

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) No 543/2011

of 7 June 2011

laying down detailed rules for the application of
Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 in respect of the fruit and
vegetables and processed fruit and vegetables sectors.

CONSOLIDATED TEXT: Annex I; Part 8 of Part B

MARKETING STANDARD FOR SWEET PEPPERS

I. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This standard applies to sweet peppers of varieties¹ (cultivars) grown from *Capsicum annuum* L., to be supplied fresh to the consumer, sweet peppers for industrial processing being excluded.

II. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements for sweet peppers, after preparation and packaging.

However, at stages following 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 “Extra” Class, a slight deterioration due to their development and their tendency to perish.

A. Minimum requirements

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the sweet peppers 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,
- fresh in appearance,
- firm,
- practically free from pests,

¹ Some sweet pepper varieties may have hot taste.

- free from damage caused by pests affecting the flesh,
- free of damage caused by low temperature or frost,
- with peduncles attached; the peduncle must be neatly cut and the calyx be intact,
- free of abnormal external moisture,
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

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

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

B. Classification

Sweet peppers are classified in three classes, as defined below:

(i) "Extra" Class

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

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

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

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 silvering or damage caused by thrips covering not more than 1/3 of the total surface area,
- slight skin defects, such as:
 - pitting, scratching, sunburn, pressure marks covering in total not more than 2 cm for defects of elongated shape, and 1 cm² for other defects; or

- dry superficial cracks covering in total not more than 1/8 of the total surface area,
- slightly damaged peduncle.

(iii) Class II

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

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

- defects in shape,
- silvering or damage caused by thrips covering not more than 2/3 of the total surface area,
- skin defects, such as:
 - pitting, scratching, sunburn, bruising, and healed injuries covering in total not more than 4 cm in length for defects of elongated shape and 2.5 cm² of the total area for other defects; or
 - dry superficial cracks covering in total not more than 1/4 of the total surface area,
 - blossom end deterioration not more than 1 cm²,
 - shrivelling not exceeding 1/3 of the surface,
 - damaged peduncle and calyx, provided the surrounding flesh remains intact.

III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by the maximum diameter of the equatorial section or by weight. To ensure uniformity in size, the range in size between produce in the same package shall not exceed:

(a) For sweet peppers sized by diameter:

- 20 mm.

(b) For sweet peppers sized by weight:

- 30 g where the heaviest piece weighs 180 g or less,
- 80 g where the lightest piece weighs more than 180 g but less than 260 g,
- No limit where the lightest piece weighs 260 g or more.

Elongated sweet peppers should be sufficiently uniform in length.

Uniformity in size is not compulsory 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.

A. Quality tolerances

(i) "Extra" Class

A total tolerance of 5 %, by number or weight, of sweet peppers not satisfying the requirements of the class but meeting those of Class I is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 0.5 % in total may consist of produce satisfying the requirements of Class II quality.

(ii) Class I

A total tolerance of 10 %, by number or weight, of sweet peppers not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 1 % 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 %, by number or weight, of sweet peppers satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements is allowed. Within this tolerance not more than 2 % in total may consist of produce affected by decay.

B. Size tolerances

For all classes (if sized): a total tolerance of 10 %, by number or weight, of sweet peppers 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 sweet peppers of the same origin, variety or commercial type, quality, size (if sized) and, in the case of Classes "Extra" and I, of appreciably the same degree of ripeness and colouring.

However, a mixture of sweet peppers of distinctly different commercial types and/or colours may be packed together in a package, provided they are uniform in quality, and for each commercial type and/or colour concerned, in origin. Uniformity in size is not required.

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

B. Packaging

The sweet peppers 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 paper or stamps bearing trade specifications is allowed, provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Stickers individually affixed on 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 defect.

Packages must be free of all foreign matter.

VI. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING

Each package² must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside:

A. Identification

Name and physical address of the packer and/or the dispatcher (for example: street/city/region/postal code and, if different from the country of origin, the country).

This mention may be replaced:

- for all packages with the exception of pre-packages, by the officially issued or accepted code mark representing the packer and/or the dispatcher, indicated in close connection with the reference "Packer and/or Dispatcher" (or equivalent abbreviations). The code mark shall be preceded by the ISO 3166 (alpha) country/area code of the recognising country, if not the country of origin;
- for pre-packages only, by the name and the address of a seller established within the Union indicated in close connection with the mention "Packed for:" or an equivalent mention. In this case, the labelling shall also include a code representing the packer and/or the dispatcher. The seller shall give all information deemed necessary by the inspection body as to the meaning of this code.

B. Nature of produce

- "Sweet peppers" if the contents are not visible from the outside.

² These marking provisions do not apply to sales packages presented in packages. However, they do apply to sales packages presented separately.

- "Mixture of sweet peppers", or equivalent denomination, in the case of a mixture of distinctly different commercial types and/or colours of sweet peppers. If the produce is not visible from the outside, the commercial types and/or colours and the quantity of each in the package must be indicated.

C. Origin of produce

Country of origin³ and, optionally, district where grown or national, regional or local place name.

In the case of a mixture of distinctly different commercial types and/or colours of sweet peppers of different origins, the indication of each country of origin shall appear next to the name of the commercial type and/or colour concerned.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class.
- Size (if sized) expressed as minimum and maximum diameters or minimum and maximum weights.
- Number of units (optional).
- "Hot" or equivalent denomination, where appropriate.

E. Official control mark (optional)

Packages need not to bear the particulars mentioned in the first subparagraph, when they contain sales packages, clearly visible from the outside, and all bearing these particulars. These packages shall be free from any indications such as could mislead. When these packages are palletised, the particulars shall be given on a notice placed in an obvious position on at least two sides of the pallet.

³ The full or commonly used name shall be indicated.