



Report of the U.S. Delegate, 19th Session, Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

The Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV) held its Nineteenth Session in Ixtapa Zihuatanejo, Guerrero, Mexico, October 5-9, 2015. The Session was attended by 77 delegates from 36 Member countries and two Member organizations, as well as observers from three regional and international organizations. The United States was represented by Delegate Dorian LaFond of the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Alternate Delegate Dr. David Ingram of the Food and Drug Administration, Kenneth Lowery of the U.S. Codex Office and one industry advisor.

Key Issues

Matters Arising From Other International Organizations on the Standardization of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables; United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

The CCFFV accepted the UNECE Standards for aubergine, garlic, kiwi fruits, early and ware potatoes and its FFV standard Layout as a reference when discussing the relevant Agenda items. The CCFFV decided to use a web-link to the relevant UNECE Standards in the future rather than listing the standards.

Proposed Draft Standard for Aubergines / Eggplant

The Committee made changes to this draft standard based on the product's characteristics and trade practices to harmonize with an international interpretation. The Committee agreed to forward the draft standard to the 39th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) in June 2016 for adoption at Step 5/8.

The U.S. delegation was instrumental in ensuring that this standard harmonized with the revised CCFFV Standard Layout to better reflect global trade and regulatory practices

Proposed Draft Standard for Garlic

This draft standard was discussed, and most issues were resolved except for the inclusion of "smoked" dried garlic. Some delegations supported the U.S. position in expressing concern that certain smoking practices may alter the taste and/or appearance of this raw agricultural commodity. Therefore, it is the U.S. position that 'smoked garlic' should be considered as a processed commodity and not be included in the fresh garlic standard currently under development. The United States is on record for expressing concerns that smoked garlic may be outside the scope of the CODEX CCFFV terms of reference, which clearly state: "to elaborate standards for fresh fruits and vegetables." Since smoked garlic should be considered "processed," it should be



referred to the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV) for further discussion.

The draft standard was advanced to Step 5 for continued elaboration.

Proposed Draft Standard for Kiwifruit

The Committee discussed the draft standard and agreed to exclude *Actinidia* species such as the *A. arguta* (kiwiberry) from the standard. The standard was aligned with the approved sections of the revised CCFFV standard layout. There was lack of consensus on size-based classes; i.e. the inclusion of different minimum sizes (diameters) per class along with the minimum maturity requirements.

The draft standard was advanced to Step 5 for continued elaboration.

Proposed Draft Standard for Ware Potatoes

Differing view/positions on several provisions of this proposed draft standard such as sprouting, green coloration, presence of rot and allowance for the presence of soil were not resolved at this session. Therefore the CCFFV agreed to return the proposed draft standard to a working group, led by India, at Step 3 for further revision and consideration at its next session.

Proposals for New Work

The Committee considered proposals for the elaboration of new Codex Standards for fresh dates (India), shallots (Indonesia) and yams (Costa Rica). The proposal from India was approved as new work by the CCFFV, subject to CAC approval, while those from Indonesia and Costa Rica were returned for redrafting and submission at the 20th CCFFV session.

Proposed Revised Layout for Codex Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Standards

With the exception of the following issues, the CCFFV 19th Session agreed with the revised CCFFV standard Layout:

- Pest damage and free of pest - align these requirements in-line with individual IPPC obligations.
- PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING: Point E: Definition of Miniature produce
- PROVISION CONCERNING TOLERANCES:
 - (1) Inclusion of Tolerances for decay, soft rot and internal breakdown in “Extra” Class



(II) One percent (1%) Tolerance for decay, soft rot and internal breakdown in Extra Class

- **NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS:** the first paragraph.
The Committee also included agreed-upon text of the standard layout in the standards being elaborated. These included:
 - Inserting a “Scope.” This clarifies the purpose of the standard and some guidance on how it should be applied.
 - New wording on Minimum Maturity Requirements that is based on the commonly accepted product characteristics and trade practices.
 - Clarifies that sizing should not be a factor in classification unless there is a direct correlation between sizing and product quality (i.e. “sufficiently developed” and market maturity acceptances).
 - Broadened sizing requirements to reflect the wide array of international trade practices.
 - Quality Tolerances: Inserted the following new text for products that fail initial conformity: “Produce that fail conformity assessment, may be allowed to be resorted and brought into conformity in accordance with the Guidelines on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification (CCFICS) Guideline 47-2003 sections 9, 10 and 27”.
 - Allowing for the mixture of varieties/colors/commercial types of the same commodity in the same sales/retail package.
 - For both treated and untreated FFV -a general reference to the relevant section of the Codex General Standard for Food Additives was inserted.
- The CCFFV agreed:

1. To establish a working group led by the United States and co-led by Germany working in English to further consider the unresolved section of the standard Layout
2. To establish a working group led by Mexico working in English and Spanish to develop a glossary, which is needed to further harmonize certain definitions of terms that may have alternate meanings in different languages.

Next CCFFV Session

The 20th CCFFV Session is tentatively scheduled in 18 months. The exact time and venue will be determined by Mexico as the host Government in consultation with the Codex Secretariat.

Further information on each agenda item may be found in the CCFFV final report (REP16/FFV) when it is posted on the Codex Website.