

## 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	Gr/lt Bulk	Volatile	extraneous
Nigrum	Density	Oil (VO)	matter
Grade 1	>550	>2%	<1,0%
Grade 2	>500	>2%	<1,5%
Grade 3	>450	>1,8%	<2,0%

Grade 2 is also defined as FAQ: Fair Average Quality

Mycotoxins	ppb
Aflatoxin	< 10
(B1+B2+G1+G2)	
Aflatoxin B1	< 5
Ochratoxin A total	< 15

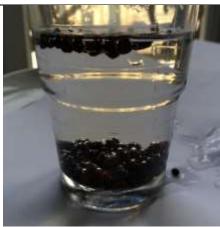
 $1 \text{ ppb} = 1 \mu \text{g/kg}$ 

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 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 SQRT 600 = 24 + 1 = 25 stitches of 200 gr each
- ➤ The aggregate sample of 25 \* 200 grs = 5 kg must be homogenised, so that sub samples of 200 gr will be fully representative for the 15 tons lot



**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.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> 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.