



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS

3rd Session

Chennai, India, 6 -10 February 2017

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR OREGANO

Prepared by the electronic working group chaired by Argentina and Turkey

(At Step 3)

Governments and interested international organizations are invited to submit comments on the **Draft Standard for Oregano** at Step 3 (**Appendix I**), and the comments should be in writing in conformity with the Uniform Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts (see *Procedural Manual of the Codex Alimentarius Commission*) to: India, the Secretariat of CCSCH, email ccsch@indianspices.com with a copy to the Codex Contact Point of India, (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) Email: codex-india@nic.in and the Secretariat, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, e-mail: codex@fao.org by **13 January 2017**.

Format for submitting comments: In order to facilitate the compilation of comments and prepare a more useful comment document, Members and Observers are requested to provide their comments in the format outlined in the **Appendix II** to this document.

Background

1. The 1st session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)¹, which was held from February 11 to 14, 2014, in Kochi, India, considered the proposal for new work on Standard for Oregano prepared by Argentina (CRD12) and in addition to several editorial amendments, deleted reference to *Origanum vulgare* L. in the title and in other sections of the project document to align them with the scope of the standard (Section 1), which referred to all species of oregano, i.e. *Origanum* spp. L.
2. CCSCH1 agreed to establish, subject to the approval of the Commission, an electronic Working Group, led by Argentina and co-chaired by Greece and working in English and Spanish, to prepare the proposed draft standard for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next Session.
3. At CCSCH2², which was held from September 14 to 18, 2015, in Goa, India, the European Union introduced the item and summarised the outcomes of the work, which was led by Argentina and co-chaired by Greece. CCSCH2 noted that several provisions still required considerable review and that the standard was not ready for advancement in the Step process. Therefore, it was agreed to establish an electronic working group (eWG), led by Argentina and co-chaired by Turkey, working in English, to redraft the proposed draft Standard taking into account the earlier discussions, written comments and relevant decisions regarding the format of the other standards currently under elaboration.
4. CCSCH2 agreed to return the proposed draft standard to Steps 2/3 for redrafting by the aforementioned eWG, circulation for comments and consideration at the following Session.
5. In March 2016, the Codex Secretariat sent all Codex member countries and observers a message inviting them to participate in the eWG. Fifteen member countries, one member organization and two observers expressed their interests in participating in the eWG (see Appendix III).

Electronic working group

6. The draft standard for oregano, with the amendments proposed at CCSCH2, was the basis for the first document circulated to eWG members. The eWG reviewed the initial draft proposal and a second version was prepared by Argentina and Turkey based on the comments received. The second draft was circulated to the eWG for a second round of comments. In total, eleven member countries and two observers (Ar-

¹ REP14/SCH paras 67-69

² REP16/SCH paras 26, 29-31

gentina, Chile, Ecuador, Greece, Japan, Mexico, Turkey, the United States of America, IOSTA and Food Drink) submitted comments that were considered and incorporated in every case.

7. Some members (Mexico and the US) requested after the due date that Lippia spp. was included, which would mean a radical change to the scope of the draft standard that was approved by CCSCH. In other words, CCSCH agreed on development of a new standard on Oregano L. excluding Marjoram or Thyme or Lippia. During the circulation of the second draft, most of the eWG members e.g. Turkey, Greece underlined the scope of the standard and disagreed on the inclusion of Lippia. On the other hand, this option should be discussed in CCSCH3, if CCSCH agrees to include Lippia spp. in the scope of the standard.

8. Another topic that needs discussion in CCSCH3 relates to the chemical parameters of the proposed draft standard. No consensus was reached on the values for essential oils proposed by Argentina and Turkey, the Committee also should discuss the values in square brackets, especially chemical features and the proposed tables of physical characteristics. The eWG has not been able to debate in the group. With regard to volatile oil, two or three bracketed values are observed, proposed mainly by three countries that defend lower or high values.

Request for comments

Codex members and observers are invited to submit comments to the Proposed Draft Standard for Oregano prepared by the eWG (Appendix I).

