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**Coffee and coffee products —  
Determination of particle size of  
ground roasted coffee — Horizontal  
sieving motion method using circular  
brushes**

*Café et dérivés du café — Détermination de la taille des grains de café  
torréfié moulu — Méthode de tamisage horizontal à l'aide de brosses  
circulaires*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 34, *Food products*, Subcommittee SC 15, *Coffee*.

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Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

# Coffee and coffee products — Determination of particle size of ground roasted coffee — Horizontal sieving motion method using circular brushes

## 1 Scope

This document specifies a method for carrying out particle-size distribution analysis of roasted ground coffee by horizontal sieving motion method using circular brushes to minimize the effects of obstruction, agglomeration and adhesion. It specifies general principles to follow concerning apparatus, procedure and presentation of results.

This document is applicable to particle sizes ranging from approximately 150  $\mu\text{m}$  to 2 mm.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 565, *Test sieves — Metal wire cloth, perforated metal plate and electroformed sheet — Nominal sizes of openings*

ISO 2395, *Test sieves and test sieving — Vocabulary*

ISO 3310-1, *Test sieves — Technical requirements and testing — Part 1: Test sieves of metal wire cloth*

ISO 9276-1, *Representation of results of particle size analysis — Part 1: Graphical representation*

ISO 9276-2, *Representation of results of particle size analysis — Part 2: Calculation of average particle sizes/diameters and moments from particle size distributions*

ISO 9276-3, *Representation of results of particle size analysis — Part 3: Adjustment of an experimental curve to a reference model*

ISO 9276-4, *Representation of results of particle size analysis — Part 4: Characterization of a classification process*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 2395 apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

## 4 Principle

Separate a sample of roasted ground coffee by horizontal sieving machines using circular brushes on each test sieve to obtain reliable analysis.

[Annex B](#) compares the results of the horizontal sieving method (with or without brushes) to the results of the laser diffraction method.

## 5 Apparatus

The usual laboratory apparatus and, in particular, the following shall be used.

### 5.1 Horizontal sieve shaker or tap sieve shaker.

The equipment shall be provided with a timer that counts to at least 10 min, as well as all the necessary accessories for its proper and safe functioning.

### 5.2 Test sieves.

The sieves given in [Table 1](#) shall be used in accordance with ISO 565 and ISO 3310-1. It is not necessary to use sieves smaller than 150 µm (experimental evidence for this is given in [Annex C](#)).

Test sieving shall be carried out with a single test sieve or with a series of test sieves with different nominal aperture sizes. A lid and receiver pan should be included in both cases, where appropriate. The number of sieves used in the test should be sufficient to give the requisite information about the material and to avoid excessive wear or blinding.

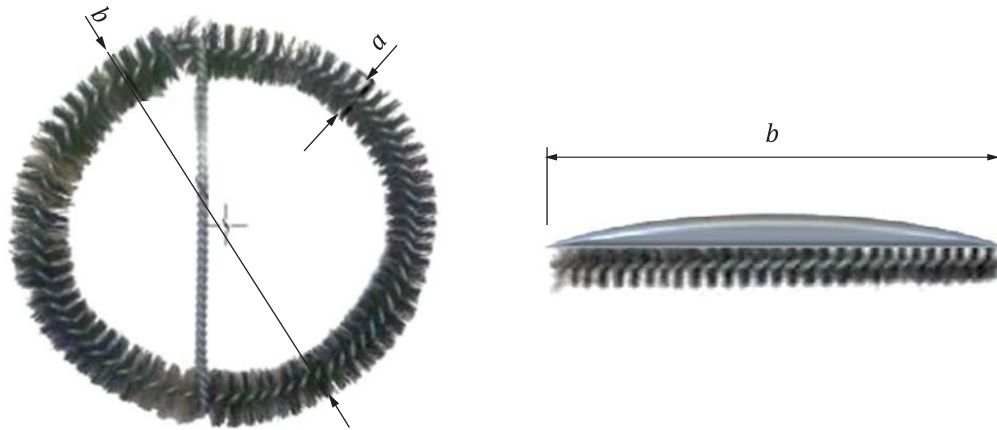
**Table 1 — Sieves' opening in accordance with ISO 565 and ISO 3310-1**

Series R 20/3 µm	Series R 40/3 µm
1 400	1 180
1 000	850
710	600
500	425
355	300
250	212
180	150

**5.3 Balance**, capable of weighing to an accuracy of 0,1 g.

**5.4 Special circular brush**, with a convex or flat cap and a mass not greater than 25 g in order to avoid possible fractionation of the material by the brush. For detailed information on the brushes and their manufacturing, see [Annex E](#).

