

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE**(Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare)****NOTIFICATION**

New Delhi, the 12th July, 2022

G.S.R. 538(E).—Whereas, the draft of the Almond (kernel) Grading and Marking Rules, 2022, was published under sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act (1 of 1937) in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i), vide number G.S.R.217 (E), dated the 22nd March, 2022, inviting objections and suggestions from all persons likely to be affected thereby within forty-five days from the date on which copies of the said notification published in the Gazette of India, were made available to the public;

And whereas, the copies of the said notification were made available to the public on 22nd March, 2022, and whereas, the objections and suggestions received from the stakeholders in respect of the said draft rules have been duly considered;

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937 (1 of 1937), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules, namely:-

- 1. Short title, application and commencement.** - (1) These rules may be called the Almond (kernel) Grading and Marking Rules, 2022.
 - (2) They shall apply to Almond (kernel) obtained from *Prunus amygdalus Batsch. syn. Prunus dulcis (Mill.)D.A. Webb* intended for human consumption.
 - (3) They shall come into force on the date of their final publication in the Official Gazette.
- 2. Definitions.** - (1) In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires,-
 - (a) "Agricultural Marketing Adviser" means the Agricultural Marketing Adviser to the Government of India;
 - (b) "authorised packer" means a person or a body of persons who has been granted a certificate of authorisation to grade and mark the Almond (kernel) in accordance with the grade standards and procedure provided under these rules and the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988;
 - (c) "Certificate of Authorisation" means a certificate issued under the provisions of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, authorising a person or a body of person to grade and mark Almond (kernel) with the Grade Designation Mark;
 - (d) "General Grading and Marking Rules" means the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988 made under section 3 of the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937 (1 of 1937);
 - (e) "Grade Designation Mark" means "AGMARK Insignia" referred to in rule 3;
 - (f) "Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules" means the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, made under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 (1 of 2010); and
 - (g) "Schedule" means a Schedule appended to these rules.

(2) The words and expressions used in these rules and not defined but defined in the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937 or the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, shall have the same meaning as are assigned to them under the said Act or the Rules.
- 3. Grade Designation Mark.**-The Grade Designation Mark shall consist of the design of "AGMARK Insignia" as set out in Schedule-I, incorporating the certificate of authorisation number, the word "AGMARK", the name of commodity and its grade.
- 4. Grade designations.**- The grade designations to indicate the quality of Almond (kernel) including the criteria for grade designation shall be as set out in Schedule-II.

- 5. Quality.** - For the purpose of these rules, the quality of Almond (kernel) shall be as provided in Schedule- II.
- 6. Method of packing.** -(1) The Almond (kernel) shall be packed in new clean paper bags or cloth bags or dry jute bags or poly woven bags with inner lining of food grade material or new glass jar or any bio-degradable packaging materials or poly packs of food grade material or any other packaging material as approved by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser or the officer authorised by him under rule 11 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988.
- (2) The packaging material shall be free from insect and fungal infestation and should not impart any toxic substance or undesirable odour or flavor to the product.
- (3) The Almond (kernel) shall be packed in pack sizes either in accordance with the provisions of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 or as allowed by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser under rule 11 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988.
- (4) The graded material of small pack sizes of the same lot or batch and grade may be packed in a master container with complete details thereon along with Grade Designation Mark.
- (5) Each package shall contain Almond (kernel) of the same type and of the same grade designation.
- (6) Each package shall be properly and securely closed and sealed so as to disallow spilling.
- 7. Method of Marking.** -(1) The Grade Designation Mark shall be securely affixed to or printed on each package in the manner approved by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser or the officer authorised by him under rule 11 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988.
- (2) In addition to the Grade Designation Mark, following particulars shall be clearly and indelibly marked on each package, namely. –
- name of the commodity;
 - grade;
 - variety or trade name (optional);
 - lot /batch number;
 - date of packing;
 - crop year (optional);
 - net weight;
 - name and address of the authorized packer;
 - maximum retail price (inclusive of all taxes);
 - BEST BEFORE _____MONTH_____YEAR; and
 - any other particulars as provided under the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 or specified under the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 and the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020 or any notification issued under any other law for the time being in force or any instructions issued under provisions of the Act:
- Provided that the ink used for marking on packages shall not contaminate the Almond (kernel).
- (3) The authorised packer may after obtaining prior approval of the Agricultural Marketing Adviser or an officer authorised by him under rule 11 of General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, mark his private trade mark or trade brand on the graded packages provided the same do not indicate quality other than that indicated by the Grade Designation Mark affixed to the graded packages in accordance with these rules.
- 8. Special conditions of Certificate of Authorisation.** -(1) In addition to the conditions specified in sub-rule (8) of rule 3 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, every authorised packer shall comply the conditions specified under these rules.

(2) The authorised packer shall either set up his own laboratory as per norms issued under rule 8 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, or have access to an approved State Grading Laboratory or cooperative or association laboratory or a private commercial laboratory manned by a qualified chemist approved by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser or the officer authorised by him under rule 9 of the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, for testing the quality of Almond (kernel).