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR OREGANO

“[Proposal Draft Codex Standard for Oregano (*Origanum L spp* and *Lippia spp*)]” [MEX]

1. SCOPE

This standard applies to dried leaves/flowers of species or hybrids of the genus *Origanum L.* from the *Lamiaceae* family, except (*Origanum majorana L.*) offered for industrial food production and for direct consumption including for catering purposes or for repackaging if required. “[It does not apply to the product when indicated as being intended for industrial processing]” [US]

[This standard applies to dried leaves/flowers of those plants commonly sold in commerce as “oregano”. The exact species bought/sold may be defined by contractual specifications; offered for direct human consumption, commercial food processing and for repacking if required. [It does not apply to product when intended for industrial processing] [US]

[This standard applies to dried leaves/flowers of species of the genus *Origanum spp* and *Lippia spp* from the *Lamiaceae* family, except *marjoram (Origanum majorana L.)* offered for industrial food production and for direct consumption including for catering purposes or for repackaging if required. It does not apply to the product when indicated as being intended for further processing] [MEX]

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 Product Definition

Dried oregano is the product:

- (a) Obtained from the leaves and the flowering tops of *Origanum L.* from the *Lamiaceae* family.–

[Dried oregano is the product:

- (a) Obtained from the leaves and the flowering tops of **those plants commonly sold in commerce as “oregano”**. *Origanum L.* from the *Lamiaceae* family, .] [US]

- (b) Prepared Processed in an appropriate manner, having undergone operations such as cleaning, drying, rubbing, and sifting.

[Dried oregano is the product obtained from the leaves and the flowering tops of *Origanum L. spp* and *Lippia spp* from the *Lamiaceae* family, except *marjoram (Origanum majorana L.)*, prepared in an appropriate manner, having undergone operations such as cleaning, drying, rubbing, milling and sifting] [MEX]

2.2 Styles

Dried oregano may be offered in one of the following styles:

Whole: /intact

Crushed/rubbed: processed into varying degrees ranging from a course to fine crush.

Ground/powdered: processed into powders

- Whole/intact; [MEX]
- Crushed/rubbed; processed into varying degrees ranging from course to fine crush. [MEX]
- Ground/powdered: processed into powder [MEX]

2.3 Varietal Types

Any wild grown species and hybrid or cultivated variety (cultivar) of *Origanum L.* suitable for processing, except *Origanum majorana L.*

[Any wild grown species and hybrid or cultivated variety (cultivar) those plants commonly sold in commerce as “oregano”. belonging to the genus of *Origanum* which are suitable for processing. It does not included *Origanum majorana L.*] [US]

[2.3 Varietal Types

Any wild grown species and hybrid or cultivated variety (cultivar) of *Origanum L.* suitable for processing, except *Origanum majorana L.*] [MEX]

3 ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Composition

Product as defined in Section 2.

3.2 Quality Factors

~~3.2.3.1~~ QUALITY FACTORS] [MEX]

3.2.1 Odour, flavor and color

Dried oreganos shall have a characteristic odour and flavor fragrant,[warm], unpungent and bitter flavor (varying according to the chemical strain of the main components of the volatile oil (carvacrol and/or thymol). Dried oreganos shall be free from any foreign odour or flavor and especially from mustiness. The colour ranges from yellow green to dark green.

[3.1.1 3.2.1. Odour, flavor and color:

Dried oregano shall have a characteristic odour and flavor fragrant, warm, unpungent and bitter flavor. **(varying according to the chemical strain of the main components of the volatile oil (csifarvacrol and/or thymol))**. Dried oregano shall be free from any foreign odour or flavor and especially from mustiness. The colour ranges from pale greyish, yellow green to dark green.][MEX]

3.2.2. Infestation

[3.1.2 3.2.2. Infestation] [MEX]

Dried oreganos shall be free from live insects and practically free from dead insects, insects fragments and rodent contamination visible to the naked eye (corrected, if necessary, for abnormal vision)

3.2.3 Classification

In accordance with the Chemical and Physical Characteristics in section 3.2.4 [Whole and Crushed/Rubbed][US] and 3.2.5, styles of dried oregano are classified into the following grades:

- [Grade][MEX] Extra
- Grade I/Class I, and
- Grade II/Class II.

[In all grades/classes][MEX], the defects allowed must not affect the general appearance of the product as regards to its quality, keeping quality and presentation in the package.