A special circular brush with a cap is illustrated in [Figure 1](#).

**Key**

- a* bristle brush diameter: 13 mm to 17 mm  
*b* circular brush diameter: 80 mm to 100 mm

**Figure 1 — Special circular brush with a cap**

## 6 Sample preparation

### 6.1 General

The sampling method used should be such that the sample taken for sieving is truly representative of sample material from which it has been drawn.

### 6.2 Division of the sample

The original sample is often too large for direct use in a sieve test: it shall therefore be reduced. In reducing the sample, it is just as important to ensure that the final quantity (test sample) taken for sieving is truly representative of the original sample as it is to ensure that the original sample was representative of the material.

NOTE A precision divider can be used for this purpose.

### 6.3 Test sample

Take a test sample of a division process, between 40 g to 50 g.

## 7 Procedure

- 7.1 Weigh the receiver, making sure it is completely clean.
- 7.2 Weigh each sieve with one brush (5.4) (this is the initial mass) and assemble in increasing order of mesh opening on top of the receiver.
- 7.3 Weigh the test portion of sample obtained from 6.2 to the nearest 0,1 g.
- 7.4 Place the sample in the top sieve and cover with a lid.
- 7.5 Place the set of sieves in the equipment (5.1), tighten and sieve the sample for 10 min.

7.6 Separate each sieve and weigh with its corresponding special circular brush to the nearest 0,1 g (this is the final mass).

7.7 Calculate the difference between the final mass and the initial mass per sieve.

7.8 Carry out at least two tests.

## 8 Precision of the method

### 8.1 Interlaboratory test

Details of the interlaboratory test to determine the precision of the method are summarized in [Annex A](#).

The repeatability and reproducibility limits, as defined in ISO 5725-1, were calculated in accordance with ISO 5725-6.

The model of RRBS, as defined in ISO 9276-3:2008, Table 1, was used to determine the particle size ( $x_{50,3}$ ) of the coffee samples.

### 8.2 Repeatability

The absolute difference between two independent single test results, obtained using the same method on identical test material in the same laboratory by the same operator using the same equipment within a short interval of time, may not exceed the repeatability limits,  $r$ , given in [Table A.1](#) in more than 5 % of cases (i.e. repeatability at a 95 % probability).

### 8.3 Reproducibility

The absolute difference between two single test results, obtained using the same method on identical test material in different laboratories with different operators using different equipment, may not exceed the reproducibility limits,  $R$ , given in [Table A.1](#) in more than 5 % of cases (i.e. reproducibility at a 95 % probability).

## 9 Test report

Report results in accordance with ISO 9276-1, ISO 9276-2, ISO 9276-3 or ISO 9276-4.

The test report shall contain at least the following information:

- a) any information necessary for the identification of the sample (type, origin and designation of the sample);
- b) the date and type of sampling procedure (if known);
- c) the date of sample receipt;
- d) the date of test;
- e) the test results and the units in which they have been expressed as well as statistical information on the accuracy of these results, if required;
- f) any special observations made during testing;
- g) any operations of the procedure not specified in the method or regarded as optional, which might have affected the results.



[Annex D](#) gives a representation of results of particle size analysis using Rosin-Rammler-Bennett-Sperling (RRBS) to determine the particle size of a coffee sample. Refer to ISO 9276-3 for any other models.

NOTE It is possible to use commercial software for this purpose, provided it is validated.

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## Annex A (informative)

### Precision data of the validation study on the particle sizes of ground roasted coffee for horizontal sieving motion method using circular brushes

An interlaboratory test was carried out with each laboratory performing three determinations, and which gave the statistical information summarized in [Table A.1](#). This information was evaluated in accordance with ISO 5725-2. RRBS was used to determine the particle size ( $x_{50,3}$ ) of the coffee samples.

For samples “coarse” and “medium”, the set of Series R 40/3 was used (see [Table 1](#)). For the sample “fine”, a set of only four sieves up to 600  $\mu\text{m}$  was chosen.

