

Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Fifty-fifth session

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Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda

## REVISION OF UNECE STANDARDS

### Avocados

This note presents proposals by the United States on Incorporating Antillean Avocado Sizing within the UNECE Standard for Avocados (FFV - 42).

## **Introduction and Background**

The United States of America submits the following sizing proposal for incorporating sizes of Antillean Avocado varieties within the UNECE Standard for Avocados (UNECE Standard FFV-42).

Florida's avocado production normally accounts for 9 percent of U.S. avocado acreage. During the 2008-09 season Florida is expected to ship 900,000 to 950,000 bushels, slightly less than last season's 1.2 million bushels. Antillean avocados varieties produced in Florida are called "Florida avocados" in the United States. Antillean avocados varieties vary in size from 6 to 48 ounces (170.1 to 1360.8g) in weight and are known to vary that much even within the same variety. Because of their large fruit size the preferred package used in trade is a banana type sized carton with a bushel (36.4 liters) capacity. Imports of Antillean avocados from the Caribbean Basin region (predominantly by air) are either in single or multiple layer boxes depending on the target market, with all boxes are marked with a count.

The United States Standards for Grades of Florida Avocados has been in effect since 1957. The sizing and uniformity sections in this standard were developed taking into consideration the various shapes, sizes, flesh thickness, seed size, weight ranges and the understanding that there is no direct correlation between avocado weight and diameter. It is widely known that some fruit have a large seed and thin flesh and others have a small seed and thick flesh, hence the fruits may have the same diameter but different weight. For this reason, Antillean avocados are sold in the United States by count and not weight.

The sizing and uniformity requirements in the United States Standards for Grades of Florida Avocados have been successfully applied in the United States on the commercial trade of Antillean/Florida Avocado varieties for the fifty-one years without any major revisions or disruptions to trade. Therefore, US propose the following sizing and uniformity provisions:

## **Proposal**

- a) Size of the avocados may be specified by count.
- b) The avocados shall be packed in accordance with good commercial practice and the pack shall be at least "fairly tight"<sup>1</sup>. The weight of the smallest fruit in any container shall be not less than 75 percent of the weight of the largest fruit in the same container.
- c) In order to allow for variations incident to proper sizing and packing, not more than 5 percent, by count, of the avocados in any container may weigh less than 75 percent of the weight of the largest fruit.

**Provided**, that no fruit in any container shall weigh less than 60 percent of the weight of the largest fruit in the container.

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<sup>1</sup> The product is packed tight enough to prevent the product movement within the package, but not damaging each other or the cause of injury under normal handling.