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**Economic Commission for Europe**

Committee on Trade

**Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards****Specialized Section on Standardization  
of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables****Fifty-eighth session**

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**Review of the texts of the standards****aligned with the 2009 Standard Layout****UNECE Standard FFV-06 concerning the  
marketing and commercial quality control  
of beans****Submitted by the secretariat****I. Definition of produce**

This standard applies to beans of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Phaseolus vulgaris* L. and *Phaseolus coccineus* L. to be supplied fresh to the consumer, beans for shelling or industrial processing being excluded.

**II. Provisions concerning quality**

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

However, if applied at stages following export, 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 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, the beans must be:

- intact<sup>1</sup>
- 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
- fresh in appearance
- free from parchment (hard endoderm)
- practically free from pests
- practically free from damage caused by pests
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

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

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

## B. Classification

Beans are classified in three classes, as defined below.

### (i) "Extra" Class

Beans in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

They must be:

- turgid, easily snapped
- very tender
- practically straight
- stringless.

Seeds, if present, must be small and soft. However, needle beans must be seedless.

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.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to harvesting of beans (excluding needle beans), a degree of damage is permitted at the stalk end only according to the tolerances laid down.

**(ii) Class I**

Beans in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

They must be:

- turgid
- young and tender
- practically stringless except in the case of beans for slicing.

Seeds, if present must be small and soft.

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
- slight skin defects.

**(iii) Class II**

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

They must be:

- reasonably tender
- free from rust spots in the case of needle beans.

Seeds, if present, should not be too large and must be reasonably soft.

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

- defects in shape
- defects in colouring
- skin defects
- strings
- slight rust spots except in the case of needle beans.

**III. Provisions concerning sizing**

Size is determined by the maximum width of the pod measured at right angles to the seam.

To ensure uniformity in size, the range in size between needle beans in the same package shall not exceed:

- 6 mm denominated "very fine"
- 9 mm denominated "fine"
- 12 mm denominated "medium".

Medium needle beans may not be placed in the "Extra" Class.

## **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.

### **A. Quality tolerances**

#### **(i) "Extra" Class**

A total tolerance of 5 per cent, by number or weight, of beans 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 number or weight, of beans 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. No tolerance for produce affected by *Colletotrichum lindemuthianum* (bean spot disease).

Within this tolerance, a maximum of 5 per cent, by number or weight, may have strings in the case of a variety and/or commercial type that should be stringless.

In addition a maximum of 15 per cent, by number or weight, of beans (excluding needle beans) may have the stalk and a small section of the narrow part of the neck missing, provided these pods remain closed, dry and not discoloured.

#### **(iii) Class II**

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of beans 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. No tolerance for produce affected by *Colletotrichum lindemuthianum* (bean spot disease).

In addition a maximum of 30 per cent, by number or weight, of beans (excluding needle beans) may have the stalk and a small section of the narrow part of the neck missing, provided these pods remain closed, dry and not discoloured.

### **B. Size tolerances**

For all classes: a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of beans not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing is allowed.

## **V. Provisions concerning presentation**

### **A. Uniformity**

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only beans of the same origin, variety or commercial type, quality and size (if sized).

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

## **B. Packaging**

Beans 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.

Packages must be free of all foreign matter.

## **VI. Provisions concerning marking**

Each package<sup>2</sup> 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/shipper:

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 authority<sup>3</sup>.

### **B. Nature of produce**

- “Beans” and/or commercial type if the contents are not visible from the outside
- Name of the variety (optional).

### **C. Origin of produce**

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

### **D. Commercial specifications**

- Class
- Size:
  - for needle beans indicated by the words "very fine", "fine", "medium";

<sup>2</sup> According to the Geneva Protocol, footnote 2, “Package units of produce prepacked for direct sale to the consumer shall not be subject to these marking provisions but shall conform to the national requirements. However, the markings referred to shall in any event be shown on the transport packaging containing such package units”.

<sup>3</sup> 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) country/area code of the recognizing country, if not the country of origin.

- for other beans (if sized) indicated by the minimum and maximum width of the pod.

**E. Official control mark (optional)**

Adopted 1962

Last revised 2010

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](http://www.oecdbookshop.org).

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