



# MARKETING STANDARDS

## ASPARAGUS Shoots (*Asparagus officinalis* L.)



<b>PRODUCT: ASPARAGUS Shoots (<i>Asparagus officinalis</i> L.)</b> <b>VARIETIES: Several</b>	<b>FILE NUMBER: 4</b> <b>VERSION: 2</b> <b>SOURCE: EU</b>																					
<b>0. REFERENCE</b> Regulation 2377/1999 of 9 November 1999. Amended by: Regulation 46/2003 of 10 January 2003.																						
<b>1. DEFINITION</b>	This standard applies to shoots for supply fresh to the consumer. Asparagus for industrial use are excluded. Shoots are colour classified: a. White asparagus; b. Violet asparagus (tips of a colour between pink and violet or purple and a part of the shoot is white); c. Violet/ green asparagus, part of which is of violet and green colouring; d. Green asparagus (tips and most of the shoot green). This standard does not apply to green and violet/green asparagus of < 3mm diameter and white and violet asparagus of < 8 mm diameter, packed in uniform bundles or unit packages.																					
<b>2. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS</b>																						
Intact, sound, clean, free from unsuitable washing damage, fresh in appearance, practically free from pests and their damages, practically unbruised, free of abnormal external moisture, free of any foreign smell or taste. Shoots must be neither hollow, split, peeled nor broke. Small cracks allowed within the quality tolerance limits. The cut at the base of the shoots must be as clean as possible.																						
<b>3. DEVELOPMENT AND CONDITION</b>																						
Condition must be such as to enable the asparagus shoots to withstand transport and handling and to arrive in satisfactory condition at destination.																						
<b>4. CLASSIFICATION</b>																						
<b>'Extra' Class:</b> Superior quality. Very well formed and practically straight. Very compact tips. A few very slight traces of rust (removable by normal peeling). No traces of woodiness. Green asparagus must be totally green. White asparagus tips and shoots must be white (a faint pink tint is allowed on the shoots). The cut at the base must be as square as possible (when packed in bundles, outside shoots may be bevelled ≤1 cm). <b>Tolerance:</b> 5% by number of weight out of standards, but conforming to Class I standards, or exceptionally coming within Class I tolerances, or having slight unscarred after-harvesting cracks.																						
<b>Class I:</b> Good quality. Well formed and may be slightly curved. Compact tips. Slight traces of rust (removable by normal peeling). A trace of woodiness on the lower part is permissible, provided it disappears by normal peeling. A faint pink tint may appear on the tips and the shoots of the white asparagus. Green asparagus must be green for 80% of the length. No woody shoots are allowed for white asparagus. The cut at the base must be as square as possible. <b>Tolerance:</b> 10% by number or weight out of standards, but conforming to Class II standards, or exceptionally coming within Class I tolerances, or having slight unscarred cracks appearing after harvesting.																						
<b>Class II:</b> Less well formed, more curved traces of rust (removable by normal peeling). Shoots must be slightly woody. Tips of white asparagus may have a colouration including green tint. Violet ones may have a slight green tint. Green asparagus must at least be green for the 60% of the length. The cut at the base of the shoots may be slightly oblique. <b>Tolerance:</b> 10% by number or weight out of standards, with the exception of produce affected by deterioration affecting consumption (e.g. rotting). In addition, 10% by number or weight can be allowed for hollow shoots (no more than 15% in each package or bundle) or shoots showing very slight cracks due to washing.																						
<b>5. SIZING</b>																						
<b>By length:</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Long asparagus: &gt; 17 cm</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Short asparagus: 12 – 17 cm</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Asparagus tips: &lt; 12 cm</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class II asparagus arranged in the packages (not bundled) must be &lt; 12 cm.</li> <li>Maximum length allowed: 22 cm for white and violet asparagus; 27 cm for green and violet/green asparagus.</li> <li>Maximum difference in length of shoots packed in firmly bound bundles: ≤ 5 cm.</li> </ul>		Long asparagus: > 17 cm	Short asparagus: 12 – 17 cm	Asparagus tips: < 12 cm																		
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<b>By diameter: (measured at the mid-point of the length)</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;">Colour group</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Class</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Minimum diameter</th> <th style="width: 55%;">Sizing: Variation between the thinnest and the thickest shoot in the same package or the same bundle.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="3" style="text-align: center;">White and Violet</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Extra</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12 mm</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8 mm maximum</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">I</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10 mm</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10 mm maximum</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">II</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8 mm</td> <td style="text-align: center;">No provision as to uniformity</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Violet/green and Green</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Extra and I</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3 mm</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8 mm maximum</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">II</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3 mm</td> <td style="text-align: center;">No provision as to uniformity</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Colour group	Class	Minimum diameter	Sizing: Variation between the thinnest and the thickest shoot in the same package or the same bundle.	White and Violet	Extra	12 mm	8 mm maximum	I	10 mm	10 mm maximum	II	8 mm	No provision as to uniformity	Violet/green and Green	Extra and I	3 mm	8 mm maximum	II	3 mm	No provision as to uniformity
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<b>Size tolerance:</b> 10% by number or weight of shoots out of specifications with a deviation of ± 1 cm in length and ± 2 mm diameter.																						
<b>6. PRESENTATION</b>																						
<b>Uniformity:</b> in origin, quality, colour group and size (where sizing is compulsory). Visible part representative of the entire content. Colour: shoots of different colour group may be allowed within the following limits: -White asparagus: 10% by number or weight of violet asparagus in class 'Extra' and I and 15% in class II. -Violet, green and violet/green asparagus: 10% by number or weight of another colour group. In class II a mixture of white and violet asparagus is allowed provided it is appropriately marked.																						
<b>Packaging:</b> The produce must be packed in such a way to assure its protection. Materials must be new, clean and of a proper quality. Non-toxic ink or glue. Packages must be free of all foreign matter.																						
<b>Presentation:</b> (a) in bundles, firmly bound and protected by paper. Outside shoots must correspond in appearance and diameter with the average of the whole bundle. 'Extra' Class shoots in a bundle must be of the same length. In any one package: bundles of same weight & length and evenly arranged. (b) in unit packages, or arranged but not bundled in the package.																						
<b>Mixed products:</b> Asparagus shoots may be mixed, in sales packages of < 3 Kg net weight, with different types of fresh fruit and vegetables on the condition laid down by the Regulation 48/2003 of 10 January 2003.																						



