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LEBTRADE PORTAL A GOLDMINE FOR EXPORTERS



Creating Export Opportunities by
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY & TRADE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table Grapes HS Code: 080610– Potential Market in the Netherlands	1
1. Video Summary	1
2. Product description / classification: Which product(s)?	1
3. What are the mandatory requirements?	1
a. Pesticides Residues	1
b. Contaminants - Avoiding contaminants.....	2
c. Phytosanitary regulations	2
4. Labeling and Packaging	3
a. Size and packaging	3
b. Uniformity	3
c. Packaging.....	5
d. Provisions Concerning Marking.....	8
5. Quality requirements	11
a. General quality requirements (all classes)	11
b. Maturity.....	21
c. Classification.....	21
I. “Extra” Class	21
II. Class I.....	23
III. Class II.....	23
Additional requirements and permissible tolerances for Class I avocados	Error! Bookmark not defined.
d. Provisions Concerning Sizing	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6. What additional requirements do buyers often have?	33
a. Variety	Error! Bookmark not defined.
b. Certification.....	33
7. What are the requirements for niche markets?	33
8. Refer to MI report	Error! Bookmark not defined.
9. Refer to the quality support organizations in Lebanon	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Table Grapes HS Code: 080610– Potential Market in the Netherlands

1. VIDEO SUMMARY



2. PRODUCT DESCRIPTION / CLASSIFICATION: WHICH PRODUCT(S)?

<p>Harmonized System (HS) code</p>	<p>08061000 Fresh grapes</p> <p>08061010 Fresh table grapes</p>
<p>Top varieties found in Lebanon? Ask local farmers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seedless • White: Thompson, Sweet Globe, Sugraone, Regal, Centennial, Autumn Crisp, Cotton Candy • Red: Crimson, Flame, Ruby, Sweet Celebration, Timco • Black/blue: Summer Royal, Melody, Autumn Royal, Sable Seedless • • Seeded • White: Italy • Red: Red Globe, Victoria Red • Black: Sweet Jubilee

Image 1: Examples of varieties (cultivars) - Top:

3. WHAT ARE THE MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS?

When exporting Table grapes to Netherlands, you have to comply with the requirements for food safety and product quality.

a. Pesticides Residues

Pesticide residues are a major concern for fruit and vegetable producers. This is especially true for grapes, which are ingested straight. The European Union has established maximum residual limits (MRLs) for pesticides in and on food products to protect human health and the environment. Pesticide-containing products will be taken off the market if they contain more pesticides than are allowed. Contaminants like heavy metals are the same way.

Buyers in a number of EU Member States, including the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, and Austria, utilize MRLs that are harsher than those set out in European legislation. Supermarket businesses uphold the strictest standards, requiring anything

from 33% to 100% of the authorized MRL. Lidl, a German discounter, is one of the tightest, limiting single active chemicals to 33% of the EU regulatory limit.

Pesticide management takes a lot of responsibility on your part as a producer or exporter. More and more buyers ask for upfront information about your pesticide spray records. Shipments are checked before they are sent to the retailer. For future business, you must take into account that your responsibility as an exporter will play an important role as retail chains put more pressure on their suppliers.

Tips

- Use the [EU Pesticide Database](#) to find out the MRLs that are relevant for your products. You can select your product or a pesticide and the database shows the list of associated MRLs. Always check whether your buyers have additional requirements for MRLs and pesticide use.
- Apply [integrated pest management](#) (IPM) to reduce the amount of pesticide. IPM is an agricultural pest control strategy, which is also part of [GLOBALG.A.P.](#) Certification. It uses natural control practices such as the application of pests' natural enemies. The fewer chemicals you use, the better your marketing position will be for export to Europe.

b. Contaminants - Avoiding contaminants

Contaminants are compounds that have not been purposely added to food but may be present as a result of its production, packing, transportation, or storage. The European Union has set limits for numerous pollutants, similar to the MRLs for pesticides (see table 1).

The pollution of lead, cadmium, and nitrate in fresh fruits and vegetables will be your main concerns (mainly for spinach, lettuce and rucola).

