



ASEAN STANDARD FOR OKRA (ASEAN Stan 22:2011)

1. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This standard applies to commercial varieties of okra, which is also known as lady's finger, grown from *Abelmoschus esculentus* (L) Moench (*syn. Hibiscus esculentus* L.) of the Malvaceae family to be supplied fresh to the consumer. Okra for industrial processing is excluded.

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

2.1 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

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

- whole with peduncle intact not to exceed 1 cm;
- firm, not fibrous and easy to snap
- fresh;
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter;
- practically free of foreign smell and taste;
- characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type;
- sound, produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded;
- practically free of pests and damage caused by them affecting the general appearance of the produce:
- practically free from mechanical and/or physiological damage; and
- practically free of surface moisture excluding condensation.

2.1.1 The okra should be harvested and have reached an appropriate degree of development as shown in Annex 1 in accordance with the characteristics proper to the variety and to the area in which they are grown.

The development and condition of the okra must be such as to enable them:

- to withstand transport and handling; and
- to arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination

2.2 CLASSIFICATION

Okra is classified in three classes defined below:

2.2.1 "Extra" Class

Okra in this class must be of superior quality. It must be practically free of defects provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

2.2.2 Class I

Okra in this class must be of good quality. Slight defects in shape and colour may be allowed provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

2.2.3 Class II

This class includes okra which do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified in Section 2.1 above. Okra in this class must be of good quality. Defects of shape and colour may be allowed provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by length of the pod excluding peduncle, in accordance with the following table:

Size Code	Length of pod (cm)
1	>15
2	>11-15
3	>9-11
4	>7-9
5	>5-7
6	3-5

4. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

Tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each package (or in each lot for produce presented in bulk) for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.

4.1 QUALITY TOLERANCES

4.1.1 "Extra" Class

Five percent by number or weight of okra is not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class I or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

4.1.2 Class I

Ten percent by number or weight of okra not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

4.1.3 Class II

Ten percent by number or weight of okra satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of produce affected by rotting or any other deterioration

4.2 SIZE TOLERANCES

For all classes, 10% by number of okra not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing, but falling within the size immediately above or below those indicated in Section 3.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 UNIFORMITY

The contents of each package (or lot for produce presented in bulk) must be uniform and contain only okra of the same variety, origin, quality and size. The visible part of the contents of the package (or lot for produce presented in bulk) must be representative of the entire contents.

5.2 PACKAGING

Okra must be properly packed and stacked in such a way as to protect the produce. The materials used inside the package must be clean and of good quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce. The use of materials, particularly of paper or stamps bearing trade specifications is allowed, provided the printing or labeling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Okra shall be packed in each container in compliance with the *Recommended International Code of Practice for Packaging and Transport of Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 44-1995, Amd. 1-2004)*.

5.2.1 Description of Containers

The containers shall meet the quality, hygiene, ventilation and resistance characteristics to ensure suitable handling, shipping and preserving of the okra. Packages (or lot for produce presented in bulk) must be practically free of foreign matter and smell.

6. MARKING OR LABELING

6.1 CONSUMER PACKAGES

In addition to the requirements of the Codex General Standard for the Labeling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991), the following specific provisions apply:

6.1.1 Nature of Produce

Each package shall be labeled as to the name of the produce and may be labeled as to the name of the variety and/or commercial type.

6.2 NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS

Each package must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside, or in the documents accompanying the shipment. For produce transported in bulk these particulars must appear on a document accompanying the goods.

6.2.1 Identification

Name and address of Exporter, Packer and/or Dispatcher. Identification code (optional).

6.2.2 Nature of Produce

Name of produce, variety and/or commercial type.

6.2.3 Origin of Produce

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

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

- Produce name;
- Variety name (optional);
- Class;
- Size;
- Number of units (optional);
- Net weight (optional).

6.2.5 Official Inspection Mark (optional)

7. CONTAMINANTS

7.1 PESTICIDE RESIDUES

Okra shall comply with those maximum residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and/or by authority for this commodity.

7.2 OTHER CONTAMINANTS

Okra shall comply with those maximum levels for heavy metals established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and/or by authority for this commodity.

8. HYGIENE

8.1 It is recommended that the product covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 3-1997), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

8.2 The product should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).

9. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

Analytical and sampling methods to be used for ascertaining conformance to the requirements of this specification shall be in accordance with relevant text in Codex Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

References:

Proposed Draft Brunei National Standard for Okra, PBD...2010/1

Malaysian Standard for Fresh Lady's Finger (Okra) Specifications – First Revision (MS 1230:2010).

Philippine National Standard. Fresh Vegetable - Okra. PNS/BAFPS 39: 2008 ICS 67.080.

Thai Agriculture Standard:Okra. TAS 1501-2004

ILLUSTRATIONS OF MATURITY STAGES OF OKRA



Figure 1. Examples of good appearance and marketable stages



Figure 2. Over-mature



Figure 3. Examples of deforms – Bent and Twisted



Figure 4. Examples of damages – Pest And Disease



Figure 5. Examples of damages - Mechanical



Figure 6. Examples of damage - Physiological Defects (Blemishes)



Figure 7. Examples of damage – Discoloration

VERNACULAR NAMES OF OKRA IN THE ASEAN REGION

Country	Common Name
Brunei Darussalam	Bendir
Cambodia	Okra Poat Baraing
Indonesia	Okra
Lao PDR	Okra
Malaysia	Bendi
Myanmar	Yone Pa Di
Phillipines	Okra
Thailand	Kra Jeab Khiew
Vietnam	Dau bap