3.2.4 Chemical characteristics

[Whole leaf, crushed or rubbed/ground/powdered][US] Dried oregano shall comply with the chemical requirements as specified in Table 1.

[Table 1: Chemical requirements for whole crushed/rubbed, and ground/powdered oregano.][US]

PARAMETERS	Requirements for Whole or Crushed/Rubbed styles			Requirements for Ground /Powdered styles		
	Extra	Class/ Grade I	Class/ Grade II	Extra	Class/ Grade I	Class/ Grade II
Moisture content (m/m,) maximum	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>	11	<u>12</u>	12
Total ash (m/m, dry basis) maximum	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u> [12]	9, [10]	<u>10</u> , [12]	10, [12]
Acid insoluble ash (m/m, dry basis) maximum	<u>1.2</u> [1.5]	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	1.2, [1.5]	<u>2</u> , [2.5]	2, [3]
a) Volatile oil ml/100 g (dry basis) minimum	<u>2.5</u>	<u>[1.5]</u> [2.0]	<u>[1]</u> [1.2][1.75]	<u>[1.5]</u> [1.75]	<u>[1]</u> , 1.1, [1.5], [1.50]	<u>[0.8]</u> , 1, [<u><1.1</u>]
[Artificial colors/flavorings Additives or foreign substances]	0	0	0	0	0	0

[About the Point 3.2 Quality Factors (Moisture Content), USA suggest no more than 11][US]

[Should be eliminated from Table 1 the determination for Artificial colors/ flavorings Additives or foreign substances][MEX]

3.2.5 Physical characteristics

Whole leaf, crushed or rubbed/ground/powdered oregano shall comply with the physical requirements as specified in Table 2.

Table 2: Physical requirements for whole crushed/rubbed, and ground/powdered oregano

	PARAMETERS	Requirements for Whole or Crushed/Rubbed styles			Requirements for Ground/ Powdered styles		
		Extra	Class/ Grade I	Class/ Grade II	Extra	Class/ Grade I	Class/ Grade II
1	Extraneous matter ¹ (maximum % mass fraction)	1	2	2	4-	2	2
2	Foreign matter content ² (maximum % mass fraction)	0.1 [1]	0.1 [1]	0.1 [1]	1	1	1
3	Oregano powder (smaller than 40 mesh/420 µm maximum %)	1, [5][MEX] 5	2, [10][MEX] 10	4 [2], [20][MEX] 20	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹All vegetable matter from the specific plant other than the required part. The proportion of stalks which have dimensions exceeding 7 mm in length and 3 mm in diameter shall not be more than 50% (w/w) of total extraneous matter content.

² Foreign matter: visible and / or apparent matter or material not usually associated with the oregano. Foreign matter includes leaves such as olive leaves, strawberry leaves and sumac leaves.

[² Foreign matter: visible and/or apparent matter or material not usually associated with oregano. Foreign matter includes leaves such as olive leaves, strawberry leaves and sumac leaves.][MEX]

[U.S. Proposal: (Alternative Proposal)Table 2 Physical Characteristics]

Parameters	TOLERANCES ALLOWED			
	Whole or Crushed/Rubbed styles			Ground/Powder styles
	Extra	Class I	Class II	
Total tolerances	3	5	5	5
Vegetative Matter associated with the product	3	3	3	3
Extraneous Vegetative Matter (non-toxic plants)	[1][MEX] 2	2	2	2
(Foreign Matter (Maximum %) Non-plant foreign parts	[1][MEX] 2	2	2	0.1
Percentage of "Oregano" powder (maximum) among whole or crushed styles	1	2	4	-
Percentage of whole or crushed styles among Oregano powder (maximum)	- N/A	- N/A	- N/A	<u>0.5</u>
[Mold, % by weight][MEX]	1	1	1	1

Pieces of stem greater than 7mm long x 3mm wide][MEX]	1	1	1	0.10
Pest damage /hairs etc (mg/Per kg))	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2 [N/A][MEX]
[Spotted/dark leaves (maximum in %)]][MEX]	20	30	40	-

3.3 Classification of Defectives

A container that fails to meet one or more of the applicable quality requirements, as set out in Section 3.2 (except those based on sample averages), should be considered as a “defective”.