Tips

- Maintain good contact with your buyers, because they will often keep you up to date with changes in regulation, which affect the fresh fruit and vegetables business.
- Read more about contaminants on the [website of the European Commission](#) and find an overview of the [maximum contaminant levels in the Annex of Regulation \(EC\) 1881/2006](#). Try to check this information on an annual basis.
- Find out more about the prevention and reduction of lead contamination in the [Code of Practice](#) published by the FAO Codex Alimentarius.
- Check the European Commission's fact sheet on food contaminants [managing food contaminants: how the EU ensures that our food is safe](#).

c. Microbiological criteria

If salmonella, E. coli, or other bacteria are found, food safety authorities can remove imported table grapes from the market or prevent them from entering the European Union (Regulation No 2073/2005).

To reduce contamination in grapes, the European Food Safety Authority recommends utilizing excellent agronomic, hygienic, and production procedures.

Tips

- Make sure to use clean water and equipment for the cultivation and packing of grapes. Also maintain good hygiene practices in case of manual packing of the fruit. Use the Codex Alimentarius - Code Of Hygienic Practice For Fresh Fruits And Vegetables as a guideline.

d. Phytosanitary regulations

The [new European Directive](#) (2019) requires table grapes to go through plant health checks before entering the European Union. The plant health inspection must take place in the country of origin. Table grapes require phytosanitary certificates prior to shipping. Phytosanitary certificates are provided by plant health authorities and must guarantee that a product is:

- Properly inspected;
- Free from quarantine pests, within the requirements for regulated non-quarantine pests. Practically free from other pests;

- In line with the plant health requirements of the EU, laid down in [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2072](#).

MOA is the national authority issuing the phytosanitary certificate link

Tips:

- Learn more about the European phytosanitary rules in [Council Directive 2000/29/EC](#) and the new [Implementing Directive 2019/523](#) on the protective measures against the introduction of harmful organisms in the European Union.
- Check which (other) fruit and vegetables require a **phytosanitary certificate** in the lists of Annex XI and Annex XII of [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2072](#).

4. LABELING AND PACKAGING

a. Size and packaging

Food placed on the EU market must meet the legislation on food labelling.



Image 2: Example of pre-packaged grapes

b. Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only bunches of the same origin, variety, quality and degree of ripeness.
⇒ photos 38 to 40

In the case of the «Extra» Class, the bunches must be of more or less identical size and colouring. ♦ photo 38

In “Extra” Class, all bunches in a package must be - with respect to the variety - individually uniform as to size and colour and there should be no variation between the bunches.

In the case of table grapes packed in small consumer packages of a net weight not exceeding one kilogram, uniformity of variety and origin is not required. ⇒ photo 41

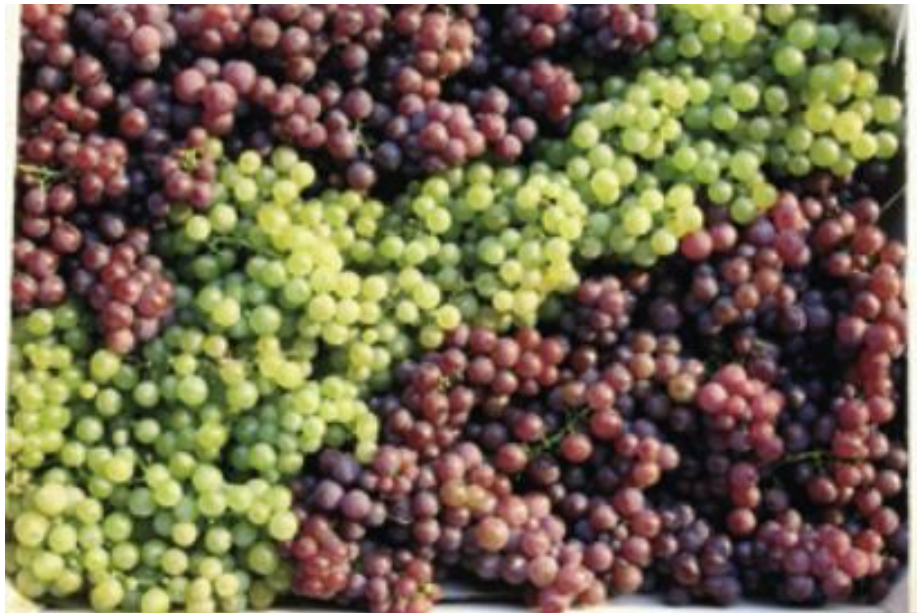
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Bunches of different colours in a sales package not exceeding 1 kg

