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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

UN/ECE RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE MARKETING AND
COMMERCIAL QUALITY CONTROL OF WALNUT KERNELS

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 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

This standard applies to walnut kernels from varieties (cultivars) grown from *Juglans regia* L., intended to be supplied either directly to the consumer or to the food industry.

II. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

A. Minimum requirements

(i)

- clean, practically free from any visible foreign matter and from shell;

B. Classification

It should be indicated that "the classification criteria are specified in the annex relating to the colour, shape and size of kernels".

For each class, a reference should be added to a footnote stating:

"The kernels may be designated by a commercial name, provided that the class is also expressed in the marking."

This change would allow operators to use names such as "Harlequin" or "Harlequin light".

(i) **"Extra" Class**

The first paragraph should read as follows:

Walnut kernels in this class must be of superior quality, uniformly light-coloured with practically no dark straw and/or lemon-yellow colour and with no dark brown.

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

"A commercial type means that the kernels in each container are of a similar general type and appearance or belong to a mix of varieties officially defined by the producing country."

(ii) **Class I**

The first paragraph should read as follows:

Walnut kernels in this class must be of good quality, of a dark straw to light brown and/or lemon-yellow colour with practically no dark brown colour and with no black.

A reference to the same footnote as given above should follow the words "commercial type".

In view of the footnote that would allow optional use of a name, the sentence "this class corresponds to kernels also called 'Harlequin'" should be deleted.

(iii) **Class II**

The following paragraph could be added:

"This class also includes mixtures of kernels of different colours and designated in the marking by the words 'mixed colours'."

III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING: STYLES

The following paragraphs should be added:

(j) large pieces and halves: a mixture of kernels corresponding to the styles large pieces (iii) and halves (i) and of which the proportion of halves may be specified in the marking.

The different styles are represented in the annex relating to colour, shape and size.

In addition to the designation of the style in the marking, an indication of the number of pieces per kg may be given optionally.

IV. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

A. Quality and colour tolerances

Defects allowed <u>1</u> /	Tolerances allowed (per cent by weight of kernels)		
	Extra	Class I	Class II
(1) Kernels not satisfying the minimum requirements such as:	4	6	8
- Rotten kernels	0.5	0.5	1
- Mouldy kernels	0.5	0.5	1
- Shell fragments or foreign matter	0.1	0.1	0.1
(2) Kernels darker in colour, but not black	8 dark straw to light brown and/or lemon-yellow in colour	8 dark brown in colour	8 of different colours

D. Size tolerances (styles)

For all styles, a minimum percentage of kernels corresponding to the style indicated in the marking is required and a maximum percentage by weight of kernels different from the style indicated is tolerated:

Style	Minimum percentage and tolerances allowed (per cent by weight of kernels)					
	Halves	Chipped kernels	Quarters	Large pieces	Broken pieces	Fragments
Halves	85/a)	15/b)	5/c)		1/c)	
Quarters			85/a)	15/b)	5/c)	
Large pieces				85/a)	15/b)	1/c)
Broken pieces				10/b)	90/a)	1/d)
Large pieces and halves	20/a)			65/a)	15/b)	1/c)

- a) Minimum percentage
- b) Tolerances allowed
- c) Included in 15%
- d) Included in 10%

VI. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING

In view of the changes made above, paragraphs B and D should be amended as follows:

B. Nature of produce

"Walnut kernels" if the contents are not visible from the outside. Name of the variety or commercial type for "Extra" class and class I where applicable (optional for class II).

This indication is given for the sake of consistency with the provisions included in the section on classification (paragraph II.B, items (i) and (ii)).

D. Commercial specifications

- Class and optionally a commercial name; the words "mixed colours" in class II where applicable;
- Style ("halves", "quarters", "large pieces", "broken pieces" or "large pieces and halves") and optionally the number of pieces per kg;
- Crop year (mandatory for "Extra" class and class I, otherwise optional);

Note: *The time which has elapsed between harvesting and marketing is an important factor as regards the quality of the produce and its preservability. The indication of the crop year thus helps to give the user information about this time frame. This change is furthermore consistent with the uniformity requirements (paragraph V.A), which state in particular that each package must contain kernels of the same crop year.*

- Net weight;
- Best by end date (optional).

ANNEX II

DEFINITION OF DEFECTS

Any defect adversely affecting the appearance or edibility of the kernel including:

- blemishes: discolouration which covers more than one quarter of the surface of the kernel and which is of a colour in pronounced contrast with the colour of the rest of the kernel (dark blemishes or areas of discolouration);
- torn skin: absence of skin from more than 5% of the surface of the kernel;
- embedded dirt;
- crushing of more than 5% of the volume of the kernel;
- drying defect: the kernel is moist, soft or leathery.

Fragments:	Kernel and skin fragments which can pass through a 1 mm mesh.
Shrivelled kernels:	Kernel of which more than one eighth is seriously shrunken, wrinkled and tough.
Mould:	Mould filaments visible to the naked eye.
Decay:	Significant decomposition caused by the action of micro-organisms.
Insect damage:	Visible damage caused by insects or animal parasites or the presence of dead insects or insect debris.
Shell:	Outer shell and/or woody partition from between the halves of the kernel (internal central partition), and any fragments of either.
Foreign matter:	Any matter or material not usually associated with the product.
Mineral impurities:	Acid insoluble ash.
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).
Foreign smell or taste:	Any odour or flavour that is not characteristic of the product.
