



BAHAMAS NATIONAL STANDARD

SPECIFICATION FOR GRADES OF FRESH AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE

PART 1: BANANAS

FDBNS CRS 24: PART 1: 2010

Bahamas Bureau of Standards & Quality (BBSQ)
Verizon Business Park, 1000 Bacardi Road
P.O. Box N- 4843, Nassau, New Providence, Bahamas
Tel: (242) 362-1748 thru 56
Fax: (242) 362-9172
Email: standards@bbsq.bs
Website: www.bbsq.bs



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Our address:

Bahamas Bureau of Standards and Quality (BBSQ)

Verizon Business Park

1000 Bacardi Road

P.O. Box N-4843

Nassau, New Providence

Bahamas

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BBSQ Foreword

This draft national standard is identical to Caribbean Regional Organisation of Standards and Quality CRS 24: PART 1: 2010. The national committee responsible for reviewing this standard is Technical Committee 15 Food and Food Products. The standard contains the requirements relevant for The Bahamas.

BBSQ Committee Representation

This Bahamas National Standard was adopted as a national standard under the supervision of the National Technical Committee for Food and Food Products (NTC 15) hosted by The Bahamas Bureau of Standards and Quality which at the time comprised of the following members:

Member	Representing
Ms. Shania Smith	Department of Environmental Health Services
Ms. Destinae Munroe	Department of Environmental Health Services
Ms. Kristen Brochu	University of the Bahamas
Dr. Patricia Johnson	BAHFSA
Mr. Kimball Stubbs	BAHFSA
Mr. Robert Butler Ms.	Ministry of Education
Raquel Turnquest Ms.	Bahamas Department of Education
Theresa Dorsett Mr.	Office of the Auditor General
Mona Nixon Mr.	Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation
Joshua Symonette	Consumer
Ms. Sheri Fountain	The Bahamas Agriculture Marine Science Institution - BAMS
Ms. Yvette R. Charlton	Presidential Suites
Ms. Marissa Stubbs	Consumer
Ms. Micah Carey	Quiose Wines
Ms. Sharmaine Smith-Farah	Bahamas Ministry of Tourism Investments & Aviation

Ms. Felistar Butler	BAHFSA
Ms. Shandera Smith	Ministry of Health & Wellness
Ms. Lathera Lotmore-McKenzie	Ministry of Health & Wellness
Ms. Patrice Adderley	We Buy Sell
Ms. Tamara Munroe	Consumer
Mr. Peter Bethell	Police
Mr. Owen Coakley	Princess Margaret Hospital
Ms. Camelta Barnes	Ministry of Health and Wellness
Ms. Michelle Bowleg	Cryshelle's tasty tingz & Cryshelle's Infused Drinks
Mr. Tony Smith	Andros Crab Farm
Ms. Charo Morley	Bahamas Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Tonjia Burrows	Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation
Ms. Kimberly Trowers	Bahamas Agricultural Health & Food Safety Authority
Ms. Melvern E. Symonette	Public Hospitals Authority – Princess Margaret Hospital
Ms. Camille Stephen	Princess Margaret Hospital
Ms. Joyanne Thompson	University of The Bahamas
Mr. Owen Coakley	Princess Margaret Hospital
Ms. Denise Worrell	Naturally Bahamian
Mr. Long Water	Long Bay Enterprises T/A Out Island Water Company
Mr. Andre Newbold	Royal Bahamas Defense Force
Officer Ingraham	Royal Bahamas Defense Force
Mr. Troy Smith	Andros Crab Forum
Ms. Ethuce Cooper	Ministry of Social Services
Dr. Cherita Moxey	Ministry of Health and Wellness
Ms. Nastazia Hepburn	Ministry of Health and Wellness
Mr. Delmon Rolle	Ministry of Agriculture

Ms. Tiara Stubbs

Ministry of Finance

Ms. Avis Richardson

Food Safety Testing Laboratory

Mr. Elvis Bullard

Royal Bahamas Defense Force

Ms. Greg Rolle

Cryshelle's Tasty Tingz

Ms. Kellie Rolle

BAHFSA

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CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality, CROSQ

2ND Floor Nicholas House

29 & 30 Broad Street

Bridgetown, St Michael

Barbados

Telephone: 246-622-7677

Fax: 246-622-6778

Email: crosq.caricom@crosq.org

Website: <http://www.crosq.org>

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ATTACHMENT PAGE FOR CRS AMENDMENT SHEETS

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Committee representation

This CARICOM Regional Standard was prepared under the supervision of the Regional Technical Committee for Agricultural Commodities (RTC 19) (hosted by the CARICOM Member State, Dominica), which at the time comprised the following members:

Members

Mr. Lloyd Pascal (**Chairperson**)

Mr. Ricky Allport

Mr. Ryan Anselm

Mr. Kent Coipel

Mr. Clement Ferreira

Mrs. Marcella Harris

Mr. Cecil Joseph

Mr. Rawle Leslie

Mr. Angus McIntyre

Dr. Gregory Robin, PhD

Mr. John Robin

Mr. Delroy Williams

Dr. Nadia Pacquette-Anselm (**Technical Secretary**)

