

**Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)
2nd Session**

Goa, India, 14-18 September 2015

European Union comments on

Proposed Draft Standard for Oregano

Agenda Item 6, CX/SCH 15/02/06

**Mixed competence
Member States vote**

The European Union and its Member States (EUMS) would like to thank Argentina and Greece for leading the work on oregano.

The EUMS would like to make the following comments on the proposed draft standard for oregano.

General comments

The lay-out and provisions of standards for different herbs and spices will need to be aligned as far as possible.

Specific comments

2.2 Styles

The style "whole leaf" should be kept as it is recognized in trade.

The styles should be bound to both the aperture size of a sieve and a standardized mesh, because both are used and they are comparable.

3.2.2 Odour, flavor and color

It would be useful to link the flavour to the chemical components of the volatile oil. Thus square bracketed sentence should be retained.

Flavour should be described with: fragrant, warm, ~~un~~ pungent, and **slightly** bitter.

3.2.4.1 Chemical Characteristics

In relation to the content of the volatile oil in oregano, there should be a substantial difference between the different styles and between the different grades/classes of oregano. Hence, the following values should be inserted for the volatile oil content:

PARAMETERS	Requirements for Whole or Crushed/Rubbed styles			Requirements for Ground /Powdered styles		
	Extra	Class/ Grade I	Class/ Grade II	Extra	Class/ Grade I	Class/ Grade II
Volatile oil ml/100 g (dry basis) minimum	2,5	2.00	1.75	1.75	1.50	0.8

3.2.4.2 Physical Characteristics

Footnote (a) of Table 2 reads “The proportion of stalks which have dimensions exceeding 7 mm in length and 3 mm in diameter shall not be more than 50 % (m/m) (w/w) of total extraneous matter content”. The value of 50 % is too high and should be reduced to 5 %. This would bring the provision in line with the corresponding provision in the proposed draft standard for thyme.

5. Contaminants

Section 5.3 should be deleted as the issue of dehydration factors should be addressed in the horizontal Codex provisions on contaminants.

9.2.1

This section should be complemented as follows:

The name of the product shall be as defined in Section 2 Product Definition. It may also include an indication of the **species and** varietal types and of the style as described in Section 2.2. as well as of the product classification, as described in Section 3.2. **In case of products consisting of blends of different species, the name of the product may be followed by the taxonomic names of all species in order of descending quantity.**

9.2.2 Styles

This section can be deleted as the labelling of styles is already covered by section 9.2.1.

10. Methods of analysis and sampling

In relation to moisture, appropriate methods are ISO 760:1978 (distillation) and AOAC 2001.12 which are based on the Karl Fischer titration principle and are appropriate for the determination of moisture content in dried parts of plants high in moisture (1-15%). The application of methods ISO 939:1980 or AOAC 925.40 in dried herbs with high content of volatile oil may result in determining higher moisture content than the actual one and hence these methods should be deleted.

In relation to volatile oils, appropriate methods are ISO 6571:2008 and AOAC 962.17 but not AOAC 948.22 which should be deleted. The latter refers to the determination of the fat content in nuts and nut products using Soxhlet extraction while in herbs the preferable method is distillation.

It should be considered whether the current sampling plan could be replaced by a reference to ISO 948:1989 spices and condiments – sampling plan.