The inclusion in each package of bunches of different colours for decorative purposes shall be allowed in the case of the variety Chasselas. ⇨ photo 42



Bunches of different colours in the case of the variety Chasselas

The variety Chasselas exists with white skin and with red skin. It is allowed to present these two colour types of this variety in one package. The net weight of the package may be above 1 kg. It is neither allowed to present white Chasselas with a different variety of red or black colour nor to present red Chasselas with a different variety of white or black colour in such packages.

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

A special effort should be made to suppress camouflage, i.e. concealing in the lower layers of the package produce inferior in quality and size to that displayed and marked.

Similarly prohibited is any packaging method or practice intended to give a deceptively superior appearance to the top layer of the consignment.

c. Packaging

The table grapes must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

Packages must be of good quality, strength and characteristics to protect the produce during transport and handling.

The materials used inside the package must be new, 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.

This provision is designed to ensure suitable protection of the produce by means of materials inside the package which are new and clean and also to prevent foreign matter such as leaves, sand or soil from spoiling its good presentation.

Stickers individually affixed on the produce shall be such that, when removed, neither leaves visible traces of glue, nor lead to skin defects.

Packages must be free of all foreign matter, although a fragment of vine shoot no more than 5 cm in length may be left on the stem of the bunch as a form of special presentation. ⇒ photo 43



Presentation with a fragment of wine shoot no more than 5 cm in length - Allowed

A visible lack of cleanliness in several packages could result in the goods being rejected.

C. Presentation

In the case of the “Extra” Class, the bunches must be packed in a single layer. ⇒ photo 38



Very careful presentation - “Extra” Class

The table grapes must be presented either:

— in sales packages ⇒ photos 44 to 46



Closed sales package (pre-package)



Closed sales package (pre-package)

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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Date: 28-Jun-21

Revision: 00

Prepared by: MoET



Open sales package

— in bunches arranged in the package ⇨ photos 38 to 40



Very careful presentation - "Extra" Class



Careful presentation - Class I



Suitable presentation - Class II

Tips:

- Always discuss specific packaging requirements and preferences with your customers.
- Check the additional requirements if your product is pre-packed for retail in the [Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods](#) or [Regulation \(EU\) No. 1169/2011](#) on the provision of food information to consumers in Europe.
- Find the legal requirements for labelling in the [buyer requirements for fresh fruit and vegetables](#) on the CBI market information platform.

New drives sustainable and plastic-free packaging

Reducing plastic and making packaging more sustainable will be key for future table grape sales.

The abundant use of packaging was already an issue in the minds of many retailers and conscious consumers. But since the European Parliament approved the new law banning single-use plastics, companies are forced to take action.

Currently most grapes are sold in punnets or clamshell packages, for example 500g, but smaller snack-sized packages such as 250g or 170g are also increasingly available. These smaller packages do not increase the total volume of grapes, but it only adds to the plastic waste.

There is a need for more sustainable packaging and exporters must be prepared for this change. Grape packers were already using more and more top-sealed punnets to reduce the plastics of lids (clamshells), and now companies have started to implement new sustainable packaging such as biodegradable and compostable carry bags for grapes and cardboard punnets (adopted by retailer Waitrose). For organic grapes, sustainable packaging such as cardboard is a real selling point.

d. Provisions Concerning Marking

Each package 1 must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside: ⇒ photo 47



Example of marking printed on the package

In the case of packed produce, all particulars must be grouped on the same side of the package, either on a label attached to or printed on the package, with water-insoluble ink.

In the case of re-used packages, all previous labels must be carefully removed or previous indications deleted.

