

General Marketing Standard - Note for interpreting the EU Marketing Standard.

This note has been agreed by Member States to explain more clearly some areas of the requirements of the General Marketing Standard. It also gives information about defects that are not in the standard. It does not cover all the requirements, you can read these in the marketing standard on GOV.UK.

Brassicas

This note applies to the following products:

Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, kale, pak-choi and other such products. This is not a full list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	<p>Products cleanly cut in half or into portions are not covered under the General Marketing Standard. Hollow and split stems are allowed if the hollow part is sound.</p> <p>Brussels sprouts: The stalk must be cut just beneath the outer leaves. Cauliflowers: One removed or damaged floret of 3cm² or less is allowed.</p>
Sound, disease, deterioration	<p>Broccoli: Loss of characteristic colour (browning/drying) is not allowed. Broccoli: Only a few Alternaria spots are allowed. Cabbages: A few Alternaria spots are allowed on both the outer leaves and the heart (centre). A few fine Alternaria spots are allowed on the edible part. Several more Alternaria spots on outer leaves and some discolouration to outer leaf layers are allowed. Less fresh outer leaves are allowed. Slight frost damage and some discolouration to the outer leaf layers is allowed. Cauliflowers: Only a few slight pepper spots are allowed.</p>
Clean	<p>Almost free of soiling; slight soiling on the outside and within the leaf stalks is allowed, but must not be more than slight. The heart must be clean.</p>
Pests	<p>2 or 3 small pests are allowed.</p>

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Pest damage	Cabbages: Slight traces of feeding damage caused by insects are allowed.
Condition	Cabbages: Damage to the outer leaves is allowed but the heart must not be damaged. Store cabbages: Trimmed cabbage with not more than 5 leaves detached from the stem but adhering to the cabbage is allowed.
Development, ripeness and maturity	Cabbages: Flower stems $\frac{2}{3}$ or less of the total length of the head are allowed. Brussels sprouts: Elongated stems are allowed, but not more than 1 or 2 gaps between the leaves can be showing. Cauliflowers: Excessive wooliness, or excessive openness is not allowed. Choi Sum: Flowering is allowed.

Fleshy fruit and vegetables

This note applies to the following products:

Aubergines, beans, courgettes, cucumbers, duhdi, melons, mormordica, okra, peas, pumpkins, squashes, sugar snaps, watermelons and other similar fruit and vegetables. This is not a full list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	Products cleanly cut in half or into portions are not covered under the General Marketing Standard. Slight dry damage, cracks and bruises that can be removed by normal peeling are allowed. Beans: Broken beans are allowed up to a tolerance of 10%.* <i>* If more than 10% and less than 30% of the beans are broken, trading under the UNECE standard is possible.</i>
Sound, disease, deterioration	Slight traces of diseases and virus not affecting the flesh are allowed. Courgettes: Cladosporium rot (Gummosis) is highly progressive and not allowed. Cucumbers: Mycosphaerella is not allowed. Excessively deep or soft creases at the handle are not allowed. Strong colour defects not characteristics of the variety are not allowed. Melons: Any sugar spotting must be sound.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Clean	Soiling without lumps is allowed where the fruit has touched the ground. Courgettes: May be slightly gritty to the touch. Cucumbers: Natural wax is allowed.
Pest damage	Shallow damage up to half the surface area is allowed if it is not affecting the flesh.
Condition	Small areas of bruising are allowed if the flesh is sound. Picking damage that has healed is allowed if it is clean, shallow and dry. Courgettes: Splits that have healed are allowed if they are not deep, and are relative to the size and shape of the fruit. Melons: A few chill spots are allowed if the flesh is sound.
Development, ripeness and maturity	Under or over mature fruit does not 'display a satisfactory degree of ripeness', therefore it is not allowed. Aubergines: Fibrous flesh due to being over ripe is not allowed. Beans: Pods of peas and broad beans must contain seeds. Less well developed or overdeveloped seeds are allowed. Hard seeds are not allowed. Fibrous flesh due to being over ripe is not allowed. Courgettes: Severe colour contrasts due to ripeness are not allowed. Cucumbers: Severe colour contrasts due to ripeness are not allowed. Mange tout: Pods with over mature seeds (pods are round in cross section) are not allowed. Peas: Pods with over mature seeds (pods are round in cross section) are not allowed. Melons: If the taste is unsatisfactory and/or other maturity signs such as thick peel and underdevelopment are visible, check the Brix: it must be at least 8°. Sugar snaps: Pods with over mature seeds (pods are round in cross section) are not allowed. Shelling peas: Wrinkled pods or pale pods with hard seeds are not allowed. Watermelons: If the taste is unsatisfactory and/or other maturity signs such as thick peel and underdevelopment are visible, check the Brix: it must be at least 8°.

