

CODEX STANDARD FOR LITCHI

CODEX STAN 196-1995

1. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This standard applies to commercial varieties (cultivars) of litchis grown from *Litchi chinensis* Sonn. of the *Sapindaceae* family, to be supplied fresh to the consumer, after preparation and packaging. Litchis for industrial processing are excluded.¹

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

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

- whole;
- 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 of pests affecting the general appearance of the produce;
- practically free of damage caused by pests;
- free of damage and abrasion;
- practically free of brown markings;
- free of abnormal external moisture, excluding condensation following removal from cold storage;
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.²

2.1.1 The litchis must have been carefully picked and must be sufficiently developed and mature. The development and condition of the litchis must be such as to enable them:

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

¹ Governments, when indicating the acceptance of the Codex Standard for Litchi, should notify the Commission which provisions of the Standard would be accepted for application at the point of import, and which provisions would be accepted for application at the point of export.

² This provision allows for smell caused by conservation agents used in compliance with corresponding regulations.

The colouring of litchis may vary from pink to red in the case of untreated litchis; from pale yellow to pink for litchis that have been fumigated with sulphur dioxide.

2.2 CLASSIFICATION

Litchis are classified in three classes defined below:

2.2.1 “Extra” Class

Litchis in this class must be of superior quality. They must have the shape, development and colouring that are typical of the variety and/or varietal type. They must be free of 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.

2.2.2 Class I

Litchis in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or varietal 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:

- slight misshaping;
- slight defects in colouring;
- slight skin defects provided these do not exceed a total area of 0.25 cm².

2.2.3 Class II

This class includes litchis which do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified in Section 2.1 above. The following defects may be allowed, provided the litchis retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- defects in shape;
- defects in colouring;
- skin blemishes provided these do not exceed a total area of 0.5 cm².

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

- Size is determined by the maximum equatorial diameter.
- The minimum size for “Extra” Class is 33 mm.
- The minimum size for Classes I and II is 20 mm.
- A maximum size range of 10 mm between fruit in each package is permitted.

4. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

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

4.1 QUALITY TOLERANCES

4.1.1 “Extra” Class

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

4.1.2 Class I

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

4.1.3 Class II

Ten per cent by number or weight of litchis satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of produce affected by rotting or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.

4.2 SIZE TOLERANCES

For all classes, 10 per cent by number or weight of litchis not satisfying the requirements as regards the minimum size, provided, however, that the diameter is not less than 15 mm in all classes, and/or the maximum size range of 10 mm.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 UNIFORMITY

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only litchis of the same origin, variety and/or varietal type, quality, size and colour. The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

5.2 PACKAGING

Litchis must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly. The materials used inside the package must be new,³ clean, and of a quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce. 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.

Litchis shall be packed in each container in compliance with the Recommended International Code of Practice for Packaging and Transport of Tropical Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 44-1995). However, the presence of a limited number of fresh leaves is permitted where litchis are presented in bunches.

5.2.1 Description of Containers

The containers shall meet the quality, hygiene, ventilation and resistance characteristics to ensure suitable handling, shipping and preserving of the litchis. Packages (or lot for produce presented in bulk) must be free of all foreign matter and smell.

5.3 PRESENTATION

The litchis must be presented under one of the following forms:

5.3.1 Individually

In this case the pedicel must be cut at the first knot and the maximum length of the stalk must not extend more than 2 mm beyond the top of the fruit. "Extra" Class litchis must be presented individually.

5.3.2 In Bunches

In this case, the bunch must include more than three attached and well-formed litchis. The branch must not exceed 15 cm in length.

6. MARKING OR LABELLING

6.1 CONSUMER PACKAGES

In addition to the requirements of the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 2-1999), the following specific provisions apply:

³ For the purposes of this Standard, this includes recycled material of food-grade quality.

6.1.1 Nature of Produce

If the produce is not visible from the outside, each package shall be labelled as to the name of the produce and may be labelled as to the name of the variety and/or varietal type.

6.2 NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS

Each package must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside, or in the documents accompanying the shipment.⁴ For produce transported in bulk these particulars must appear on a document accompanying the goods.

6.2.1 Identification

Name and address of Exporter, Packer and/or Dispatcher. Identification code (optional).⁵

6.2.2 Nature of Produce

Name of produce if the contents are not visible from the outside. Name of variety and/or commercial type (optional). "Bunch" specification, when applicable.

6.2.3 Origin of Produce

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

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

- Class;
- Net weight (optional).

6.2.5 Official Inspection Mark (optional)

⁴ Governments, when indicating their acceptance of this Standard, should notify the Commission as to which provisions of this Section apply.

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.

7. CONTAMINANTS

7.1 HEAVY METALS

Litchis shall comply with those maximum levels for heavy metals established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

7.2 PESTICIDE RESIDUES

Litchis shall comply with those maximum residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

8. HYGIENE

8.1 It is recommended that the produce covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 3-1997), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

8.2 The produce should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).