3.4 Lot Acceptance

A lot should be considered as meeting the applicable quality requirements referred to in Section 3.2 when the number of “defectives”, as defined in Section 3.3, does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of the appropriate sampling plan, as described in Section 10. For factors evaluated on a sample average, a lot will be considered acceptable if the average meets the specified tolerance, and no individual sample is excessively out of tolerance.

4 FOOD ADDITIVES

No food additives and flavorings are permitted in the products covered by this standard.

5 CONTAMINANTS

5.1 The products covered by this standard shall comply with the maximum levels of the Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CODEX STAN 193-1995).

5.2 The products covered by this standard shall comply with the maximum residue limits (MRLs) established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

5.3 Dehydration factors should be taken into consideration.

6 FOOD HYGIENE

6.1 The produce regulated by the provisions of this standard should 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), Annex on Spices and Dried Aromatic Herbs to the Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Moisture Foods (CAC/RCP 75-2015). and other relevant Codex texts, such as codes of practice and codes of hygienic practice.

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

7 WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Containers shall be as full as practicable without impairment of quality and shall be consistent with a proper declaration of contents for the product.

8 PACKAGING AND PRESENTATION

8.1 Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform, including particle size, and must only contain oregano of the same species, variety, cultivar and/or commercial type and quality. The visible part of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

9 LABELLING

9.1 The products covered by the provisions of this Standard shall be labelled in accordance with the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985). In addition, the following specific provisions apply:

9.2 Name of the Product

9.2.1 The name of the product shall be as defined in Section 2 Product Definition. It may also include an indication of the varietal types and of the style as described in Section 2.2. as well as of the product classification, as described in Section 3.2.

9.2.2 Styles

The name of the product shall include the style (cut/description/presentation), as defined in Section 2.2

9.3 Labelling of Non-Retail Containers

Information for non-retail containers shall be given either on the package or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the product, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer, as well as storage instructions, shall appear on the container. However, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided that such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

The processing method (e.g. dehydrated / air dried / freeze dried oregano) shall also be given.

[The processing method (e.g. dehydrated / air dried / freeze dried oregano) shall also be given][MEX]

10 METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING³

For checking the compliance with this standard, the methods of analysis and sampling contained in the Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CODEX STAN 234-1999) relevant to the provisions in this standard, shall be used.

Provision	Method	Principle	Type
Moisture	ISO 939:1980 AOAC 925.40 [ISO 760:1978] [AOAC 2001.12] ASTA 2.0 [NOM-116-SSA1-1994][MEX]	Gravimetry Distillation	I
Total ash	ISO 928:1997 AOAC 950.49 ASTA 3.0 [NMX-F-607-NORMEX-2013]-[MEX]	Gravimetry	I
Acid-insoluble ash	ISO 930:1997 ASTA 4.0 [NMX-F-607-NORMEX-2013]-[MEX]	Gravimetry	I
Non-volatile ether extract	ISO 1108:1992	Gravimetry	I
Volatile oils	ISO 6571:2008 [AOAC 948.22 OR [AOAC 962.17] ASTA 5.0	Gravimetry Distillation	I
Extraneous matter	ISO 927:2009 [ASTA 14.1][MEX]	Visual examination	IV
Foreign matter	ISO 927:2009 [ASTA 26.0][MEX]	Visual examination	IV

³ The listing of methods of analysis and sampling will be removed when the standard is adopted by CAC.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS under eWG on Oregono

ARGENTINA

Maria Florencia Demarco
 Direccion de Calidad Agroalimentaria
 Servicio Nacional de Sanidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria,
 0054 11 52225921
fdemarco@senasa.gov.ar

CHILE

Constanza Miranda
constanza.miranda@achipia.gob.cl

CROACIA

Ms. Anita Štefanac
 Senior Advisor for Market Organisation in Fruit and Vegetables Sector
 Department for Plant Production and Market, Directorate of Agriculture and Food Industry, Sector of Agriculture and Food Industry, Service for plant production, Ministry of Agriculture
 ++00385 1 610 9697
anita.kovacic@mps.hr