A. Identification

Packer		Name and address or
And/or		officially issued or
Dispatcher		accepted code mark

For inspection purposes, the “packer” is the person or firm responsible for the packaging of the produce (this does not mean the staff who actually carry out the work, who are responsible only to their employer). The code mark is not a trademark but an official control system enabling the person or firm responsible for packaging to be readily identified. The dispatcher (shipper or exporter) may, however, voluntarily or compulsorily, assume sole responsibility for inspection purposes, in which case identification of the «packer» as defined above is no longer necessary.

To prevent indistinctness in the case where a code mark is used, the reference «packer», “dispatcher” and/or “exporter” (or equivalent abbreviations, i.e. “pack.”, “exp.”) has to be indicated in close connection with the code mark.

B. Nature of produce

— “Table grapes”, if the contents are not visible from the outside.

The name of the produce must be stated on packages whose contents are not visible from the outside.

— Name of the variety or, where applicable, names of varieties.

The variety name or its synonym must be indicated. Any indication to highlight a special grading, presentation or berry size must not be indicated in close connection with the variety name.

The registered trade name may only be used in addition to the variety name by licensees.

In the case mentioned in the 3rd subparagraph of V. A. of table grapes of different varieties packed together in the same consumer package, each variety must be indicated.

— “Underglass”, where applicable.

C. Origin of produce

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

Marking must include the country of origin, i.e. the country in which the table grapes were grown (e.g. “Produce of Italy” or “Produce of South Africa”).

Optionally, district of origin in national, regional or local terms (e.g. Chasselas de Moissac) may also be shown.

In the case mentioned in the 3rd subparagraph of V. A. of table grapes of different varieties of different origin packed together in the same sales package, the country of origin of each of the varieties must be indicated next to the name of the variety concerned.

D. Commercial specifications

— Class.

Stating the class is compulsory.

— “Late harvest grapes” where applicable.

E. Official control mark (optional) => photo 48



Example of official control mark (optional)

5. QUALITY REQUIREMENTS

a. General quality requirements (all classes)

Minimum requirements

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

— **sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded.**

Table grapes must be free from disease or serious deterioration which appreciably affects their appearance, edibility or market value. In particular, this excludes table grapes affected by rotting, even if the signs are very slight but liable to make the table grapes unfit for consumption upon arrival at their destination. Table grapes showing the following defects are therefore excluded:



shriveled berries and wilted rachis (stalk) and pedicels (cap stems) - not allowed



damaged or burned berries due to chemical treatment
Bleached berries due to SO₂ treatment on black varieties- not allowed



Bleached berries due to SO₂ treatment on white varieties
damaged or burned berries due to chemical treatment-
not allowed



damaged or burned berries due to chemical treatment Bleached
berries due to SO₂ treatment on white varieties- not allowed



split berries- not allowed



deterioration or alteration of the skin or pulp caused by fungal
diseases:

- black rot- not allowed



deterioration or alteration of the skin or pulp caused by fungal diseases

powdery mildew- not allowed



deterioration or alteration of the skin or pulp caused by fungal diseases

Anthracnose- not allowed



deterioration or alteration of the skin or pulp caused by fungal diseasesgrey mould- not allowed

- clean and practically free of any visible foreign matter.

Table grapes must be practically free of visible soil, dust, chemical residue or other foreign matter. However, as it is not possible to clean the berries of table grapes before eating, chemical residue, soil, dust, sooty mould or pollution by mealy bug secretion is not allowed. ⇒ photos 14 to 15



Visible foreign matter- not allowed



Pollution by mealy bug secretion- not allowed

— **practically free from pests.**

Table grapes must be free of insects or other pests. The presence of pests can detract from the commercial presentation and acceptance of the table grapes. ⇒ photos 16 to 17



Mealy bug infestation- not allowed



Mealy bug infestation- not allowed

— **practically free from damage caused by pests.**

Pest damage can detract from the general appearance and affect the keeping quality and edibility of the table grapes. ⇨ photo 18

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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS



Damage caused by grape berry moth- not allowed

— **free of abnormal external moisture.**

This provision applies to excessive moisture, for example free water lying inside the package, but does not include condensation on produce following release from cool storage or refrigerated vehicle.

