




Black Pepper (*Piper Nigrum* L.): Quality Standards for export to EU & N-A

Appended are the standards such as applied by the European Spice Association (ESA) for “Export Quality Pepper”. It is **important** that all players in the supply chain are aware of these and comply with them. It is for the Government to enforce compliance and penalize abuse.

Export Quality Spice must adhere to EU regulation no. 1881/2006 for Aflatoxins/ochratoxins AND EU regulation concerning Maximum Residue Levels on pesticides: no. 396/2005						
Piper Nigrum	Gr/lit Bulk Density	Volatile Oil (VO)	extraneous matter		Mycotoxins	ppb
Grade 1	>550	>2%	<1,0%		Aflatoxin (B1+B2+G1+G2)	< 10
Grade 2	>500	>2%	<1,5%		Aflatoxin B1	< 5
Grade 3	>450	>1,8%	<2,0%		Ochratoxin A total	< 15
Grade 2 is also defined as FAQ: Fair Average Quality					1 ppb = 1 µg/kg	

Ripe red berries give “light berries” after drying, reducing bulk density	Mature pepper berries give high density dried pepper kernels. Bulk density preferred is > 500 g/L	Clean pepper of 550 g/L
		

Good Post Harvest grading, cleaning and drying: are key to reach Export Quality. Standards help to ensure: 1) harvesting-when-spice-is-mature; 2) proper drying down to < 12% moisture; 3) proper storage to avoid deterioration and mould forming; 4) selecting 1st and 2nd and 3rd grades.

Pepper with dust and light berries	Grade & Clean	Dry on raised beds
		

To give reassurance to potential buyers, about the volume they paid for in advance (FOB – Incoterms 2010), send **Representative pre-shipment samples according to ISO 948 standard**

for a 20 ft fcl containing 15 tons in 600 bags of 25 kg:

- The # of samples equals the square root of the # of bags + 1
 $\text{SQRT } 600 = 24 + 1 = 25$ stitches of 200 gr each
- The aggregate sample of $25 * 200 \text{ grs} = 5 \text{ kg}$ must be homogenised, so that sub samples of 200 gr will be fully representative for the 15 tons lot

25 kg PP bag, PE inner lining	Stitching a 200 gr sample	Weighing a 25 kg bag
		

INCOTERMS: International buyers apply Incoterms-2010 rules for purchasing spices.

Most common is CFR – Cost & Freight port of destination, whereby the buyer only pays upon arrival of the goods. Either after control or CAD – Cash Against Documents.

African suppliers for now, generally prefer FOB – Free On Board, whereby the buyer pays against the B/L – Bill of Lading or CAD once the cargo is on board ship.

Ensure that transport from the collecting/processing point to the place of containerization takes place under dry conditions. Ensure that the container is clean and have the walls and ceiling covered with kraft paper to absorb moisture and avoid mould formation.

Container stowing	Export Documentation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Packing List Original Bill of Lading Certificate of Origin Health Certificate Phytosanitary Certificate Certificate of Fumigation Certificate of Analysis of cargo¹

¹ Foreign buyers rely on these, as collateral for their FOB payment. It is for the authorities to enforce this sampling practice and to penalize malfunctioning in this respect.