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COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND  
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Working Party on Standardization  
of Perishable Produce and  
Quality Development

Specialized Section on Standardization  
of Dry and Dried Produce (Fruit)  
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Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

UN/ECE RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE MARKETING AND  
COMMERCIAL QUALITY CONTROL OF INSHELL WALNUTS

Proposal transmitted by France

**Introduction:** The proposed changes take account of the discussions held in California with the professionals concerned during a study tour in October 1998, when it was agreed to reconsider the moisture content for inshell walnuts and to provide some clarifications regarding the scope of the standards, sizing, size tolerances and the definition of defects. Some changes have also been made to improve the legibility of the standards and the consistency of the text.

All text to be deleted has been struck through and text to be changed appears against a grey background. The grey shading may not be fully highlighted owing to the reproduction process.

## I. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

*Note:* Walnuts "to be cracked for extraction of the kernels" should be excluded in order to simplify the application of the standard. The quality and sizing requirements for walnuts intended for direct consumption are inappropriate in respect of walnuts to be cracked for the production of kernels. The trade in inshell walnuts intended for the production of kernels is, moreover, relatively small. It should be noted that UN/ECE standard DF-03 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of inshell hazelnuts deals exclusively with fruit intended for direct consumption.

The definitions of "fresh walnuts" and "dry walnuts" should be clarified as follows:

"The expression 'fresh walnuts' or 'early walnuts' (in French: "noix primeurs") means walnuts which have been marketed soon after harvesting and cannot be preserved for a long time, from which the husk has been removed and which have not been treated in any way that tends to change their natural moisture content.

"The expression 'dry walnuts' means walnuts which can be preserved for a long time under normal conditions of storage."

The moisture content, which is defined in the following paragraph, need not be mentioned here.

## II. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

### A. Minimum requirements

(ii) Moisture content

*Note:* The maximum moisture content of dry walnuts is a decisive factor for the stability and preservation of the produce. At the forty-fourth session in Istanbul, the maximum moisture content values for the whole nut and for the kernel were reduced from 12% and 8% to 10% and 6%, respectively.

However, in the light of current practices, that change should be reconsidered and the moisture content set at the original levels, i.e. 12% and 8%.

*Note:* It is important to bear in mind that the moisture content value must be correlated with the measurement method used.

Studies conducted over several years in France concerning the method of determining moisture content show that the drying time for the produce has a decisive influence on the moisture content measured: a longer drying time (24 hours instead of 6 hours) would enable the moisture content of the nuts to be determined exactly, regardless of the nature of the sample and with better repeatability of the results. Thus, the moisture content measured on the same nuts will be slightly higher with 24 hours of drying than with 6 hours of

drying. This work will be pursued in order to evaluate the actual moisture content of marketed walnuts and to establish the correlation between moisture content and keeping quality.

With regard to fresh walnuts, the following sentence might be added:

"The natural moisture content of fresh walnuts shall be equal to or greater than 20%."

**B. Classification**

(ii) Class I

The concept of "commercial type", as referred to in the text, should be defined in a footnote. This footnote could be modelled on the definition used in the standards for inshell hazelnuts and hazelnut kernels, as follows:

"A 'commercial type' means that the walnuts in each container are of a similar general type and appearance."

**III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING**

Size is defined either by an interval determined by the minimum diameter and the maximum diameter (sizing) or by an indication of the minimum diameter followed by "and above" or "and +" (screening). 6/

Class	Sizing 6/	Screening 6/
Extra and I	32 to 34 mm	34 mm and above
	30 to 32 mm	32 mm and above
	28 to 30 mm	30 mm and above
	27 to 30 mm for oblong varieties 5/	28 mm and above
II	24 to 28 mm	27 mm and above for oblong varieties 5/
	24 to 27 mm for oblong varieties 5/	24 mm and above

footnote:

6/ In addition to this sizing and screening table, provided that the size is also expressed in the marking, any size name may be used optionally.