— **free of any foreign smell and/or taste.**

This provision applies to table grapes stored or transported under poor conditions, which have consequently resulted in their absorbing smells and/or tastes, in particular through the proximity of other product which give off volatile odours.

In addition, berries must be:

— **intact.**

Berries must not have any damage or injury spoiling the integrity of the produce. ⇨ photo 9

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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Date: 28-Jun-21

Revision: 00

Prepared by: MoET



Split berries- not allowed

— **well formed.**

— **normally developed.**

Dried (black or brown berries) and shot berries (underdeveloped berries) are not allowed. ⇒ photos 19 to 20



Dried, small black or brown berries- not allowed



Bunch with shot (underdeveloped) berries- not allowed

Pigmentation due to sun is not a defect. Berries of white varieties exposed to sunlight turn yellow and may show pigmentation on the skin only. ⇒ photo 21

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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS



Pigmentation due to sun- allowed

Spots of sunscorch that deteriorate the skin and may affect the flesh are not allowed. ⇒ photos 22 to 23



Sunscorch - Not allowed



Sunscorch - Not allowed

Bunches must have been carefully picked.

Harvesting operations need to take into account the fragility of the fruit and the fact that the slightest damage may lead to deterioration. It is vital to avoid applying any pressure. During the harvest the skin of the grapes should, wherever possible, be dry. Bunches should be handled as little as possible to keep the bloom intact. These precautions relate to picking as well as to all other stages when handling the produce.

The bunches must be sufficiently developed and display satisfactory ripeness.

With respect to a sufficient development are the following defects excluded:

- a) “thin” (straggly) bunches, i.e. with berries too far apart on the stalk or with too few berries.
- b) “unevenly developed” bunches, i.e. with «shot» berries resulting from insufficient pollination. The “shot” berries are usually seedless in those varieties that normally develop seeds. They may be entirely green and hard or mature and colour uniformly with the normal berries. ⇒ photo 20



Bunch with shot (underdeveloped) berries

The development and condition of the table grapes must be such as to enable them:
— to withstand transport and handling, and

— to arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

b. Maturity

Table grapes must be fully developed, with adequate maturity and ripeness. As a result, the grapes must have reached a Brix level of at least 16°.

Fruit with a lower index is acceptable if the sugar-to-acid ratio is equal to or greater than:

If the Brix level is greater than or equal to 12.5° and less than 14° Brix, the ratio is 20:1.

If the Brix level is greater than or equal to 14° Brix but less than 16° Brix, the ratio is 18:1.

Tip:

- Sound – produce must be free from rotting or deterioration likely to make it unfit for consumption;

c. Classification

Table grapes are classified in three classes, as defined below:

I. "Extra" Class

Table grapes in this class must be of superior quality. In shape, development and colouring, the bunches must be typical of the variety, allowing for the district in which they are grown, and have no defects.

The table grapes must be very carefully presented. ⇒ photos 1 to 4 and 38.



Variety Italia - White seeded large-berry variety



Variety Ronelle - Black seeded large-berry variety



Variety Red Globe - Red seeded large-berry variety



Variety Sugraone - White seedless large-berry variety



Very careful presentation - "Extra" Class

Berries must be firm, firmly attached, evenly spaced along the stalk and have their bloom virtually intact.

Slight traces of missing bloom due to handling are allowed.

LEBTRADE PORTAL

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Date: 28-Jun-21

Revision: 00

Prepared by: MoET



Bloom virtually intact - Limit allowed in "Extra" Class

II. Class I

Table grapes in this class must be of good quality. In shape, development and colouring the bunches must be typical of the variety, allowing for the district in

which they are grown.

Although the Class I quality requirements are less strict than for "Extra" Class, Class I table grapes must, nevertheless, be carefully selected and presented. ⇒ photo 39

LEBTRADE PORTAL

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Date: 28-Jun-21

Revision: 00

Prepared by: MoET



Careful presentation - Class I

Berries must be firm, firmly attached and, as far as possible, have their bloom intact. They may, however, be less evenly spaced along the stalk than in the "Extra" Class.

