

EUROPEAN SPICE ASSOCIATION SPECIFICATIONS OF QUALITY MINIMA FOR HERBS AND SPICES

(Revised in May 2003 during ESA Meeting)

SUBJECT	
Sampling	(For routine sampling) Square root of units/lots to a maximum of 10 samples. (For arbitration purposes) Square root of all containers e.g. 1 lot of pepper may = 400 bags, therefore square root = 20 samples.
CHEMICAL/PHYSICAL ANALYSIS	
Ash	Refer to ANNEX
Acid Insoluble Ash	Refer to ANNEX
Moisture	Refer to ANNEX
Volatile Oil	Refer to ANNEX
Water Activity	To be agreed between buyer and seller.
Bulk Density	To be agreed between buyer and seller.
Microbiology	Salmonella absent in (at least) 25g. Yeast & Moulds 105/g target, 106/g absolute maximum E Coli. 102/g target, 103/g absolute maximum Other requirements to be agreed between buyer and seller.
CONTAMINANTS/RESIDUES	
Pesticides	Shall be utilised in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations and good agricultural practice and comply with existing national and/or EU legislation.
Heavy Metals	Shall comply with national / EU legislation.
Mycotoxins	Should be grown, harvested, handled and stored in such a manner as to prevent the occurrence of aflatoxins or minimise the risk of occurrence. If found, levels should comply with existing national and / or EU legislation. EU Regulation 472/2002 states maximum aflatoxin levels are: B1 5µg/kg and total aflatoxin 10µg/kg. These only apply to the following species of spices: pepper, nutmeg, ginger, turmeric and capsicums. For other spices national legislation will apply where implemented. EU limits for Ochratoxin A (OTA) in spices should not be introduced as long as there are no validated methods for the determination of OTA in spices.
Treatments	Use of any EC approved fumigants in accordance with manufacturers' instructions, to be indicated on accompanying documents. (Irradiation should not be used unless agreed between buyer and seller).
PURITY	
Species	To be agreed between buyer and seller.
Adulteration	Shall be free from.
Infestation	Should be free in practical terms from live and/or dead insects, insect fragments and rodent contamination visible to the naked eye (corrected if necessary for abnormal vision).
Extraneous matter	Herbs 2%, Spices 1%
Foreign Matter	maximum 2%
SENSORY PROPERTIES	
Off Odours	Shall be free from off odour or taste.
Packaging	Should be agreed between buyer and seller.

ANNEX

PRODUCT (whole form)	ASH % W/W MAX	AIA % W/W MAX	H₂O % W/W MAX	V/O % V/W MIN
ANISEED	9	2.5	12	1
BASIL	16	3.5	12	0.5
BAY	7	2	8 ¹	1
CARDAMOM	9	2.5	12	4
CASSIA	7	2	14	1.0
CELERY SEED	12	3	11	1.5
CHERVIL	17	2	8	-
CHILLI	10	1.6	11	-
CHIVES	13	2	8	-
CINNAMON	7	2	14	0.4
CLOVES	7	0.5	12	14
CORIANDER	7	1.5	12	0.3
CUMIN	14	3	13	1.5
DILL TOPS	15	2	8	-
DILL SEED	10	2.5	12	1
DUTCH CARAWAY	8	1.5	13	2.5
FENNEL SEED	9	2	12	1.5
FENUGREEK	7	2	12	-
GARLIC POWDER	6	0.5	7	-
GINGER	8	2	12	1.5
MACE	4	0.5	10	5
MARJORAM	10	2	12	1
MINT	12	2.5	13	0.5
MUSTARD	6.5	1	10	-
NUTMEG	3	0.5	12	6.5
ONION POWDER	5	0.5	6	-
OREGANO	10	2.5	12	1.5
PAPRIKA POWDER	10	2	11	-
PARSLEY (not English)	14	1.5	7.5	-
PEPPER BLACK	7	1.5	12	2
PEPPER WHITE	3.5	0.3	12	1.5
PIMENTO				
Jamaica	5	0.4	12	3.5
Other origins	5	1	12	2
ROSEMARY	8	1	10	1
SAFFRON WHOLE	8	1	12	-
SAFFRON GROUND	8	1.5	10	-
SAGE	12	2	12	1.5
SAVOURY	12	1	12	0.5
TARRAGON	12	1.5	8	0.5
THYME	14	4	12	1
TURMERIC WHOLE	8	2	12	2.5
GROUND	9	2.5	10	1.5