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Report Name: China Notifies National Standard Restricting Excessive Packaging for Edible Agricultural Products

Country: China - People's Republic of

Post: Beijing

Report Category: FAIRS Subject Report, Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety, Trade Policy Monitoring, WTO Notifications

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Report Highlights:

On February 3, 2023, China notified a new national standard to the World Trade Organization (WTO) restricting excessive packaging for edible agricultural products (G/TBT/N/CHN/1715). The deadline for comment submission is April 4, 2023. The proposed date of entry into force is to be determined. Comments may be submitted to China's WTO TBT National Notification and Enquiry Center at tbt@customs.gov.cn. This report provides an unofficial translation of the draft standard.

Summary:

On February 3, 2023, China notified a new national standard restricting excessive packaging for edible agricultural products to the WTO under G/TBT/N/CHN/1715. It is the first mandatory national standard that focuses on technical requirements and testing determination of excessive packaging for edible agricultural products.

The new standard specified the requirements for restricting excessive packaging of edible agricultural products including the interspace ratio, packaging layers, packaging cost, and packaging weight ratio for fruits, meat, eggs, and aquatic products. It also describes the testing methods and determination rules corresponding to the above requirements. The standard applies to the sales packaging of fresh edible agricultural products but doesn't apply to gifts and items not for sale.

In 2014, China released a recommended national standard (GB/T 31268-2014) on the General Rules of Restricting Excessive Packaging on Commodities, including requirements, costs and the testing determination rules for all commodities. In 2021, China released an updated standard for Requirements of Restricting Packaging for Foods and Cosmetics (GB 23350-2021) including mandatory technical requirements on restricting excessive packaging to foods and cosmetics.

BEGIN TRANSLATION

National Standard GBXXXX-202X

Requirements of restricting excessive packaging -- Edible agricultural products

（**Open for comments**）

（**Draft completion date: Nov 16, 2022**）

 Forward

This document is drafted in accordance with the provisions of GB/T 1.1-2020 "Guidelines for Standardization Work Part 1: Structure and Drafting Rules for Standardization Documents."

Please note that some contents of this document may refer to patents. The issuing agency of this document assumes no responsibility for identifying patents.

This document was proposed and managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

This document is published for the first time.

GB XXXX-202X

1 Scope

This document specifies the requirements for restricting excessive packaging of edible agricultural products, describes the detection methods corresponding to the above requirements, and gives the determination rules.

This document applies to the sales packaging of fresh edible agricultural products, not to gifts or non-sale items.

2 Normative references

This document has no normative references.

3 Terms and Definitions

The following terms and definitions apply to this document.

3.1

Excessive packaging

Packages with interspace ratio, layers, cost, and weight ratios exceeding the requirements.

3.2

Sales package

The packaging that reaches consumers together with edible agricultural products for the main purpose of sales does not include logistics protective packaging added due to online sales and delivery, and cooling supplies or water increased for freshness and preservation of agricultural products.

3.3

Number of packaging layers

Layers of physically detachable packaging that completely enclose edible produce.

Note: Complete wrapping refers to the packing method that prevents the commodities from falling out.

3.4

Weight ratio of sales package

The weight of the sales package is the percentage of the total weight of the product, expressed in WR.

3.5

Interspace ratio

The ratio of the volume of sales packaging (after deducting the volume of edible agricultural products) to the volume of edible agricultural products, expressed in IR.

3.6

Necessary interspace ratio of commodity

Necessary packaging interspace required to protect edible agricultural products, expressed in IRN.

4 Requirements

4.1 Packaging interspace ratio

The necessary packaging interspace ratio of edible agricultural products shall meet the requirements in Table 1. If there are two or more types of edible agricultural products in the package, the maximum volume of the corresponding net weight shall be taken.

Table 1 Necessary packaging interspace ratio of edible agricultural products

category	Net weight (W net) kg	Necessary packaging interspace ratio (IRN)
Fruit	≤ 1	≤ 20
	$1 < W\ net \leq 3$	≤ 15
	> 3	≤ 10
Meat	≤ 1	≤ 30
	$1 < W\ net \leq 3$	≤ 20
	> 3	≤ 15
Eggs	≤ 3	≤ 15
	> 3	≤ 10

Aquatic Products [a]	all	≤30

Note: [a] live aquatic products in oxygenated packaging are not included.

4.2 Packing layers

There should be no more than 4 layers for meat and no more than 3 layers for other edible agricultural products.

4.3 Packaging cost

The cost of sales packaging should not exceed 20% of the sales price of the product.