**Table A.1 — Precision data of interlaboratory test (results expressed in  $\mu\text{m}$ )**

Coffee grind size	Coarse	Medium	Fine
Number of laboratories	5	5	5
Mean ( $x_{50,3}$ )	1 117	762	302
Standard deviation of repeatability, $S_r$	47	11	7
Coefficient of variation of repeatability, $C_{V,r}$ %	4,2 %	1,5 %	2,4 %
Repeatability limit ( $2,8 \times S_r$ )	132	32	20
Standard deviation of reproducibility, $S_R$	76	35	44
Coefficient of variation of reproducibility, $C_{V,R}$ %	6,8 %	4,6 %	14,5 %
Reproducibility limit ( $2,8 \times S_R$ )	212	99	122

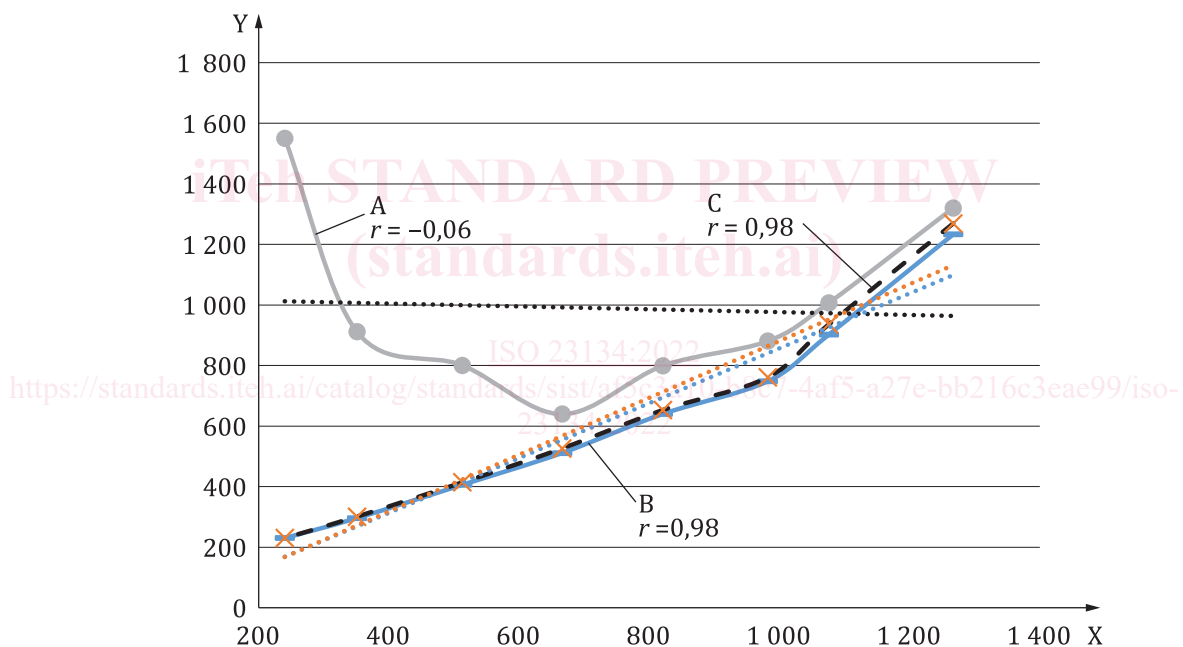
## Annex B (informative)

### Reliability of the horizontal sieving method using brushes

In order to establish the reliability of the horizontal sieving method using the brushes, samples within a 240  $\mu\text{m}$  to 1 200  $\mu\text{m}$  range of roasted and ground coffee were tested (with and without brushes), and results were compared with those of the laser diffraction dry method.

Figure B.1 shows that the finer the particle is, the less correlation there is between the result of horizontal sieving motion method without the brushes ( $r = -0,06$ ) and the laser diffraction method.

When the brushes are used in horizontal sieving either with or without tapping motion, the result of both have a high correlation ( $r = 0,98$ ) with the laser diffraction method, in the range of 200  $\mu\text{m}$  to 1 400  $\mu\text{m}$ .



#### Key

- X laser diffraction method ( $\mu\text{m}$ )
- Y horizontal sieving motion method ( $\mu\text{m}$ )
- A horizontal sieving motion method
- B horizontal sieving motion method with brushes
- C horizontal sieving motion method with taps and brushes

Figure B.1 — Horizontal sieving motion method versus laser diffraction method