



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 April 2016

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce

Sixty-third session

Geneva, 27-29 June 2016

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

Review of UNECE Recommendations

Revised Recommendation for Dried Figs

The following revised recommendation for dried figs was submitted by the delegation of Turkey. Proposed changes are highlighted. Text in brackets is still open for discussion.

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to whole figs dried from ripe fruits of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Ficus carica* L., intended for direct consumption. This standard does not apply to dried figs for industrial processing.

II. Provisions concerning quality

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

However, if applied at stages following export, the holder/seller 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 requirements¹

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

- intact; the stem and the eye (ostiolum) ends of the figs may be cut off
- sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for human consumption is excluded
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter; however, naturally crystallized sugar is not consider foreign matter or a defect
- sufficiently developed
- 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 from blemishes, areas of discolouration or spread stains in pronounced contrast with the rest of the produce affecting in aggregate more than 5 per cent of the surface of the produce
- free from mould filaments visible to the naked eye
- free of fermentation
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of foreign smell and/or taste except for a slight salty taste of sodium chloride and or calcium chloride and a slight smell of preservatives/additives, including sulphur dioxide.

The condition and development of the dried figs must be such as to enable them:

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

B. Moisture content²

The dried figs shall have a moisture content:

- not exceeding 26.0 per cent for untreated dried figs
- above 26.0 and not exceeding 40.0 percent for high moisture dried figs provided they are labelled as high moisture or equivalent denomination and treated with preservatives or preserved by other means (e.g.pasteurization)

¹ 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/StandardLayoutDDP_e.pdf>.

² The moisture content is determined by one of the methods given in Annex I of the Standard Layout – Determination of the moisture content for dried produce <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/dry/StandardLayout/StandardLayoutDDP_e.pdf>. The Laboratory reference method shall be used in cases of dispute.

C. Classification

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

“Extra” Class, Class I and 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

Size for whole dried figs is determined by the number of fruit per kilogramme or by diameter.

A. Sizing by number of fruits per kilogramme:

When sized by number of fruits per kilogramme, the number of fruits in each size is shown in the following table³:

Size code	Number of fruit per kilogramme	<i>To ensure uniformity in size</i>	
		<i>the weight range (grams) for the largest and smallest figs should not exceed</i>	<i>or the weight range (grams) between the largest and smallest figs should not exceed</i>
1	Up to 40	18 to 30	12
2	41-45		
3	46-50	14 to 24	10
4	51-55		
5	56-60		
6	61-65		
7	66-70	10 to 18	8
8	71-80		
9	81-100		
10	101-120	6 to 12	6
11	121 and over		

Optionally the number of fruit per kilogramme may be limited to 65 for “Extra” Class and 120 for Class I.

Comment by Turkey: In the current standard, the uniformity in size was ensured by “the weight range (grams) between the largest and smallest figs → 12, 10, 8 or 6 according to the size code. In İzmir 2015, INC proposed ensuring uniformity in size by using “the weight range (grams) for the largest and smallest figs → 18 to 30, 14 to 24, 10 to 18 or 6 to 12 according to the size code”. On the other hand, Turkey proposes the alternative above, where the producer/exporter is given a choice. We kindly ask UNECE delegations interested in this item to provide their opinions.

³ Reservation by Greece against the table on sizing which it considered created sub-divisions of quality classifications.

B. Sizing by diameter

When sized by diameter, the minimum diameter is 18 mm for black fig varieties and 22 mm for white fig varieties. In case a diameter range is indicated, the size range ... **[The size must be indicated with the minimum and maximum size.] or [If a size code is indicated, it should not conflict with the size code in option A.]**

Comment by Turkey: During the İzmir 2015 meeting, it was decided that the US Delegation would later propose a sentence to replace “...” and define the size range for black fig varieties and white fig varieties when sizing is done by diameter.

The two sentences following “...” were proposed by Germany to clarify the situation with respect to labelling and avoid any confusion with the table of size codes. All Delegations interested in this item are kindly invited to provide their views on this.

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 minimum requirements of the class indicated.

A. Quality tolerances

Defects allowed	Tolerances allowed, percentage of defective produce, by number or weight ^a		
	Extra	Class I	Class II
(a) Tolerances for produce not satisfying the minimum requirements	10	15	30
of which no more than:			
Damaged by pests*	9	12	16
Seriously damaged by sunscald, split or torn, excessively dried	8	10	20
Mouldy, or fermented	3	4	5
[of which fermented]	1	1	21
Living pests	0	0	0
(b) Size tolerances			
For produce not conforming to the size indicated in total	20	20	20
(c) Tolerances for other defects			
Foreign matter, loose stems, eye (ostiolum) and dust (by weight)	0.5	0.5	0.5
Dried figs that do not belong to the same colour variety, by count. Among white fig varieties (white to dark brown in colour) and among black fig varieties (from purple to black in colour), dried figs that are distinctly different in colour, by count	10	10	10

(*) The presence of the pollinating bee (*Blastophaga psenes* L.) very occasionally trapped within the figs is not considered as a defect.

Comment by Turkey: In İzmir 2015, Germany and Turkey could not agree on the tolerances allowed for the criteria “Damaged by pests*” and the total tolerance of 30% for Class II produce. The two Delegations continued consultations following the 2015 meeting. Taking into consideration views from exporters, importers and academicians, they agreed to preserve the existing tolerance levels.

The asterix (*) linked to the criteria “Damaged by pests*” continues with the highlighted footnote above, reading “The presence of the pollinating bee (*Blastophaga psenes* L.) very occasionally trapped within the figs is not considered as a defect.”. In İzmir 2015, it was proposed to remove this footnote. The US Delegation noted that they would consult with their trade about this item.

The criteria “of which fermented → 1, 1, 2” was proposed with a view to restricting the fermentation tolerance to 1, 1 and 2 in the respective classes, which would allow having up to 3, 4 and 5% of mould in case no fermented figs were in the sample. Delegations interested in this item are kindly invited to provide their views on the topic. If no objections are raised, the proposal will be accepted.

Concerning the criteria “Dried figs that do not belong to the same colour variety, by count”, the wording was modified for simplicity and to avoid misunderstandings. It used to read “Among white fig varieties (white to dark brown in colour) and among black fig varieties (from purple to black in colour), dried figs that are distinctly different in colour, by count”, which creates the impression that the criteria deals with different tones of white within white fig varieties or different tones of black within black fig varieties. However, it actually aims at preventing white figs varieties being mixed with black fig varieties, and vice versa.

V. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only dried figs of the same origin, quality, size, and variety (if indicated). [US to suggest colour scheme to distinguish black and white figs]

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

B. Packaging

Dried figs must be packed in such a way so 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”.

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 the produce

- “Dried figs”, which may be replaced by **high moisture** or equivalent denomination (when appropriate)
- Name of the variety (optional)
- Commercial type (optional).

C. Origin of the produce

- Country of origin⁶ and, optionally, district where grown or national, regional or local place name.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size⁷; expressed in accordance with section III; when sized by diameter, the size or size range should be indicated
- Crop year (optional)
- “Naturally dried” (optional)
- “Best before” followed by the date (optional).

⁴ These marking provisions do not apply to sales packages presented in packages

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.

⁶ The full or commonly used name should be indicated

⁷ The delegate of Greece expressed its reservation in favour of optional marking for size and number of fruit per kilogramme.

E. Official control mark (optional)

Adopted 1996

Revised 20xx.