Representing

Dominica Export Import Agency (DEXIA)

Division of Agriculture, Dominica

Plant protection and Quarantine Services,
Dominica

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on
Agriculture (IICA)

Nature's Best, Dominica

Windward Islands Farmers Association
(WINFA)

Dominica Hucksters Association (1995) Ltd.
(DHA)

Dominica State College – Agriculture Faculty

Windward Island Banana Development
Cooperation (WIBDECO)

Caribbean Research and Development
Institute (CARDI)

Agro-Processors Association of Dominica
(APAD)

National Association of Youth in Agriculture
(NAYA)

Dominica Bureau of Standards

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Foreword

This CARICOM Regional Standard has been prepared to improve the regional and international market competitiveness of bananas and to address critical concerns relating to quality in the production, processing and packaging of bananas in the region.

These measures are expected to assist all stakeholders engaged in the production, packaging, distribution and sale of bananas in ensuring compliance with minimum requirements for bananas for commercial use.

This regional standard has been developed in an effort to:

- a) avoid misunderstanding and confusion among those involved in the marketing chain;
- b) provide an objective basis for relating price with quality;
- c) encourage better selection, packaging and presentation of produce as a means of obtaining greater income overall; and
- d) assist exporters and their countries in meeting export market requirements and thereby enhancing their reputation and market position.

This standard was approved by the Twenty-ninth Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) on 8-9 February 2010.

In the development of this standard, assistance was derived from the following:

- a) European Commission Regulation No. 2257/94;
- b) CODEX Stan 205 -1997, AMD.1 – 2005 - CODEX Standard for Bananas.

NOTE 1 The European Commission Regulation No. 2257/94 lays down quality standards for bananas.

NOTE 2 During the development of this standard, the CARICOM Regional Code of Practice for Food Hygiene was still under development.

1 Scope

This standard specifies the requirements for bananas grown from *Musa spp.* (AAA) of the *Musaceae* family, to be supplied fresh to the consumer, after preparation and packaging. It also specifies the requirements for un-ripened green bananas after preparation and packaging.

NOTE Varieties covered by this standard include *Cavendish* and *Robusta*

This standard does not specify requirements for bananas intended for cooking only, including plantains or those used for industrial processing.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

CARICOM Regional Code of Practice for Food Hygiene

CODEX Alimentarius Commission, Code of Hygienic Practices for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 53-2003)

CODEX Alimentarius Commission, Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 27- 1997)

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the following terms and definitions shall apply.

3.1

blemish

any physical injury affecting the surface of the fruit, such as scars, healed cracks and discoloured spots, which detracts from its natural appearance, but will not significantly affect its shelf life

3.2

clean

free from adhering soil, insects, chemical deposits and other foreign matter

3.3

cluster

part of a hand of bananas, normally distributed in two fingers or more

3.4

correct length

distance along the outside curve from blossom end to the base of the pedicel where the edible pulp ends

Note The correct length is usually measured from the outer whorl fingers adjacent to the cut side of the cluster and could be more or less than that specified based on market requirements.

3.5

damage caused by pests

clusters showing cured damage to the peel due to the feeding or nesting of pests such as slugs, caterpillars, rodents or birds

3.6

deflowered

removal of the pistils (flower ends) attached to clusters

3.7

disease

any defect or combination of defects caused by micro-organisms

3.8

finger end rot

abnormal constriction at the blossom end and blackening of the pulp when split open

3.9

firm

not soft or shriveled

3.10

fresh

clusters showing coloured crowns or pedicels or fruits which are not dehydrated

3.11

fused fingers

two or more fingers joined together

3.12

malformed finger

unit or fingers on a cluster which do not conform to the general physical characteristics of the banana

3.13

turning

clusters showing yellowing of the pulp of a finger

4 Requirements

4.1 General

All fruits should come from farms whose practices are in accordance with international food safety standards. Farms may also be certified according to the market requirements for certification by the competent authority.

4.2 Quality

4.2.1 Minimum requirements

4.2.1.1 In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the bananas shall be:

- a) firm;
- b) fresh;
- c) whole;

NOTE Finger used as the reference.

- d) sound;

NOTE Produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded.

- e) clean;
- f) free from pests affecting the general appearance of the produce;

- g) free from damage caused by pests;
- h) with the crown intact, without bending, fungal damage or desiccation;
- i) with pistils removed;
- j) free from malformation or abnormal curvature of the fingers;
- k) free from blemishes;
- l) free from damage due to low temperatures;
- m) free from abnormal external moisture, excluding condensation following removal from cold storage, and bananas packed under modified atmosphere conditions;
- n) free from any foreign odours and or taste;
- o) free from signs of ripening and turning;
- p) free from fused fingers;
- q) free from finger end rot; and
- r) of the correct length.

4.2.1.2 In addition, hands and clusters shall include:

- a) cleanly cut crowns, not beveled or torn, with no stalk fragments;
- b) crowns of normal colouring, sound and free from fungal contamination;

4.2.1.3 The physical development and ripeness of the bananas shall be such as to enable them:

- a) to reach the appropriate stage of physiological maturity corresponding to the characteristics of the variety;
- b) to withstand transport and handling; and
- c) to arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination in order to attain an appropriate degree of ripening.