Traces of missing bloom due to handling are allowed. ⇒ photo 25

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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS



Bloom as far as possible intact - Limit allowed in Class I

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 defects in shape. ⇒ photos 26 to 27



Variety Red Globe

left: Typical shape

right: Slight defect in shape - Limit allowed in Class I

Variety Sugraone

left: Typical shape

right: Slight defect in shape (berries slightly scattered) - Limit allowed in Class I

Slight defects in shape may be due to the fact that the berries are less evenly spaced along the stalk.

— slight defects in colouring. ⇨ photo 28



Variety Red Globe

left: Typical colouring

right: Slight defects in colouring - Limit allowed in Class I

— very slight sunscorch affecting the skin only. ⇨ photo 29

LEBTRADE PORTAL

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Date: 28-Jun-21

Revision: 00

Prepared by: MoET



Very slight sunscorch - Limit allowed in Class I

Class II

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

Table grapes in this class must be of marketable quality, suitably presented and suitable for human consumption. ⇨ photo 40

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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS



Suitable presentation - Class II

The bunches may show defects in shape, development and colouring, provided these do not impair the essential characteristics of the variety, allowing for the district in which they are grown.

The berries must be sufficiently firm and sufficiently attached, and where possible, still have their bloom. They may be less evenly spaced along the stalk than in Class I.

The following defects are allowed provided the table grapes retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

— defects in shape. ⇒ photos 30 to 32ss evenly spaced along the stalk.



Variety Red Globe

left: Typical shape

right: Slight defect in shape (berries scattered) - Limit allowed in Class II



Variety Sugraone

left: Typical shape

right: Slight defect in shape (berries scattered) - Limit allowed in Class II

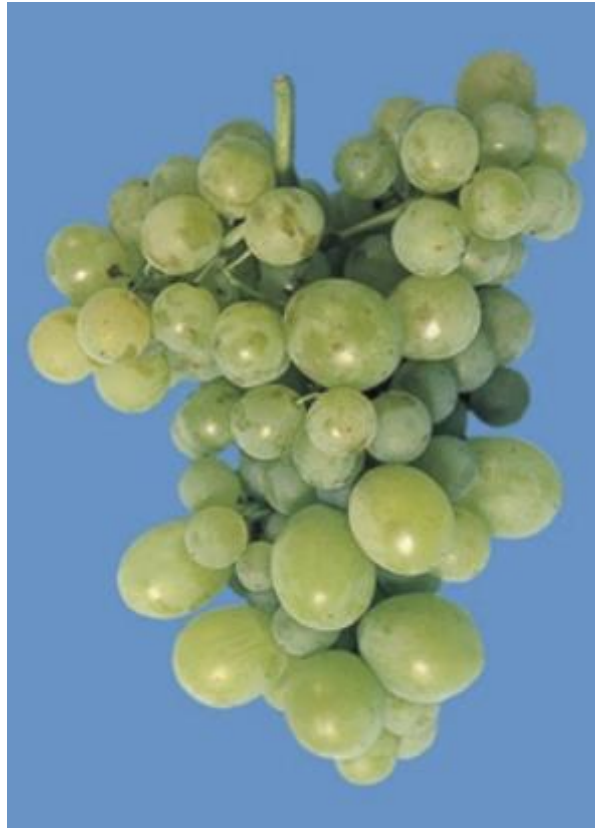
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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Date: 28-Jun-21

Revision: 00

Prepared by: MoET



Defects in shape (variation in berry size)

Limit allowed in Class II

— defects in colouring. ⇒ photo 33



Variety Red Globe

left: Typical colouring

right: Defects in colouring - Limit allowed in Class II

— slight sunscorch affecting the skin only. ⇒ photos 34 to 35



Slight sunscorch - Limit allowed in Class II



Slight sunscorch - Limit allowed in Class II

— slight bruising.

Slight bruising is allowed provided it does not affect the pulp.