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<p><b>7. MARKING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- legibly and indelibly marked,</li> <li>- grouped on the same side,</li> <li>- visible from the outside.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Identification:</b> The name and address of the packer and/or dispatcher, which can be replaced on: <i>packages but not pre-packages</i> by a code mark (officially issued or accepted) of the packer and/or dispatcher. The latter should be accompanied by the words “packer and/or dispatcher” (or equivalent abbreviations); or <i>pre-packages only</i> by the name and address of a seller in the EU in close connection with the words “Packed for:” and a code to represent the packer and/or distributor (coded information must be available on request).            Packages containing sales packages visible from the outside, marked with the above markings, must be free of markings. Where palletised, the pallet should be labelled with the above information on two sides.</p>		
	<p><b>Nature of the produce:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ‘Asparagus’ followed by the ‘colour group’, if not visible from outside,</li> <li>- ‘short’, ‘tips’ or ‘mixture white and violet’, where appropriate.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Origin:</b> Country (comp) and district or local name (opt)</p>
	<p><b>Commercial specifications:</b></p> Class; Size expressed as: min. – max. diameters (for asparagus subjected to the uniformity rules) or, min. diameter followed by max. diameter or the words ‘and over’ (when not subjected to uniformity rules); number of bundles or unit packages (for asparagus packed in bundles or unit packages).		<p><b>Official control mark:</b> (opt)</p>
<b>8. CONTAMINANTS</b>			
<b>Heavy metals</b>	<b>Maximum level</b>	<b>Commission Regulation</b>	<b>Sampling &amp; Analysis methods</b>
<b>Lead (Pb)</b>	0,1 mg/kg wet weight	466/2001	Directive 2001/22/EC
<b>Cadmium (Cd)</b>	0,1 mg/kg wet weight	466/2001	Directive 2001/22/EC