



FRUIT EXPORT (VANILLA) REGULATIONS 1993

GS 1 of 1993

FRUIT EXPORT ACT

[22nd July 1993]

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by Section 3 of the Fruit Export Act (Cap. 116), the Prime Minister with the consent of Cabinet hereby makes the following Regulations.

1.
 - (1) These Regulations may be cited as the Fruit Export (Vanilla) Regulations 1993.
 - (2) The vanilla bean is hereby declared as a fruit for the purposes of Section 2 of the Fruit Export Act.
2. In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires —

“aroma”	means fresh and distinctively strong vanilla smell;
“blossom end”	means the end of the vanilla bean where the flower was formed;
“broken bean”	means snapped vanilla bean;
“bundled”	means vanilla beans tied together according to length;

“clean”	means free from dirt, soil, excreta and any other foreign matter;
“cured”	means vanilla beans which have been dried and treated properly to evolve the vanilla aroma;
“cut beans”	means small pieces of cured vanilla beans, usually resulting from the removal of damaged parts or from broken beans;
“foreign smell”	means a smell which is not typical of strong vanilla smell such as mouldy, fishy and smoky smell;
“foreign matter”	means any materials other than vanilla;
“green vanilla beans”	means ripe vanilla beans which are not cured;
“MAF”	means Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry;
“mite”	means minute insect which is a pest of cured vanilla beans;
“moisture content”	means the amount of water in fresh or cured vanilla beans;
“mould”	means fungal growth on beans which can be white, yellow, black, brown or greenish in colour;
“ripe”	means that the vanilla bean has reached a maturity at harvest as indicated by: (i) change to a yellow colour on the blossom end (yellow tip); or (ii) starts splitting at the tip;
“scab”	means skin marks on vanilla beans caused by physical damage;
“special grade cut beans”	means vanilla beans that have been cut into small pieces and subjected to rapid curing process;
“split beans”	means vanilla beans which are partially split lengthwise from the blossom end as they ripen;
“supple”	means vanilla beans, which are fleshy, soft and flexible;

“vanilla” or “vanilla bean”	means the vanilla bean grown from varieties of <i>Vanilla fragrans</i> , fresh or cured;
“vanilla curing shed”	means a building designed for curing of vanilla beans;
“vanillin content”	means the amount of colourless, fragrant, crystalline compound $C_8H_8O_3$ contained in cured vanilla beans;
“waxy”	means smooth shiny appearance.

3. Green vanilla beans must be of the following grades: —

- (1) Grade 1 vanilla beans which —
 - (a) must be ripe, fresh and firm at harvest;
 - (b) must be 15cm or more in length;
 - (c) includes both ripe split and non-split;
 - (d) includes ripe broken beans;
 - (e) includes scabbed vanilla bean. (not more than 50% of the length of the bean is affected with scab);
 - (f) must be clean and free from any foreign smell.
- (2) Grade 2 vanilla beans which —
 - (a) must be ripe at harvest;
 - (b) must be 12 cm or more in length;
 - (c) includes both split and non-split beans;
 - (d) includes scabbed, twisted vanilla beans (not more than 50% of the bean length is affected with scab);
 - (e) includes ripe, broken beans;
 - (f) must be clean and free from any foreign smell.
- (3) Green vanilla Grades 1 and 2 may have up to 5% by weight of unripe vanilla beans.

4. Cured vanilla beans must be of the following Grades: —

- (1) Premium Grade vanilla beans which —
 - (a) must have good vanilla aroma;
 - (b) must have minimum vanillin content of 0.18 vanillin;
 - (c) must be whole beans, 15cm or more in length;

- (d) must have dark brown to black colour (without scabs, blemishes and light brown streaks), shiny, supple and have a waxy appearance;
 - (e) have moisture content not less than 30% or higher than 35% (or as specified by the buyer to the exporter and to the Director of Agriculture and Forestry);
 - (f) must be clean, free of moulds, mites, other insects and any foreign smell;
 - (g) must be bundled (or unless specified otherwise by the buyer to the exporter and to the Director of Agriculture and Forestry);
 - (h) includes split beans if specifically requested by the buyer to the exporter and to the Director of Agriculture and Forestry.
- (2)
- (i) Grade 1 vanilla beans which —
 - (a) must have good vanilla aroma;
 - (b) must have minimum vanillin content of 0.18 vanillin;
 - (c) must be whole or cut beans 15cm or more in length;
 - (d) must have dark brown to black supple, shiny and waxy appearance;
 - (e) have moisture content not less than 20% nor higher than 30% (or as specified by the buyer to the exporter and to the Director of Agriculture and Forestry);
 - (f) must be clean, free of moulds, rots, mites, other insects and any foreign smell;
 - (g) must be bundled (or unless specified otherwise by the buyer to the exporter and to the Director of Agriculture and Forestry);
 - (h) includes both split and non-split beans.
 - (ii) A tolerance of up to 2% by weight of Grade 2 standard is allowed.
- (3)
- (i) Grade 2 vanilla beans which —
 - (a) must have good vanilla aroma;
 - (b) must have minimum vanillin content of 0.18 vanillin;
 - (c) must be whole or cut beans between 12cm-15cm in length;
 - (d) must have dark brown to black colour (but not as shiny and, supple as Grade 1);
 - (e) have moisture content not higher than 25%;