— slight skin defects. ⇒ photos 36 to 37



Slight skin defects - Limit allowed in Class II



Slight skin defects - Limit allowed in Class II

III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by the weight of the bunch.

The following minimum size requirements per bunch are defined for table grapes grown under glass and for open-grown table grapes, small berry varieties listed in the annex or other varieties respectively.

	Table grapes grown under glass, if indicated	Open grown table grapes	
		all varieties excluding smallberry varieties listed in the annex	small-berry varieties listed in the annex
Extra Class	350g	200g	150g
Class I	250g	150g	100g
Class II	150g	100g	75g

IV. 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.

Tolerances are provided to allow for human error during the grading and packing process.

During grading and sizing it is not permitted to deliberately include out of grade produce, i.e. to exploit the tolerances deliberately.

The tolerances are determined after examining each sample package and taking the average of all samples examined. The tolerances are stated in terms of percentage, by weight, of produce in the total sample not conforming to the class indicated on the package

A. Quality tolerances

i) "Extra" Class

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

ii) Class I

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

iii) Class II

10 per cent by weight of bunches 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.

B. Size tolerances

i) "Extra" Class and Class I

10 per cent by weight of bunches not satisfying the size requirements of the class, but meeting those of the class immediately below.

ii) Class II

10 per cent by weight of bunches not satisfying the size requirements of the class but weighing not less than 75 g.

iii) For all classes

In each package for direct sale to the consumer not exceeding 1 kg net weight, one bunch weighing less than 75 g is allowed to adjust the weight, provided the bunch meets all other requirements of the specified class.

Absolute minimum weight tolerated:

	Table grapes grown under glass	Open grown table grapes	
		Large-berry varieties	Small-berry varieties
Extra Class	250g	150g	100g
Class I	150g	100g	100g
Class II	75g	75g	75g
for all Classes: consumer packages not exceeding 1 kg net weight	1 bunch below 75 g		

6. WHAT ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS DO BUYERS OFTEN HAVE?

The European consumer has an increasing preference for convenience. This trend is positive for table grapes, because they are easy to consume and ideal as a fresh snack. To further improve the consumer experience seedless grapes are setting the new standard and are most appealing to consumers.

Specific preferences can differ per region and buyer. Most importantly, besides offering seedless grapes, your product must be fresh, sweet and crisp.

Tip:

Select the grape varieties that best suit your client's market, or find the right buyer for your variety. Visit your export market regularly to update your market knowledge and get information about new varieties from large grape breeders such as Sun World International and SNFL group.

d. Certification

Common certifications for table grapes include GlobalG.A.P. for good agricultural practices and BRCGS, IFS or similar HACCP-based food safety management systems for packing and processing facilities. Management systems recognised by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) are most recommended.

Complying with sustainable and social standards has become common for all fresh fruit and vegetables. Besides GlobalG.A.P. to ensure good agricultural practices, a social certificate such as Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) is highly recommended to get your product up to retail standards.

Tips:

- Implement at least one environmental and one social standard. See the [Basket of Standards](#) of The Sustainable Trade Initiative for Fruit and Vegetables (SIFAV).
- For other additional requirements such as payment and delivery terms, see the CBI's reports on [buyer requirements for fresh fruit and vegetables](#) and the [tips for doing business with European buyers](#).

7. WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR NICHE MARKETS?

Organic certification can increase the value of your table grapes. The demand for organic table grapes is growing, although it is mainly supplied from within Europe. Specialised buyers that import organic table grapes are, for example, OTC Organics and Eosta (the Netherlands).

For non-European suppliers, it is important to comply with European legislation. You must use sustainable and organic production methods and apply for an organic certificate from an accredited certifier.

Note that in January 2021 the new legislation Regulation (EU) 2018/848 will come into force. Inspection of organic products will become stricter to prevent fraud, while producers in third countries will have to comply with the same set of rules as those producing in the European Union.

Tip:

- Strive for residue-free grapes and certify your production as organic, if possible, to broaden your market opportunities. But, remember that implementing organic production and becoming certified can be expensive; you must be prepared to comply with the entire organic certification process.
- Download the current list of control bodies and authorities to see which certifiers are active in your region.