Mushrooms

This note applies to the following products:

Cultivated mushrooms (Agaricus), blue stalk, enoki, girolle, shiitake, oyster mushrooms. This is not a full list.

Excluding: wild mushrooms

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	Products cleanly cut in half or into portions are not covered under the General Marketing Standard. The stalk may be missing but the surrounding flesh must not be damaged. Slight damage to the cap and the stalk is allowed.
Sound, disease, deterioration	More than 2 small bacterial spots are not allowed. Traces of fungi on the mushrooms are seen as natural and are allowed. Serious moisture in the stalk is not allowed. Slight shrivelling is allowed.
Clean	Traces of casing material attached to the mushrooms are allowed. Some casing material on the foot of uncut mushrooms is allowed.
Pests	2 or 3 insects, mites or other small pests are allowed. Colonies or pests inside the produce are not allowed.
Pest damage	Slight pest damage to the stalk and the cap is allowed.
Condition	Slight bruises to the stalk and the cap are allowed. Serious skin defects are not allowed.
Development, ripeness and maturity	Slight discolouration is allowed. Severe browning is not allowed. Discoloured feathering is allowed. The colour of the gills may be dark brown, but not black.

Nuts

This note applies to the following products:

In-shell almonds, in-shell hazelnuts and in-shell walnuts. This is a full list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	Cracks in the shell of 25% or less of the circumference are allowed if the edible part of the nut (kernel) is protected. The shell may be slightly open if the kernel is physically protected.
Sound, disease, deterioration	Mould is not allowed. Old or stale (rancid) nuts are not allowed. Yellowish discolouration of the kernel flesh is a sign of being rancid, but a taste check is necessary.
Clean	Staining of the shell is allowed. Husk remains on 10% or less of the shell surface are allowed. Walnuts: Soiling on 5% or less of the shell surface is allowed.
Pests	Living pests are not allowed.
Pest damage	Pest holes are not allowed.

Root and tuberous vegetables

This note applies to the following products:

Beetroot, carrots, celeriac, fennel, garlic, horse-radish, kohlrabi, mooli (daikon), onions, parsnip, radish, scorzonera, shallots, turnip, and other such root and tuberous vegetables. This is not a full list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	<p>Products cleanly cut in half or into portions are not covered under the General Marketing Standard.</p> <p>Trimming (or product specific preparation), for example, removing the leaves, is allowed.</p> <p>Hollowness is allowed if the surrounding flesh is sound and healed.</p> <p>Cracks that have healed are allowed, if they do not reach into the heart (centre).</p> <p>Carrots: Cracks due to handling or washing are allowed, if they do not reach the heart.</p> <p> Broken carrots are allowed, if only one surface is broken.</p> <p> Broken carrots with more than one broken surface or small broken pieces are not allowed.</p> <p> 10% or less of the weight or amount of the carrots are allowed to be broken.*</p> <p>Fennel: Damage that has healed is allowed if it is not more than 3cm in length.</p> <p>Garlic: Tears in the outer skins are allowed - not more than 3 cloves may be missing.</p> <p>Onions: All dried skin may be missing if the bulb has no other deterioration.</p> <p>Radishes: Cracked bulbs are allowed in 15% or less of the weight or amount.</p> <p> Slightly damaged leaves are allowed.</p> <p><i>* If more than 10% and less than 35% of the carrots are broken, trading under the UNECE standard is possible.</i></p>

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Sound, disease, deterioration	<p>Shallow rust damage that can be removed by peeling is allowed. Leaves must not have progressive defects or rotting that may affect the root. Hollow or woody stems are not allowed.</p> <p>Carrots: A few shallow cavity spots are allowed. Secondary infection is not allowed. Celeriac: 25% or less of the cross section of the tuber may be hollow and/or spongy internally. Kohlrabi: Woodiness is not allowed. Onions: Firmness: glassiness of the 2 outer rings is allowed. Staining is allowed over the whole onion.</p>
Clean	<p>Slight traces of soil attached to the produce are allowed. Lumps of soil are not allowed.</p>
Pests	<p>2 or 3 small pests on the outside of the produce are allowed. Larvae in the root are not allowed.</p>
Condition	<p>Onions: Must be sufficiently dry. Scorzonera: Must not be fibrous.</p>
Development, ripeness and maturity	<p>Bolting (flower stem) must not affect how edible the vegetable is. Forked roots are allowed.</p> <p>Black radishes: Early signs of flowering are allowed. Fennel: Early signs of flowering are allowed. Garlic: Visible sprouting is allowed on 5% or less of the amount or weight Onions: Sprouting of not more than 5mm in length is allowed. Shallots: Sprouting of not more than 5mm in length is allowed on 10% or less of the amount or weight.</p>

