
UNECE STANDARD FFV-19

concerning the marketing and
commercial quality control of

TABLE GRAPES

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NOTE

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

The commercial quality standards developed by the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) help facilitate international trade, encourage high-quality production, improve profitability and protect consumer interests. UNECE standards are used by Governments, producers, traders, importers and exporters, and other international organizations. They cover a wide range of agricultural products, including fresh fruit and vegetables, dry and dried produce, seed potatoes, meat, cut flowers, eggs and egg products.

Any member of the United Nations can participate, on an equal footing, in the activities of the Working Party. For more information on agricultural standards, please visit our website <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.html>.

The present revised Standard for Table Grapes is based on document ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2020/5, reviewed and adopted by the Working Party in 2020 (inter-sessional approval procedure).

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UNECE standard FFV-19 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of table grapes

I. Definition of produce

This standard applies to table grapes of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Vitis vinifera* L. to be supplied fresh to the consumer, table grapes for industrial processing being excluded.

II. Provisions concerning quality

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for table grapes after preparation and packaging.

However, if applied at stages following export/dispatch, 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, bunches and berries must be:

- 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
- practically free from damage caused by pests
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

In addition, berries must be:

- intact
- well formed
- normally developed.

Pigmentation due to sun is not a defect.

The development and condition of the table grapes must be such as to enable them:

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

B. Maturity requirements¹

The table grapes must be sufficiently developed and display satisfactory maturity and/or ripeness. In order to satisfy this requirement, the fruit must have obtained a refractometric index of at least 16° Brix. Fruit with a lower refractometric index are accepted provided the sugar/acid ratio is at least equal to:

- 20:1 if the Brix level is greater than or equal to 12.5° and less than 14° Brix
- 18:1 if the Brix level is greater than or equal to 14° and less than 16° Brix.

C. Classification

The table grapes are classified in three classes, as defined below:

(i) “Extra” Class

Table grapes in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety, allowing for the district in which they are grown.

Berries must be firm, firmly attached, evenly spaced along the stalk and have their bloom virtually intact.

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

Table grapes in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety, allowing for the district in which they are grown.

Berries must be firm, firmly attached and, as far as possible, have their bloom intact. They may, however, be less evenly spaced along the stalk than in the “Extra” Class.

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
- very slight sun scorch affecting the skin only
- slight skin defects.

(iii) Class II

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

The bunches may show slight defects in shape, development and colouring, provided these do not impair the essential characteristics of the variety, allowing for the district in which they are grown.

The berries must be sufficiently firm and sufficiently firmly attached, and where possible, still have their bloom. They may be less evenly spaced along the stalk than in Class I.

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

¹ Reservation by France and the United States of America: “The uniform approach applied to the minimum maturity requirements in the UNECE Standard for Table Grapes does not correctly reflect minimum maturity requirements for all table grape varieties from all geographical production regions, and the practices of the table grape industry.”

- defects in shape
- defects in colouring
- slight sun scorch affecting the skin only
- slight bruising
- skin defects.

III. Provisions concerning sizing

Size is determined by the weight of the bunch.

The minimum bunch weight shall be 75 g for Classes “Extra” and I. This provision does not apply to packages intended for single servings in all classes.

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.²

A. Quality tolerances

(i) “Extra” Class

A total tolerance of 5 per cent, by weight, of bunches 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 weight, of bunches not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class II is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 1 per cent in total may consist of produce satisfying neither the requirements of Class II quality nor the minimum requirements, or of produce affected by decay.

In addition to the tolerances mentioned above, a maximum of 10 per cent, by weight, of loose berries, i.e. berries detached from the bunch/cluster, are allowed provided the berries are sound and intact.

(iii) Class II

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by weight, of bunches satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 2 per cent in total may consist of produce affected by decay.

In addition to the tolerances mentioned above, a maximum of 10 per cent, by weight, of loose berries, i.e. berries detached from the bunch/cluster, are allowed provided the berries are sound and intact.

² A conformity check shall be made by assessing primary or composite samples. It is based on the principle of presumption that the quality of the randomly taken samples is representative of the quality of the lot. The OECD Operating Rules for Conformity Checks are recommended for application – also by operators – at the stages of dispatch as well as in wholesale and distribution centres and storerooms of food retail. <http://www.oecd.org/agriculture/fruit-vegetables/publications/oecd-fruit-and-vegetables-rules.htm>.

B. Size tolerances

For all classes (if sized): a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by weight, of bunches not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing is allowed. In each sales package (except for single servings), one bunch weighing less than 75 g is allowed to adjust the weight, provided the bunch meets all other requirements of the specified class.

V. Provisions concerning presentation

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only bunches of the same origin, variety, quality and degree of ripeness.

In the case of the “Extra” Class, the bunches must be approximately uniform in size and colouring.

However, a mixture of table grapes of distinctly different varieties may be packed together in a package, provided they are uniform in quality and, for each variety concerned, in origin.

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

B. Packaging

The table grapes 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.

Stickers individually affixed to the produce shall be such that, when removed, they neither leave visible traces of glue nor lead to skin defects.

Packages must be free of all foreign matter, although a fragment of vine shoot no more than 5 cm in length may be left on the stem of the bunch as a form of special presentation.

VI. Provisions concerning marking

Each package³ 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/exporter:

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 authority⁴ if the country applying such a system is listed in the UNECE database.

³ These marking provisions do not apply to sales packages presented in packages bearing these particulars. However, they do apply to sales packages (pre-packages) presented individually.

⁴ 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-2) country/area code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

B. Nature of produce

- “Table grapes” if the contents are not visible from the outside
- Name of the variety. In the case of a mixture of table grapes of distinctly different varieties, names of the different varieties.

The name of the variety can be replaced by a synonym. A trade name⁵ can only be given in addition to the variety or the synonym.

C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin⁶ and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name
- In the case of a mixture of distinctly different varieties of table grapes of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the variety concerned.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- “Bunches below 75 g intended for single servings” or equivalent denomination, where appropriate.

E. Official control mark (optional)

Adopted 1961

Last revised 2020

Aligned with the Standard Layout 2021

The OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables has published an explanatory illustrated brochure on the application of this standard. The publication may be obtained from the OECD bookshop at: www.oecdbookshop.org.

⁵ A trade name can be a trademark for which protection has been sought or obtained or any other commercial denomination.

⁶ The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.