#### IV. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

##### C. Size tolerances

In view of the changes made above and of the differences in the definition of sizes as between oblong and other varieties, the size tolerances could be specified as follows:

For all classes, a maximum of 10%  $\pm$  of inshell walnuts not conforming to the size indicated in the marking is tolerated within the limits such that:

- the nuts correspond to the sizes immediately below or above when the size is designated by an interval determined by the minimum diameter and the maximum diameter (sizing);
- the nuts correspond to the size immediately below when the size is designated by an indication of the minimum diameter followed by "and above" or "and +" (screening).

#### VI. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING

The following specifications could be added:

##### B. Nature of produce

- "Fresh walnuts" or "Early walnuts" (in French: "Noix primeurs") (in the case of fresh walnuts); "Walnuts" or "Dry walnuts" (in the case of dry walnuts).

##### D. Commercial specifications

- date of packaging mandatory for fresh walnuts and optional for dry walnuts;
- crop year (mandatory for "Extra" class and class I, optional for class II).

*Note:* The indication of the crop year is essential to ensure that the consumer is properly informed about the quality and specifications of the produce. Since class I represents the bulk of marketed walnuts, the crop year must be indicated for this class.

It should be noted that the indication of the crop year is consistent with the uniformity requirements (paragraph V.A), which state in particular that each package must contain walnuts of the same crop year. Moreover, walnuts to be supplied to the consumer as such are not subject to prolonged storage.

- Date by which the produce is best consumed (optional); for fresh walnuts the indication "To be consumed quickly, store preferably in a cool place", or the indication "Preservation very limited, store preferably in a cool place".

*Note: This recommendation is designed to inform the final consumer about the delicate nature of the fresh walnuts and also serves to distinguish fresh walnuts clearly from dry walnuts.*

## ANNEX II

### DEFINITION OF DEFECTS

#### A. Defects of the shell:

- blemishes: discolouration which covers 10% of the surface of the shell of an individual nut and which is of a brown, reddish brown, grey or other colour in pronounced contrast with the colour of the rest of the shell or the majority of shells in the lot;
- staining, adhering dirt, adhering husk when affecting more than 5% of the shell surface;
- broken shells: shell fragments of a size equal to or greater than one quarter of a shell;
- perforated shells: holes in the shell affecting the individual nut over a total area equal to or greater than 5 mm<sup>2</sup>;
- husking damages: pronounced marks on the shell caused by the operation of mechanically removing the husk.

#### B. Defects of the edible part (kernel):

Any defects affecting the appearance of the kernel, including blemishes or areas of discolouration: discolouration which affects more than one quarter of the kernel and which is in pronounced contrast with the colour of the rest of the kernel.

Shrivelled kernels:	Kernel of which more than one eighth is seriously shrunken, wrinkled and tough.
Ripening defects for fresh walnuts:	Kernel which is not sufficiently firm, of which the skin cannot easily be peeled off and/or of which the internal central partition does not show signs of turning brown.
Ripening and drying defects for dry walnuts:	The internal central partition is not dry and brittle; the kernel is moist, soft or leathery.
Rancidity:	Oxidation of lipids or free fatty acid production producing a disagreeable flavour (rancidity should not be confused with a slightly astringent flavour of the skin of the kernel).
Oily appearance:	The kernel is covered by a film that is oily to the touch.

**C. Defects of the shell and kernel:**

- empty nuts: walnuts of which the kernel has not developed or of which the kernel is reduced to a thin membrane;
- foreign matter: any matter or material not usually associated with the product;
- mineral impurities: acid insoluble ash;
- insect damage: visible damage caused by insects or animal parasites or the presence of dead insects or insect debris;
- mould: mould filaments visible to the naked eye;
- decay: significant decomposition caused by the action of micro-organisms;
- foreign smell or taste: any odour or flavour that is not characteristic of the product.

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