Stalk and leafy vegetables

This note applies to the following products:

Artichoke, asparagus, basil, celery, chervil, leeks, parsley, purslane, radicchio, rhubarb, spinach, turnip tops, witloof chicory and other such products. This is not a full list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	<p>Products cleanly cut in half or into portions are not covered under the General Marketing Standard. Trimming (or product specific preparation), for example, the removal of leaves or shortening of the stalks is allowed. Hollowness is allowed if the surrounding flesh is sound. Slightly damaged leaves are allowed. *</p> <p>Artichokes: A missing stem is allowed if the cut is clean and the head is not be damaged.</p> <p>Asparagus: Must not be peeled or broken. Slight cracks are allowed if not discoloured and if they can be removed by normal peeling.</p> <p>Celery: Not more than 2 stalks may be slightly damaged, bruised or broken.</p> <p>Leeks: Trimmed shoots without any green leaves are allowed. At least ¼ of the basal plate must be present.</p> <p>Rhubarb: Shoots without leaf tops are allowed.</p> <p><i>* If damaged leaves, such as cracks, bruises, holes or tears are over the 10% tolerance, trading under the UNECE standard is possible</i></p>
Sound, disease, deterioration	<p>Asparagus: Traces of rust on the tip are not allowed.</p> <p>Leeks: A few orange pustules (rust) are allowed. Delamination (splitting) of the leaves is allowed if not extensive.</p>
Clean	<p>Almost free of soiling; slight soiling on the outside and within the leaf stalks is allowed, but it must not be more than slight. The heart (centre) must be clean.</p>
Pests	<p>2 or 3 small pests (including beetle eggs on asparagus) are allowed on the outside.</p>
Pest damage	<p>Leeks: Moderate white flecking caused by thrips is allowed.</p>

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Condition	<p>Celery: Not more than 2 stalks may be slightly damaged, bruised or broken.</p> <p>Lambs lettuce: Small root tufts are allowed.</p> <p>Witloof chicory: May be open.</p>
Development, ripeness and maturity	<p>Bolting (flower stem) must not affect how edible the vegetable is.</p> <p>Artichokes: May be partly open but the flower must not be visible.</p> <p>Asparagus: White asparagus - slight woodiness is allowed. Green asparagus – woodiness is allowed on $\frac{1}{3}$ or less of the length of the stalk.</p> <p>Celery: Slight hollowness is allowed if the surrounding flesh is sound and not discoloured.</p> <p>Leeks: Flower stem is allowed beyond the sheathed part if it is tender, not more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the diameter of the stalk, and does not affect how edible the leek is.</p> <p>Witloof Chicory: Only a very slight green colouration on the tips is allowed. Flower stems $\frac{3}{4}$ or less of the total length are allowed.</p>

Citrus fruit

This note applies to the following products:

Grapefruit, kumquat, lime, pomelo, sevilles, ugli fruit and other such product. This is not a full list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	Fruit cleanly cut in half or into portions is not covered under the General Marketing Standard. Damage affecting the fruit flesh is not allowed.
Sound, disease, deterioration	Disease affecting the flesh is not allowed. Light rind deterioration on not more than 1/5 of the surface area is allowed, but not dark coloured. Melanose is allowed.
Clean	Artificial wax is allowed. Heavy, visible waxing is not allowed.
Pests	Internal larvae are not allowed. Scale insect: Not more than 5 scale insects per fruit are allowed on fruit with edible skin. Not more than 25 scale insects are allowed on fruit with inedible skin.
Pest damage	Slight damage caused by pests is allowed if it can be removed by normal peeling.
Condition	Slight bruises are allowed, if the flesh is sound. Picking damage that has healed is allowed if clean, shallow and dry. Fruit showing early signs of internal drying (desiccation) is not allowed.
Development, ripeness and maturity	Under or over mature fruit does not 'display a satisfactory degree of ripeness', therefore it is not allowed.

Tropical fruit

This note applies to the following products:

Annonas, carambolas, fig, guavas, litchi, mangosteens, papayas, passion fruits, persimmons (kaki/sharon fruit), pineapples, plantains, pomegranates, physalis, and other such fruit. This is not a full list.

