



International
Standard

ISO 959-1

**Pepper (*Piper nigrum* L.), whole or
ground — Specification —**

Part 1:
Black pepper

*Poivre (*Piper nigrum* L.), entier ou en poudre — Spécifications —*

Partie 1: Poivre noir

**Third edition
2026-05**

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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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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 34, *Food products*, Subcommittee SC 7, *Spices, culinary herbs and condiments*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 959-1:1998), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- the normative references have been updated;
- the “best before date” has been added in [8.2](#).

A list of all parts in the ISO 959 series can be found on the ISO website.

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.

Pepper (*Piper nigrum* L.), whole or ground — Specification —

Part 1: Black pepper

1 Scope

This document specifies requirements for black pepper (*Piper nigrum* L.) (see ISO 676), whole or ground at the following commercial stages:

- a) non-processed black pepper (NP) or semi-processed black pepper (SP);
- b) processed black pepper (P), which can, in certain cases, be re-sold directly to the consumers.

This document does not apply to black pepper categories called “light”.

NOTE Specifications for white pepper are given in ISO 959-2.

Recommendations relating to storage and transport conditions are given in [Annex C](#).

Information regarding the microscopic structure of the pepper berry is given in [Annex D](#).

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 927, *Spices and condiments — Determination of extraneous matter and foreign matter content*

ISO 928, *Spices and condiments — Determination of total ash*

ISO 930, *Spices and condiments — Determination of acid-insoluble ash*

ISO 939, *Spices and condiments — Determination of moisture content*

ISO 948, *Spices and condiments — Sampling*

ISO 1108, *Spices and condiments — Determination of non-volatile ether extract*

ISO 1208, *Spices and condiments — Determination of filth*

ISO 5498, *Agricultural food products — Determination of crude fibre content — General method*

ISO 5564, *Black pepper and white pepper, whole or ground — Determination of piperine content — Spectrophotometric method*

ISO 6571, *Spices, condiments and herbs — Determination of volatile oil content (hydrodistillation method)*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.