(3) The premises of authorised packer shall be maintained in hygienic and sanitary conditions with proper ventilations and well lighted arrangement and the personnel engaged in these operations shall be in sound health and free from any infectious, contagious or communicable diseases.

(4) The premises of the authorised packer shall have adequate storage facilities with pucca floor and free from dampness, any kind of cracks and crevices, rodent and insect infestation.

(5) The authorised packer and the approved chemist shall observe all instructions regarding testing, grading, packing, marking, sealing and maintenance of records which may be issued by the Agricultural Marketing Adviser or an officer authorised by him in this behalf in accordance with the General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988 from time to time.

SCHEDULE-I

(See rule 3)

(Design of AGMARK Insignia)



Name of the Commodity.....

Grade.....

SCHEDULE-II

(See rules 4 and 5)

Grade Designation and Quality of Almond (kernel)

1. Almond (kernel) shall be obtained by drying sound, mature, clean fruits of *Prunus amygdalus Batsch. syn. Prunus dulcis (Mill.)D.A. Webb* varieties.
2. Minimum requirements:
 - (i) Almond (kernel) shall.-
 - (a) be sound, whole, sufficiently dried and properly cleaned;
 - (b) have uniform colour and achieved appropriate stage of maturity;
 - (c) have pleasant taste and flavour characteristics to the variety;
 - (d) be free from visible mould growth, rodent contamination;
 - (e) be free from foreign matter, particles, dust, soil, extraneous vegetable matter, living insects, dead insects, insect fragments, insect eggs, mites, rodent contamination;
 - (f) be free from any added coloring matter;

- (g) be free from off-odor, evidences of fermentation, mustiness and rancidity;
- (ii) for domestic trade, it shall comply with the restrictions in regard to residual levels of metal contaminants, insecticides and pesticides residue, microbial requirements, crop contaminants, naturally occurring toxic substances and other food safety requirements as specified under the Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011, the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011 and other regulations made for domestic trade under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006(34 of 2006).
- (iii) for export trade, it shall comply with the residual limits of heavy metals, pesticides and other food safety requirements as laid down by the Codex Alimentarius Commission or importing countries requirement for exports.

3. Criteria for Grade Designation of Almond (kernel):

TABLE

Grade Designation	Maximum limit of tolerance (Percent by mass)											Oil Content % by weight ODB (Minimum)
	Moisture	In shell almonds, shell or skin fragments	Rancid, rotten and damaged by insects or other pests	Gummy and brown spot	Blemished & Discoloured Kernels	Shrunken or shriveled, Dissimilar kernels	Spilt, Broken & Kernels	Chipped & Scratched Kernels	Double & twin Kernel	Acid Value of Extracted Oil, as oleic acid	Acid insoluble Ash %	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Special	5.0	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.4	0.1	49.0
Standard	5.5	0.25	1.0	2.0	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.0	4.0	0.6		47.0
General	6.0				4.0	4.0	5.0	7.0	9.0	1.25		45.0
Total tolerance: Not more than 10.0												

ODB means on dry weight basis.

Explanations: For the purpose of this Table, the expressions,-

- (a) Blemishes and discolored means damage caused by excessive heat/ sunburn, scars, mechanical injury that affects the flavor, color, appearance or edibility of the kernel.
- (b) “brown spot” means slightly depressed brown spots on the almond kernel, affecting or not the endosperm, either single or multiple, caused by the sting of insects as the box elder bug (*Leptocoris trivittatus* Say.), covering in aggregate an area more than the equivalent of a circle of 3 mm in diameter; and blemish and discoloration apparent and spread stains, other than gum and brown spot, or severe dark or black discoloration contrasting with the natural colour of the kernel skin, affecting in aggregate more than one quarter of the surface of the almond kernel; it is not considered as a defect the normal colour variations between the kernels of one lot.
- (c) Chipped kernel means mechanically damaged almond kernel from which less than one quarter of the kernel is missing; it is not considered as a defect the loss, in aggregate, of less than the equivalent of a circle of 3 mm in diameter.
- (d) Double kernel means two kernels developing in one shell, one side of a kernel is flat or concave.
- (e) “gummy” means resinous appearing substance, affecting or not the endosperm covering in aggregate an area more than the equivalent of a circle of 6 mm in diameter.
- (f) Scratched kernel means superficially mechanically damaged almond (kernel) with absence of part of the skin, affecting or not the endosperm; it is not considered as a defect, lack of skin or scratched area of less, in aggregate, than the equivalent of a circle of 3 mm in diameter.

- (g) Shrunken or shriveled dissimilar kernels means extremely flat and wrinkled, or almond (kernel) with desiccated, dried out or tough portions when the affected portion represents more than one quarter of the kernel.
- (h) Split and broken means almonds with more than one-third missing portion.
4. Other requirements:-
- (i) The condition of the Almond (kernel) shall be so as to enable it to –
- (a) withstand transport and handling; and
- (b) arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.
- (ii) Almond (kernel) shall be stored in cool, dry place and properly maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

[F. No. Q-11047/06/Almond/2019-Std.]

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