Note: Green bananas are not included in this list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	Fruit cleanly cut in half or into portions is not covered under the General Marketing Standard. Pineapples: The crown may be missing if the cut surface is completely intact. Pomegranates: Damage to the crown is allowed.
Sound, disease, deterioration	Disease affecting the flesh is not allowed. A few chill spots are allowed, but deterioration is not allowed. Pineapples: Slight sugar spots (eyes) are allowed.
Clean	Bloom is allowed.
Pests	Internal pests are not allowed.
Pest damage	Very slight skin damage is allowed.
Condition	Slight bruises are allowed if the flesh is sound. Passion fruit: Shrivelled fruit must be cut to check the juiciness of the flesh. Note: Golden passion fruit should not show any shrivelling.
Development, ripeness and maturity	Persimmon (kaki/sharon fruit): slightly discoloured and soft fruit are allowed.

Pome and stone fruit

This note applies to the following products:

Apricots, avocados, cherries, lychees, mangos, nashi and ya pears, plums, and any other stone fruit (and their hybrids). This is not a full list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	<p>Any products cut in half or into portions are not covered under the General Marketing Standard.</p> <p>Apricots: Shallow cracks that have healed are allowed</p> <p>Avocados: A missing stem is allowed, only if the fruit flesh is not damaged</p> <p>Mangos: A missing stem is allowed, only if the fruit flesh is not damaged</p> <p>Plums: A missing stem is allowed, only if the fruit flesh is not damaged</p> <p>Splits around the stem are allowed if they are shallow and the skin is healed</p> <p>2% or less split fruit is allowed.*</p> <p>Pears (nashi and ya): A missing stem is allowed, only if the fruit flesh is not damaged.</p> <p><i>* If more than 2% and less than 4% of plums are split, trading by the UNECE standard is possible.</i></p>
Sound, disease, deterioration	<p>Disease affecting the flesh is not allowed.</p> <p>Avocados: Chilling injury is not allowed.</p> <p>A few shallow spots of anthracnose are allowed if they do not affect the flesh.</p> <p>Mangos: A few shallow spots of anthracnose are allowed.</p> <p>Cherries: A slight leakage of latex around the stem is allowed.*</p> <p>Pears (nashi and ya): Very slight discoloration of the fruit flesh near the core is allowed but the edible part must be free from defects.</p> <p>Plums: Internal browning is not allowed.</p> <p>Some shrivel just over the shoulder is allowed, but fruit must not be withered.</p> <p>Gummosis in the flesh is not allowed.</p> <p><i>* Cherries: If decayed fruit is over the 2% tolerance but not over 4%, trading under the UNECE standard is possible.</i></p>

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Clean	Almost free of soiling. Mangos: A slight leakage of clear latex around the stem is allowed.
Pests	Internal larvae are not allowed. Scale insect: Not more than 5 scale insects are allowed on fruit with edible skin. Not more than 25 scale insects are allowed on fruit with inedible skin.
Pest damage	Slight shallow pest damage is allowed. Cherries: 2% or less of worm eaten fruit is allowed.* Plums: 2% or less of worm eaten fruit is allowed.* <i>* If worm eaten fruit is over the 2% tolerance but not over 4%, trading under the UNECE standard is possible.</i>
Condition	Picking damage is allowed if it is shallow, healed and dry. Deep damage, cracks or heavy bruises affecting the flesh are not allowed. Several small shallow hail marks are allowed if they are healed. Skin defects up to half the surface area are allowed, heavy blemish on not more than ¼ of the surface area is allowed. Cherries: Small cracks that have healed are allowed if they do not affect how edible the cherries are
Development, ripeness and maturity	Under or over mature fruit does not 'display a satisfactory degree of ripeness', therefore it is not allowed. Hard, green, unripe fruit is not allowed; other fruit must show colour break (ripening). Plums: Fractured stones are allowed. Double fruit are allowed, if the skin is healed.

Soft fruit

This note applies to the following products:

Blackberries, black currants, blueberries, cranberries, gooseberries, loganberries, physalis, raspberries, red and white currants, tayberries, and any other such soft fruits. This is not a full list.

Minimum requirement	The limit of defect allowed
Intact	Missing drupelets are not allowed. Very slight leakage of juice is allowed. String fruits: Berries loose from the string are allowed.
Sound, disease, deterioration	Shrivelling is not allowed. Gooseberries: Very slight early signs of mildew are allowed.
Clean	Bloom is allowed.
Pests	Pests are not allowed.
Condition	Extensive bruising is not allowed.
Development, ripeness and maturity	Blackberries: Must be largely black in colour. Fruit that is entirely red is not mature, and is not allowed. Gooseberries: May be hard if the fruit is ripe. String fruits: Less evenly spaced panicles are allowed. String fruits: A few unripe fruit are allowed.