ECUADOR

Ing. Víctor Almeida
 Analista de Productos de Uso y Consumo Humano de la Dirección Nacional de Control Sanitario.
 Ministerio de Salud Pública

Ing. Sofía Alejandra Aguirre Gudiño
 Analista de Vigilancia y Control de Contaminantes en la Producción Primaria 3
 Agencia Ecuatoriana de Aseguramiento de la Calidad del Agro – AGROCALIDAD
victor.almeida@msp.gob.ec

Ing. Sofía Alejandra Aguirre Gudiño
 Analista de Vigilancia y Control de Contaminantes en la Producción Primaria 3
 Agencia Ecuatoriana de Aseguramiento de la Calidad del Agro – AGROCALIDAD
sofia.aguirre@agrocalidad.gob.ec

EUROPEAN UNION

Mr Marco CASTELLINA
 Health and Food Safety Directorate-General (DG SAN-TE)
 European Commission
 B - 1049 Brussels
 +32 229-87443
Marco.CASTELLINA@ec.europa.eu

GREECE

Danai PAPANASTASIOU
 Scientific Officer
 Hellenic Food Authority (EFET)
 Greece
dpapanastasiou@efet.gr

INDIA

Dr Sachin Kumar Vaid
 Junior Microbiologist
 Codex Cell, Spices Board, Cochin
sachinkumarvaid.sb@gov.in

Dr.M.M.Naidu
 Head, Spice and Flavour Science
 CFTRI, Mysore
mmnaidu@cftri.res.in

JAPAN

Mr Keiji Momono
 Assistant Director
 Food Manufacture Affairs Division
 Food Industry Affairs Bureau
 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan
keiji_momono850@maff.go.jp

Ms Naomi SAITO
 Assistant
 Food Manufacture Affairs Division
 Food Industry Affairs Bureau
 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan
naomi_saito740@maff.go.jp
codex_maff@maff.go.jp

MEXICO

Daniel González Sesmas
daniel.gonzalezs@economia.gob.mx

MOROCCO

Mr LAYACHI NAJIB
 Expert Consultant FICOPAM
 +212618532248
playachi@gmail.com

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Ms Eun-kyung Hong
 Codex Researcher
 Ministry of Food and Drug Safety
hongek3@korea.kr

Ms Hyo-chin Kim
 Scientific Officer
 Ministry of Food and Drug Safety
hckim77@korea.kr

SPAIN

Sara López-Varela Celdrán
 Jefe De Unidad Confiteria Condimentos Y Aditivos
 AECOSAN-CICC
sara.lopez@consumo-inc.es

TURKEY

Ahmet GÜNGÖR
 Food, Agriculture and Livestock Expert
 Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
 General Directorate of Food and Control
 Food Establishment and Codex Department
 +90312 258 77 56
 Fax: +90312 258 77 60
agungor1977@mynet.com
ahmet.gungor@tarim.gov.tr
kodeks@tarim.gov.tr

Recep ARITURK
 Group Food Quality Manager
 KUTAS TARIM URUNLERI DIS TIC. VE SAN. A.S.
 1140 Sok. No. 57 Güney Mah.
 35120 Yenişehir - Izmir /Turkey

+90 232 433 23 11-12
Fax: + 90 232 433 23 10
recep_ariturk@kutas.com.tr

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mr Dorian LaFond
U.S. Delegate to CCSC
International Standards Coordinator
USDA/ Agricultural Marketing Service
dorian.lafond@ams.usda.gov

Dr George Ziobro
U.S. Alternate Delegate to CCSC
Research Chemist
FDA - Office of Food Safety
George.Ziobro@fda.hhs.gov

Ms Marie Maratos
International Issues Analyst
U.S. Codex Office
U.S. Department of Agriculture
marie.maratos@fsis.usda.gov

FOODDRINKEUROPE

Patrick Fox
Manager Food Policy, Science and R&D
Avenue des Nerviens 9-31- 1040 Bruxelles
BELGIUM
Tel. 32 2 5141111
p.fox@fooddrinkeurope.eu
www.fooddrinkeurope.eu
ETI Register 75818824519-45

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF SPICE TRADE ASSOCIATIONS (IOSTA)

Cheryl Deem
Secretariat
cdeem@astaspice.org