



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**

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Item 9 (b) of the provisional agenda

Revision of standards**Proposal by the delegation of France regarding commercial types for melons****Submitted by the delegation of France**

The following note has been received 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).

Melon Charentais

The main producing countries of Charentais melons are France, Spain and Morocco. The production of these three countries is mainly consumed in France. France produces around 250,000 tonnes of Melons Charentais.

Since the beginning of the 2000s, the French melon sector has been reflecting on the consumer's perception of the term "Charentais".

The first study carried out in 2003 showed that Charentais is a confusing term for French consumers because they associate it with the geographical area of Charentes (French department). Confusion is made between the commercial type of the product and its possible origin.

However, the commercial type must be written on the labelling of packages and on the shelves when the ECE standard is used by the sender. Voluntarily applied, the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe (ECE) standard is used by almost all Charentais melon marketers selling in France (this is a request from the major retail chains in France).

Initially, the French sector tried to explain to the consumer through its communication plans. But the confusion continued. In 2020, a consumer study carried out by the Centre Technique Interprofessionnel des Fruits et Légumes (CTIFL, and interprofessional technical centre for fruit and vegetables) confirmed that this misunderstanding persisted. Indeed, the French consumer does not understand how he can find on the stalls Charentais melons produced in other French departments than the Charentes or even in another country. "How is it that the Melon de Cavaillon is labelled Charentais?", "How is it that a melon from another country is labelled Charentais?"



Since 2018, the French Charentais melon sector has decided to find a new name to replace the term Charentais. Much work has been carried out (research with a communication agency, consumer tests of new names, etc.). At this stage, it seems important to survey the member countries of WP.7 to know their opinion on the name change.

NB: Do not confuse commercial type with varieties. For each of the commercial types of yellow Charentais melons and green Charentais melons, there are several hundred varieties.

Reminder of the physical characteristics of Melon Charentais (source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) brochure - International standards for fruit and vegetables Melons):

Type	Fruit shape	Skin colour at maturity		Flesh colour	Skin characteristics			Dehiscence of the peduncle
		Predominant colour	Secondary colour		Netting	Skin texture	Suture	
Yellow Charentais	Round	Creamy yellow	None	Orange	Variable	No	Yes	Yes
Green Charentais	Round	Green	None	Orange	Variable	No	Yes	Variable

