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**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****Seventieth session**

Geneva, 16-18 May 2022

Item 9 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Revision of standards****Proposal by the delegation of Germany to amend the standard for pomegranates****Submitted by the delegation of Germany**

The following proposals were submitted for consideration by the Specialized Section.

This document is submitted according to ECE/CTCS/2021/2 Decision 2021-07-02 and Decision 2021-07-07, ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2021/2 paragraph 66, and A/76/6 (Sect.20).

At its 2021 session the Specialized Section adopted a new United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) standard for pomegranates.

When applying the new standard for pomegranates, it was noticed that it needed to be clarified in some areas. The following proposals were submitted by the delegation of Germany to specify the new standard for pomegranates and thus make it easier to handle in practice.

The Specialized Section is invited to review the proposals.

**I. Definition of produce**

This standard applies to pomegranates of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Punica granatum* L. to be supplied fresh to the consumer, pomegranates for industrial processing being excluded.

**II. Provisions concerning quality**

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for pomegranates 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, the pomegranates must be:

- intact; however, the crown may be damaged or missing
- sound; produce affected by rotting, or ~~deterioration, frost, low and/or high temperatures and sunburn affecting the arils of the fruit~~ such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter
- practically free from pests
- free from damage caused by pests affecting the flesh
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

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

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

## B. Maturity requirements

Pomegranates must be sufficiently developed and display satisfactory maturity and/or ripeness.

## C. Classification

Pomegranates are classified in three classes, as defined below:

### (i) “Extra” Class

Pomegranates in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety.

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

Pomegranates in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety.

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 including cracking.

These defects must not, in any case, affect the arils of the fruit.

**(iii) Class II**

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

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

- defects in shape
- defects in colouring
- skin defects including cracking.

These defects must not, in any case, affect the arils of the fruit.

**III. Provisions concerning sizing**

Size is determined by maximum diameter of the equatorial section, weight of the individual unit or count.

If size codes are applied, those in the tables below have to be respected.

[The sizing provisions are optional for Class II.]

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

**A. For fruit sized by diameter**

<i>Size code</i>		<i>Diameter (mm)</i>
1	A	$\geq 81$
2	B	71–80
3	C	61–70
4	D	51–60
5	E	40–50

**B. For fruit sized by weight**

<i>Size code</i>		<i>Weight (g)</i>
1	A	$> 501$
2	B	401–500
3	C	301–400
4	D	201–300
5	E	$\leq 200$

**C. For fruit sized by count**

For fruit sized by count, the difference in size should be consistent with (A) or (B).

If size codes are applied, those in the tables above have to be respected.

[The sizing provisions are optional for Class II.]

## 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.<sup>1</sup>

### A. Quality tolerances

#### (i) “Extra” Class

A total tolerance of 5 per cent, by number or weight, of pomegranates 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 pomegranates 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.

#### (iii) Class II

A total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of pomegranates 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.

### B. Size tolerances

For all classes (if sized): a total tolerance of 10 per cent, by number or weight, of pomegranates 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 pomegranates of the same origin, variety, ~~or varietal type~~, quality and size (if sized).

However, a mixture of pomegranates of varieties of distinctly different skin colours may be packed together provided they are uniform in quality and, for each ~~skin colour variety~~ concerned, in origin. However, in case of those mixtures uniformity in size is not required.

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

### B. Packaging

Pomegranates 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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>.

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. Information lasered on single fruit should not lead to flesh or skin defects.

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/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 authority<sup>3</sup> if the country applying such a system is listed in the UNECE database.

### B. Nature of produce

- “Pomegranates” if the contents are not visible from the outside
- “Mixture of pomegranates”, or equivalent denomination, in the case of a mixture of varieties of distinctly different skin colours of pomegranates. If the produce is not visible from the outside, the varieties and/or colours and the quantity of each in the package must be indicated.

### C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin<sup>4</sup> and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name
- In the case of a mixture of varieties of distinctly different skin colours of pomegranates of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the skin colour variety concerned.

### D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size, expressed as
  - Size code or minimum and maximum weight in g or
  - Size code or minimum and maximum diameter in mm or
  - Number of units in the package.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

<sup>4</sup> The full or a commonly used name should be indicated.

## E. Official control mark (optional)

Adopted 2021

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (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).

A question for clarification between UNECE and OECD:

The OECD brochure on pomegranates (2014) classifies skin defects of various causes into Extra, I and II classes according to their severity. However, on plate 22 (see below), fruits with significantly less damage are classified as limit in Class I and II. Scab is indicated as the cause of this defect. We have two questions about this:

- Is this scab *Elsinoë punicae* or do the photos not rather show *Alternaria alternata*? see:<http://blogs.sun.ac.za/open-day/files/2021/04/POMSA-Poster-A0-xPHI-FINAL.pdf>
- It seems important that only a very small area of infestation is allowed in this defect. Wouldn't this have to be stated / defined accordingly in the standard? If yes, the standard for skin defects should read:
  - Class I: slight skin defects including cracking; however, scab (*Elsinoë punicae*), must not extend over more than 0,25 cm<sup>2</sup>, cumulative, in area.
  - Class II: skin defects including cracking; however, scab (*Elsinoë punicae*), must not extend over more than 1 cm<sup>2</sup>, cumulative, in area.

