



Economic Commission for Europe**Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards****Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards****Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables****Sixty-ninth session**

Geneva, 09—11 June 2021

Item 13(a) of the provisional agenda

Revision of standards**Proposal from the delegation of Germany to amend the standard for strawberries *****Submitted by the secretariat**

The following proposals (highlighted) were submitted by the delegation of Germany for consideration by the Specialized Section.

This document is submitted according to ECE/CTCS/2019/10 section IV, ECE/CTCS/2019/2 Decision 2019-8.6, and A/75/6 (Sect.20) and supplementary information.

In strawberries, fruit with dried calyx may appear during production. The reasons for dry calyx could be infection by stress due to water management or calcium deficiencies o *Xanthomonas* or *Zythia fragaria*.

At the International Meeting held in Bonn 2019, the audience agreed that the existing UNECE standard would allow dried calyx within the tolerances only. However, in the interest to prevent unnecessary food loss, it was discussed whether the standard could be amended and allow dried calyx in Class II provided the fruit is fresh and sound.

While updating the explanatory brochure of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on strawberries (version of 2005), the delegations discussed in June 2020 this problem with the same result as at the Bonn meeting.

The subsequent proposal was submitted for intersessional approval in 2020.

Standard for strawberries

The minimum requirement in the current standard says: “The calyx and (if present) the stalk must be fresh and green. Thus within the current standard, strawberries with dried calyx can be accepted only within the tolerances, i.e. 1 % in class I and 10 % in Class II provided the fruits are fresh.

In Class II, a last bullet point should be added to the list of defects allowed reading:

* Submitted late due to secretariat resource constraints.

- “Dried calyx, provided the fruit is fresh and sound.”

The photos which follow illustrate the defect and should help to guide the discussion.

This proposal did not pass the intersessional procedure in 2020 due to the subsequent comments from Spain:

“Comments from Spain on intersessional approval procedure for the proposed amendments to the standard for Strawberries”

The Spanish sector of strawberries is concerned with the proposal to amend the standard in order to allow 100 % of strawberries with dried calyx in Class II. Currently, the Spanish sector of strawberry is working well with the current standard. The provisions regarding the quality of the strawberries for Class II are fine and define very well what consumers want as strawberries of Class II. Consumers want a fresh strawberry with fresh and green calyx (if present) even in Class II. Therefore, if they start buying strawberries Class II with dry calyx they will be disappointed with the purchase, increasing food waste.

On the other hand, the OECD Lyon, France, Fruit and Vegetable Scheme is working on the amendment of the existing OECD brochure for strawberries in order to allow red coloured calyx in all classes even if the standard establish as a minimum requirement that the calyx (if present) must be fresh and green Lyon, France for all three classes. In this regard Spain would like to suggest those countries that want to include this provision in the brochure, to discuss this issue at the UNECE level before amending the existing OECD brochure as this provisions doesn't meet the following minimum requirement:” the calyx (if present) must be fresh and green” .

In conclusion, Spain does not support the proposal to amend the list of defects allowed of Class II, in order to include dried calyx, provided the fruit is fresh and sound. Spain wants to maintain the existing standard that allows strawberries with dried calyx only within the existing tolerances.”

However, the problem continues to exist. Strawberries with dried calyx and labelled Class I are delivered from producing countries to consuming countries. Inspectors in consuming countries do not want to increase unnecessary food waste and do not reject those strawberries. Either the producing countries commit themselves to fight the Class I strawberries with dried calyx and allow them in the 10 % tolerance of Class II only, or the GE.1 discusses the problem again and elaborates a solution.





3 Photos illustrating “Dried calyx, fresh fruit”.

Existing standard: allowed within tolerances only: 2 % Class I or 10% Class II.

Am ended standard: 100% Class II or within the 10 % tolerance of Class I.



Photo illustrating “Dried calyx and fruit not fresh”.

Existing standard and amended standard: not allowed, i.e. accepted within tolerances for decay as the edibility is affected: 2% in Classes and II.



Photos illustrating “Calyx and fruit not sound”.

Existing standard and amended standard: not allowed, i.e. accepted within tolerances for decay as the edibility is affected: 2% in Classes I and II.