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Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of
Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

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REPORT OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Addendum 6

UNECE Standard for Avocados

Note by the Secretariat: This document contains the text that the Specialized Section recommends for adoption as a revised UNECE standard. Changes to the recommendation in force, which concern the inclusion of Antillian varieties have been marked with strike-out for deletions and new text has been underlined.

FFV-42: Avocados

UNECE RECOMMENDATION FFV-42
concerning the marketing and commercial
quality control of

AVOCADOS

moving in international trade between and to
UNECE member countries

I. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This standard applies to avocados of varieties (cultivars) grown from *Persea americana* Mill. to be supplied fresh to the consumer, parthenocarpic fruit and avocados for industrial processing being excluded. ~~Antillan varieties are also excluded from the standard.~~

II. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements of avocados at the export control stage, after preparation and packaging.

A. Minimum requirements

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the avocados must be:

- intact
- 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
- practically free from pests
- practically free from damage caused by pests
- free of damage caused by low temperature
- having a stalk not more than 10 mm in length which must be cut off cleanly. However, its absence is not considered a defect on condition that the place of the stalk attachment is dry and intact
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.¹

Avocados must be firm and carefully picked.

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

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

¹ The use of preserving agents or any other chemical substance liable to leave a foreign smell on the skin of the fruit is permitted where it is compatible with the regulations of the importing country.

B. Maturity requirements

The development of the avocados should have reached a physiological stage, which will ensure a continuation of the ripening process to completion.

The fruit should have a minimum dry matter content, to be measured by drying to constant weight:

21%	for the variety Hass;
20%	for the varieties Fuerte, Pinkerton, Reed and Edranol;
19%	for the other varieties <u>except for Antillian varieties that may show a lower dry matter content.</u>

The ripe fruit should be free from bitterness.

C. Classification

Avocados are classified in three classes defined below:

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

Avocados in this class must be of superior quality. In shape and colouring they must be characteristic of the variety.

They must be free from defects, with the exception of very slight superficial defects of the skin provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package. If present, the stalk must be intact.

(ii) ***Class I***

Avocados in this class must be of good quality and show the typical colour and shape 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:

- slight defects of shape and colour
- slight skin defects (corkiness, healed lenticels) and sunburn; the maximum total area should not exceed 4 cm².

In no case may the defects affect the fruit flesh.

The stalk, if present, may be slightly damaged.

(iii) ***Class II***

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

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

- defects in shape and colouring
- skin defects (corkiness, healed lenticels) and sunburn: the maximum total area should not exceed 6 cm².

In no case may the defects affect the fruit flesh.

The stalk, if present, may be damaged.

III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by the weight of the fruit.

Minimum weight for avocados is 125 g except for Hass where it is 80g.

The size scale is as follows:

Weight scale in grammes	Size code
781 to 1220	4
576 to 780	6
461 to 575	8
366 to 460	10
306 to 365	12
266 to 305	14
236 to 265	16
211 to 235	18
191 to 210	20
171 to 190	22
156 to 170	24
146 to 155	26
136 to 145	28
125 to 135	30
80 to 125 (Hass variety only)	S ²

² The difference between the smallest and largest fruit within a package should not be more than 25g.

IV. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

Tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each package for produce not satisfying the requirements for the class indicated.

A. Quality tolerances

(i) *"Extra" Class*

5 per cent by number or weight of avocados not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class I or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

(ii) *Class I*

10 per cent by number or weight of avocados not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class II or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

(iii) *Class II*

10 per cent by number or weight of avocados satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of fruit affected by rotting, marked bruising or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.

B. Size tolerances

For all classes: 10 per cent by number or weight of avocados conforming to the size range immediately below and/or above that mentioned in the marking.

V. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only avocados of the same origin, variety, quality, colouring³ and size.

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

B. Packaging

The avocados must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

³ A change in the colour of the dark-skinned varieties is not considered as a defect, but the colouring of the fruit in each package must be uniform at the point of dispatch.

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The materials used inside the package must be new, clean and of a quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the fruit. 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 package⁴ must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside:

A. Identification

Packer)	Name and address or
and/or)	officially issued or
Dispatcher)	accepted code mark. ⁵

B. Nature of produce

- "Avocados", if the contents are not visible from the outside
- Name of the variety.

C. Origin of produce

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

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size expressed in minimum and maximum weight
- Code number of the size scale and number of fruits when it is different from code number or, optionally, code number of the size scale and the net weight of the package.

E. Official control mark (optional)

Published 1986
Revised 1994, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2003
The UN/ECE standard for Avocados
has led to an explanatory brochure published by the OECD Scheme

⁴ *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.*

⁵ *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.*