- (f) must be clean, free of moulds, rots, mites, other insects and foreign smell;
 - (g) must be bundled (unless specified otherwise by the buyer to the exporter and to the Director of Agriculture and Forestry);
 - (h) includes split and non-split beans.
- (ii) A tolerance of up to 2% by weight of subgrade vanilla is allowed.
- (4) Industrial Grade which —
 - (a) may be a mixture of Grade 1 and Grade 2;
 - (b) must have the minimum requirements of Grade 2;
 - (c) must be approved by the Director of Agriculture and Forestry (as requested by the exporter).
- (5)
 - (i) Special grade - cut beans which —
 - (a) must have a good vanilla aroma; .
 - (b) must have a minimum vanillin content of 0.18 vanillin;
 - (c) must have dark brown to black colour with shiny and waxy appearance;
 - (d) must have moisture content not higher than 25% (or as specified by the buyer to the exporter and to the Director of Agriculture and Forestry);
 - (e) must be clean, free of moulds, mites, other insects, and any foreign smell.
 - (ii) Export of this grade must be approved by the Director of Agriculture and Forestry (at the application of the Exporter).

5.

- (1) Registration of vanilla growers shall be carried out by MAF in all Island Groups of Tonga.
- (2) A registered grower will be given a registration number.
- (3) A list of registered growers with their registration numbers will be made available to vanilla buyers prior to the declaration of opening of harvest and inspection dates.
- (4) Only registered growers may have their vanilla inspected and sold for export.

6. Harvesting of ripe vanilla beans shall be carried out as follows:

- (1) MAF will determine and declare open the start of the harvest season, subsequent harvesting dates, inspection dates and designated inspection sites.
- (2) No vanilla bean is to be harvested, inspected and sold at other times unless specified by MAF.
- (3) Ripe vanilla beans must be picked one by one and not by clusters.

7. Vanilla inspection shall be carried out as follows —

- (1)
 - (a) Inspection of all green vanilla beans shall be by MAF authorised green vanilla inspectors, who must hold MAF identification cards.
 - (b) All harvested vanilla beans must be brought to designated inspection sites where the vanilla is grown.
- (2) Duties of MAF green vanilla inspectors will be:
 - (a) to check ownership of the vanilla beans against the registration list,
 - (b) to grade vanilla beans to the appropriate grades,
 - (c) the issuing of receipts to the registered vanilla owner with the following information —
 - (i) grower's name, registration number and village;
 - (ii) date of inspection;
 - (iii) weight of Grade 1 vanilla beans;
 - (iv) weight of Grade 2 vanilla beans;
 - (v) weight of rejected vanilla beans;
 - (vi) MAF official stamp and signature of the inspector.
- (3) In cases of disagreement on grading between MAF green vanilla inspectors, vanilla growers or vanilla buyers, the Officer-in-charge of MAF in each Island Group shall assess the situation and make the final decision.

8. Buying of green vanilla beans shall be as follows:

- (a) Vanilla buyers must buy green vanilla only from registered growers who hold MAF inspection receipts.
- (b) Buyers must restrict their buying to declared harvest and inspection dates.

9. The curing of vanilla beans shall be carried out as follows:

- (a) By curers certified by MAF.

- (b) The curing method shall be the Malagasy system of using hot water for scalding of vanilla beans (with the exception of the “special grade cut beans” for which a hot air drying system is used).
- 10. MAF will inspect and certify vanilla curing sheds annually.
- 11. A certified curing shed must:
 - (a) be a wooden or concrete building designed for vanilla curing;
 - (b) not be used for living quarters or kitchen;
 - (c) be clean and have wooden or concrete floor;
 - (d) have good light and ventilation;
 - (e) be located away from the main roads, dusty roads, poorly drained areas, smoke and pollution; '
 - (f) have adequate water supply.
- 12. A certified curing shed must have the following equipment:
 - (a) a good fire-place with a drum and basket for scalding of green vanilla (or hot air drying system “for special grade-cut beans);
 - (b) a good functional thermometer;
 - (c) accurate watch or clock;
 - (d) outside platforms for sun drying of vanilla;
 - (e) drying racks or trays for shade drying in the curing shed;
 - (f) black blankets or cloth material for wrapping and drying of vanilla;
 - (g) inspection tables and chairs;
 - (h) insulated sweating boxes;
 - (i) maturing boxes.
- 13. All cured vanilla must be inspected by MAF Quarantine Officers for quarantine and quality purposes prior to packing for export.
- 14. All vanilla containers cleared for export must show clearly on the outside:
 - (i) name of exporter;
 - (ii) type of vanilla;
 - (iii) place of origin;
 - (iv) grade of vanilla;
 - (v) nett weight; and

(vi) “pass quarantine” label.

15. The Fruit Export Regulations 1934 shall not apply to vanilla beans.

Made this day of 1993.

Prime Minister