4.3 Classification

Bananas shall be classified as Class I, Class II or Class III.

4.3.1 Class I

4.3.1.1 Bananas in this class shall be of superior quality and have the characteristics typical of the variety and or commercial type.

4.3.1.2 The fingers shall be free from defects, apart from slight superficial blemishes not covering a total of more than 1 cm² of the surface of the finger. The blemishes shall not impair the general appearance of the hand or cluster, its quality, its keeping quality or the presentation of the package.

4.3.2 Class II

4.3.2.1 Bananas in this class shall be of good quality. They shall display the characteristics typical of the variety and or commercial type.

4.3.2.2 Slight defects of the fingers are allowed, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality, the flesh of the fruit and the presentation of the package:

- a) slight defects in shape and colour; and
- b) slight skin defects due to rubbing and other slight superficial defects not exceeding 2 cm² of the total surface area per cluster.

4.3.3 Class III

4.3.3.1 This class includes bananas which do not qualify for inclusion in Class I or II, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified in 4.1.1.

4.3.3.2 The following defects of the fingers are allowed, provided the bananas retain their essential characteristics as regards quality, the keeping quality, flesh of the fruit and presentation:

- a) defects in shape and colour, provided the produce retains the normal characteristics of bananas; and
- b) skin defects due to scraping, rubbing, blemishes or other causes, provided that the total area affected does not cover more than 4 cm² of the surface of the cluster.

4.4 Sizing

4.4.1 Size shall be determined by:

- a) the length of the edible pulp of the fruit, expressed in cm and measured along the convex face from the blossom end to the base of the pedicel; and
- b) the diameter, defined as the thickness of a transverse section of the fruit between the lateral faces.

4.4.2 The reference fruit for measurement of the length and grade shall be:

- a) for hands, the median finger on the outer row of the hand; and
- b) for clusters, the finger next to the cut section of the hand, on the outer row of the cluster.

4.4.3 The minimum length shall be 14 cm and the minimum grade shall be 27 mm.

NOTE Size may also be determined by market requirements.

4.5 Tolerances

4.5.1 General

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

4.5.2 Class I

5 % by number or weight of bananas not satisfying the requirements for Class I but meeting those for Class II, or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances for that class.

4.5.3 Class II

10 % by number or weight of bananas not satisfying the requirements of Class II but meeting those for Class III, or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances for that class.

4.5.4 Class III

10 % by number or weight of bananas satisfying neither the requirements for Class III nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of produce affected by rotting, major imperfections or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.

4.5.5 Size tolerances

For all classes, 10 % by number or weight of bananas not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing, but falling immediately above or below those indicated in 3.4, up to a limit of 1 cm for the minimum length of 14 cm.

4.6 Presentation

4.6.1 Uniformity

4.6.1.1 The contents of each package shall be uniform and contain only bananas of the same origin, variety and quality.

4.6.1.2 The visible part of the contents of each package shall be representative of the entire contents.

4.6.2 Packaging

4.6.2.1 The bananas shall be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

4.6.2.2 The materials used inside the package shall be new, clean and of a nature so as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce.

NOTE The use of materials, particularly, wrapping papers or adhesive labels bearing commercial indications is allowed provided that the printing and labelling is done with a non-toxic ink or glue.

4.6.2.3 Packages shall be free from any foreign matter.

4.6.2.4 Boxes shall possess holes that are adequately punched out in an effort to provide for adequate ventilation.

4.6.3 Presentation

4.6.3.1 The bananas shall be presented in hands or clusters of at least four fingers.

4.6.3.2 Not more than one cluster of three fingers with the same characteristics as the other fruit in the package shall be present per row.

4.7 Labelling

4.7.1 Each package shall bear the following particulars in writing, all on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked and visible from the outside in the official language(s) of the country in which the produce is to be sold:

- a) name and address of the exporter or the officially issued or recognized conventional mark; packer and or dispatcher;

b) nature of produce, marked in the following manner:

- 1) the word 'Bananas' where the contents are not visible from the outside; and
- 2) the name of the variety or commercial type;

c) country of origin; and

NOTE District where grown or national, regional or local name is optional.

d) commercial specifications as follows:

- 1) class; and
- 2) net weight .

NOTE The use of red or orange should be avoided since these colours are used in the labelling of dangerous goods.

5 Contaminants

5.1 Heavy metals

Bananas shall comply with those maximum levels for heavy metals established by the CODEX Alimentarius for this commodity.

5.2 Pesticide residues

Bananas shall comply with those maximum pesticide residue limits established by the CODEX Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

6 Hygiene and sanitation

6.1 It is recommended that the produce covered by the provisions of this standard be prepared and handled in conjunction with the appropriate clauses of the latest edition of the CARICOM Regional Code of Practice for Food Hygiene or other international Codes of Practice, the latest recommended Code of Hygienic practices for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 53-2003) and other CODEX texts which are relevant to this commodity

6.2 Bananas shall comply with the microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 27-1997).

6.3 Bananas shall comply with Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary requirements of both the importing and exporting countries.

End of document