by the Specialized Section to the Working Party for approval as a recommendation for a one-year trial.

UNECE Standard FFV-39 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of sweet chestnuts

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to sweet chestnuts in the shell but with the spiny husk removed of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Castanea sativa* Mill. (sweet chestnuts), *Castanea crenata* Siebold et Zucc. (Japanese chestnuts) and their hybrids, to be supplied fresh to the consumer, sweet chestnuts for industrial processing being excluded.

Sweet chestnuts with non-septate nuts may be marketed under a special commercial denomination ([e.g. marrons](#)).

II. Provisions concerning quality

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for sweet chestnuts 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/seller 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 sweet chestnuts must be:

- intact; however, slight superficial cracks are not considered as a defect, provided the kernel is physically protected
- sound; produce affected by rotting or other deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter, including a slight surface mould
- practically free from pests
- practically free from damage caused by pests, including the presence of dead insects and/or mites, their debris or excreta
- free of shrivelling or drying out
- free of externally visible sprouting
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

The development and condition of the sweet chestnuts must be such as to enable them:

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

B. Classification

Sweet chestnuts are classified in three classes, as defined below:

(i) “Extra” Class

Sweet chestnuts in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

They 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

Sweet chestnuts in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

The following 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:

- a slight defect in shape
- slight defects in colouring.

(iii) Class II

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

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

- defects in shape
- defects in colouring.

III. Provisions concerning sizing

Size is determined by the number of nuts per kg or by diameter i.e. the diameter of each nut or a diameter range.

(a) When sized by number -

- The minimum size shall be 125 nuts per kg.

To ensure uniformity in size, the difference in weight between the 10 smallest and the 10 largest nuts taken in a sample of 1 kg in each package shall not be more than 80-100 g.

(b) When sized by diameter.

- The minimum size shall be 25 mm.

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.

A. Quality tolerances

Defects allowed	Tolerances allowed percentage of defective produce by count		
	“Extra” Class	Class I	Class II
(a) Tolerances for sweet chestnuts not satisfying the quality requirements	6	10	15
of which no more than			
• damaged, dried and/or shrivelled	2	4	7
• affected by decay (mould, rot)	1	3	5
• living pests	0	0	1
• damage caused by pests	0	3	7
• slight externally visible sprouting	0	0	5
(b) Size tolerances	10	10	10
(c) Tolerances for other defects			
• [affected by a slight surface mould	5	15	20]
• septate nuts if the commercial type “non-septate nuts” is indicated	20	20	20

V. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only sweet chestnuts of the same origin, variety or commercial type, quality and size and appreciably of the same degree of ripeness for development.

For “Extra” Class, the sweet chestnuts must be of uniform colouring.

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

B. Packaging

The sweet chestnuts 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.

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

- “Sweet chestnuts” or “Japanese chestnuts” if the contents are not visible from the outside
- “Marrons” for non-septate nuts [where applicable ~~or (optional)~~]
- Name of the variety (optional).

C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin³ and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size expressed as
 - number of nuts contained in 1 kg.
 - minimum and maximum diameter in mm.

¹ These marking provisions do not apply to sales packages presented in packages.

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)” must be indicated in close connection with the code mark, and the code mark should be preceded with the ISO 3166 (alpha) country/area code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

³ The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.

E. Official control mark (optional)

Adopted 1983

Last revised 2014
