



**International
Standard**

ISO 8961

**Traditional Chinese medicine —
Areca catechu seed**

Médecine traditionnelle chinoise — Graine d'Areca catechu

**First edition
2026-07**

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Published in Switzerland

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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 document 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).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 249, *Traditional medicine*, Subcommittee SC 1, *Traditional Chinese medicine*.

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.

Introduction

Areca catechu seed is a well-known traditional Chinese medicine, and its pinyin name is Bing Lang. Currently, it is commonly used as one of the main traditional Chinese materia medica in over 100 prescriptions based on its wide spectrum of biological and pharmacological activities, for treating various gastrointestinal, parasitic and oedematous diseases. The global import and export trade volume is huge with sustainable growth in recent years. The countries of trade mainly include India, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, Cambodia, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Nepal and Bangladesh. However, the following concerns exist regarding the quality control of *Areca catechu* seed:

- a) The processing method, storage practices and operation technology of *Areca catechu* seed have not been standardized, which can affect the quality and safety of medicinal materials.
- b) The requirements for *Areca catechu* seed are different in different countries, including China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand. The applicability of standards is limited and affects international trade.
- c) *Areca catechu* seed is ranked no. 39 in the priority list of single herbal medicines for developing standards in ISO/TR 23975, which is in the high priority of developing international standards.

Therefore, there is a clear and urgent need to develop an International Standard for the quality control of *Areca catechu* seed and its products.

This document aims to harmonize the existing standards to ensure the safety and effectiveness of *Areca catechu* seeds, which can benefit farmers, consumers, enterprises and governments involved in the cultivation, regulation and trade of *Areca catechu* seed.

As national implementation can differ, and examples of national and regional values are given in [Annex D](#).

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Traditional Chinese medicine — *Areca catechu* seed

1 Scope

This document specifies the minimum requirements and test methods for *Areca catechu* seed.

This document applies to *Areca catechu* seed that is sold and used as natural medicines in international trade, including Chinese materia medica (whole medicinal materials) and decoction pieces derived from this plant.

This document does not apply to processed decoction pieces of *Areca catechu* seed.

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 18664, *Traditional Chinese Medicine — Determination of heavy metals in herbal medicines used in Traditional Chinese Medicine*

ISO 21371, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Labelling requirements of products intended for oral or topical use*

ISO 22217, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Storage requirements for raw materials and decoction pieces*

ISO 22258, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Determination of pesticide residues in natural products by gas chromatography*

ISO 22283, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Determination of aflatoxins in natural products by LC-FLD*

ISO 22590, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Determination of sulfur dioxide in natural products by titration*

ISO 23723, *Traditional Chinese medicine — General requirements for herbal raw material and materia medica*

ISO/TS 13126, *Traditional Chinese medicine — Determination of ochratoxin A in natural products by liquid chromatography coupled with fluorescence detector*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions 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/>

3.1 seed

mature ovule consisting of an embryo and its store of food surrounded by a protective seed coat

3.2 *Areca catechu* seed

dried ripe seed (3.1) of *Areca catechu* L. (Fam. Palmae)