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Onions — Guide to storage

Oignons — Guide pour l'entreposage

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Foreword

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Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

International Standard ISO 1673 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 34, *Agricultural food products*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 1673:1978), of which it constitutes a technical revision.

Annex A of this International Standard is for information only.

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Onions — Guide to storage

1 Scope

This International Standard gives recommendations for the storage, with or without the use of artificial refrigeration, of onions of the species *Allium cepa* Linnaeus, intended for long-term conservation and consumption in the fresh state.

Information on the limits of application of this International Standard are given annex A.

2 Normative reference

The following standard contains provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. At the time of publication, the edition indicated was valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent edition of the standard indicated below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO 2169:1981, *Fruits and vegetables — Physical conditions in cold stores — Definitions and measurement*.

3 Conditions of harvesting and putting into store

3.1 Cultivars

It is necessary to choose onions of cultivars recognized as being well suited for keeping.

NOTE 1 Onions of late cultivars are generally chosen.

3.2 Harvesting

The onions should be harvested when 65 % to 75 % of the green leaves have turned yellow, the necks have become soft and the leaves are drooping, and the bulbs are covered with well-

differentiated outer scales signifying that they are in a state of physiological rest.

The onions should be harvested in such a way that they are neither bruised or otherwise damaged.

The stem should be cut so that it does not exceed 4 cm after drying (see 3.4).

3.3 Quality characteristics

Qualitative inspection of onions for conservation is strongly recommended.

It is necessary to choose onion bulbs of good quality, meeting the following requirements: sound, free from mechanical injuries, well covered by outer scales, well dried, ripe and homogeneous.

The onions should be free from foreign odour.

Bulbs having floral stems, or which are not covered by outer scales, which are double, triple, too large, too small, deformed, or not fully mature, should not be stored.

3.4 Various treatments before storage

To avoid sprouting, approved phytosanitary inhibitors may be applied if their use is not restricted.

Before storage, the onions should be dried to eliminate excess external moisture and moisture in the outer scales, the rootlets and the neck.

If natural drying is not possible, a suitable method of artificial drying should be used, for example exposure to a current of warm dry air for a period of 4 days up to a maximum of 8 days, depending on the moisture content. The air temperature may be up to a maximum of 30 °C and the relative humidity should, if possible, be from 60 % to 70 %. The rate of air flow may be from 2 m³/min to 2,5 m³/min per cubic metre of bulbs. Ventilation should be effected either with fresh air from outside the store or with a mixture of outside and inside air, with different rates of air change for the two different types of ventilation. Alternatively, the internal air may simply be