4.4 Packaging weight ratio

It should not exceed 30%. For example, when the weight of crab bundles is included in the priced weight, the weight of a single bundle should not exceed 5% of the total weight of a single crab (including bundles).

5. Testing

5.1 Sampling

For the edible agricultural products of the same category, the same net weight range, and the same packaging style, the sampling quantity is 2 pieces.

5.2 Equipment and Tools

5.2.1 Weight determination

Scales, balances or their automated equipment and tools for weight determination shall meet the measurement requirements, with the tolerance scope of less than 0.05 kg.

5.2.2 Length determination

The ruler, caliper or its automatic equipment and tools for measuring length shall meet the measurement requirements, and the tolerance scope shall be less than 1 mm.

5.2.3 Volume determination

The measuring barrel, volume measuring instrument or its automatic equipment and tools for measuring volume shall meet the measurement requirements, and the tolerance scope shall be less than 0.1 L.

5.3 Measurement of sales package volume

5.3.1 Regular commodities

Under room temperature and pressure, for the cuboid commodity sales package, use a length measuring instrument to directly measure the length, width, and height of the sales package along the outer wall of

the package, repeat 3 times, and the average value is recorded as the volume of the sales packages. For the cylindrical product sales package, use a length measuring instrument to directly measure the diameter and height of the sales package along the outer wall of the package, repeat 3 times, take the arithmetic mean value and record it as the volume of the sales package.

5.3.2 Irregular commodities

Irregular commodities are determined by the drainage method.

5.3.2.1 Rigid outer packaging

a) Sealable: Under room temperature and pressure, completely immerse the sales package in a container filled with water, accurately measure the volume before and after immersion, the increased volume is the volume of the sales package, repeat 3 times, and take the arithmetic mean value as sales package volume;

b) Unsealable: use a plastic film to seal the periphery, and then follow the operation of 5.3.2.1 a);

5.3.2.2 Flexible outer packaging

a) Sealable: add water inside, and then follow the operation of 5.3.2.1 a);

b) Unsealable: Use plastic film to seal the periphery, add water inside, and then follow the operation in 5.3.2.1 a).

5.4 Calculation of packaging interspace ratio

Calculate according to formula (1).

$$IR = \frac{V\,total - V\,net}{V\,net} \qquad \text{............................} \qquad (1)$$

In the formula:

IR -- package interspace ratio, accurate to 1 decimal;

V total -- the volume of the sales package, in liters (L);

V net -- the total volume of edible agricultural products contained in the commodity, converted by the net weight of edible agricultural products. 1 kg is counted as 1 L.

5.5 Calculation of packaging layers

5.5.1 The packaging that directly contacts edible agricultural products is the first layer, and so on, the outermost packaging is the Nth layer, and N is the number of layers of packaging.

5.5.2 Material layers that directly contact edible agricultural products and are inherent properties of the product, and the heat-shrinkable films that are close to the outside of the sales package are not counted.

5.5.3 If the same sales package contains edible agricultural products with different packaging layers, only the packaging layers of the edible agricultural products with restrictions on the number of packaging layers shall be counted. For edible agricultural products that have restrictions on the number of packaging layers, calculate their packaging layers to determine whether the edible agricultural products meet the requirements according to the restrictions on the number of packaging layers.

5.6 Calculation of packaging costs

Calculate according to formula (2).

$$Y = \frac{C}{P} *100\% \qquad \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots \quad (2)$$

In the formula:

Y -- packaging cost, the unit is %, accurate to 1 decimal;

C -- the sum of the purchase price of the sales package, in yuan;

P -- the sales price of the commodity, in yuan.

Note: The sales package included in the price includes packaging materials, bindings, pads, oxygen absorber packets, small tools, moisture-proof desiccant, non-edible agricultural product gifts, etc.

5.7 Calculation of packaging weight ratio

Calculate according to formula (3).

$$WR = \frac{W\,pac}{W\,total} *100\% \qquad \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots \quad (3)$$

In the formula:

WR - packaging weight ratio, in %, accurate to 1 decimal;

W pac - the total weight of the sales package, in kilograms (kg);

W total - the total weight of the product, in kilograms (kg).

Note: The sales package included in the weight includes packaging materials, bundles, pads, oxygen absorbent packets, small tools, moisture-proof desiccant, etc.

5.8 Repeatability

Under repeatability conditions to obtain two independent measurement results, the absolute difference should not exceed 10% of the arithmetic mean.

6 Determination rules

If there is one item of commodity packaging that does not meet the requirements stipulated in Chapter 4, the packaging of the commodity will be determined as excessive packaging.

Attachments:

No Attachments.