

**Order of the Minister of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests No 1339-21 of 8 Shawal 1442 (20 May 2021) setting out the names and characteristics of table olives.**

(OG No 7032 of 21/10/2021, page 2050)

**The Minister of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development and Water and Forests,**

Having regard to Decree No. 2-20-422 on the quality and safety of vegetable preserves marketed, in particular, Article 3 thereof ;

Having regard to Decree No. 2-12-389 of 11 Joumada II 1434 (22 April 2013) laying down the conditions and detailed rules for labelling food products,

**Orders:**

**Article 1:** The purpose of this Order shall be to set out, in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 of the aforementioned Decree No. 2-20-422, the names and characteristics of the table olives defined in Article 2 below.

**Article 2.** - Within the meaning of this Order, the following terms shall mean :

- **“Table olive”**: the product prepared from the healthy and ripe fruits of cultivated olive varieties (*Olea europaea* L.), packaged with or without brine and subjected to debittering treatments and preserved by natural fermentation and/or or by heat treatment or by other means authorized by the regulations in force;
- **“Brine”**: solutions of food salt in drinking water as defined by the regulations in force.

**Article 3.** - Table olives are classified, according to the degree of ripeness of the fresh fruit, as follows:

- **Green olives**: Fruits harvested during the ripening cycle, prior to colouring and when they have reached normal size;
- **Turning colour olives**: Fruits harvested before full maturity, at ripening;
- **Black olives**: Fruits harvested when they have reached full maturity.

**Article 4.** - Table olives may, depending on the processing method, be marketed under the following names:

- 1) **For candied olives**: green, turning colour or black olives having undergone an alkaline treatment, packaged in brine:
  - “candied green olives”;
  - “candied turning colour olives”;
  - “candied black olives”;
- 2) **For natural olives**: green, turning colour or black olives treated directly in brine in

which they undergo total or partial fermentation and preserved by adding acidifiers if necessary:

- “natural green olives”;
- “natural turning colour olives”;
- “natural black olives”;

3) **For wrinkled olives:** green, turning colour or black olives which may or may not have undergone a slight alkaline treatment, preserved in brine or partially dehydrated in dry salt and/or by heating or any other process authorized by the regulations in force:

- “wrinkled green olives”;
- “wrinkled turning colour olives”;
- “wrinkled black olives”;

4) **For olives blackened by oxidation:** green or turning colour olives preserved in brine, fermented or not, blackened by oxidation in an alkaline medium and preserved by sterilization in airtight containers.

**Article 5.** - Olives may be presented in one of the following ways:

**1) Whole unpitted olives:**

- **Whole olives:** Olives with or without peduncle, presenting their natural shape;
- **Broken olives:** Whole olives subjected to an operation allowing the pulp to burst without crushing the stone which remains intact and whole in the fruit;
- **Slashed olives:** Whole olives sliced lengthwise through incisions made in the skin and part of the pulp;

**2) Pitted olives:**

- **Whole pitted olives:** Olives in their natural shape and from which the stone has been removed;
- **Olives in halves:** Whole olives stuffed or unstuffed, cut in two halves perpendicular to the long axis of the fruit;
- **Quartered olives:** Olives cut into four parts, along the long axis of the fruit and perpendicular to it;
- **Olives in sections:** Olives cut lengthwise into more than four parts;
- **Sliced olives:** stuffed or unstuffed whole olives, cut into slices of roughly uniform thickness;
- **Chopped olives:** Olives cut into small pieces;
- **Broken olives:** Olives accidentally broken during pitting or the introduction of the stuffing;

**3) Stuffed olives:** Pitted olives, stuffed with one or more ingredients such as chilli, onion, almond, celery, anchovy, olive, orange or lemon peel, hazelnuts, capers and their pastes. They can be presented "arranged" or "unarranged";

**4) Olive paste:** Paste consisting exclusively of finely ground olive pulp.

**Article 6.** - The brine used for the preparation of table olives must be clean, free of foreign matter and meet the physico-chemical characteristics set out in Appendix I to this order.

**Article 7.** - The following ingredients may be added to the brine used for the preparation of table olives:

- Vinegar;
- Olive oil;
- Sugars;
- Any simple or compound edible ingredient such as chilli, onion, almond, celery, anchovies, capers or their pastes;
- Spices, aromatic plants or their natural extracts.

**Article 8.** - Table olives may have the following defects:

- 1) **Cores or core fragments:** Whole cores or core fragments measuring more than 2 mm on their longest axis;
- 2) **Broken fruit:** Olives damaged to such an extent that their normal structure is altered;
- 3) **Defects in the stuffing:** olives presented as stuffed olives, totally or partially empty;
- 4) **Stained fruits:** Olives with superficial marks that may or may not penetrate the pulp, with an area greater than 9 mm<sup>2</sup>;
- 5) **Mutilated fruits:** Olives damaged by the tearing of the epicarp to such an extent that a portion of the mesocarp becomes apparent;
- 6) **Wrinkled fruit:** Olives abnormally wrinkled to such an extent that their appearance is altered;
- 7) **Abnormal texture:** Excessively or abnormally soft or hard olives taking into account the commercial preparation considered;
- 8) **Abnormal colour:** Olives whose color differs markedly from that which characterizes the commercial preparation in question;
- 9) **Peduncles:** Peduncles attached to the olive and protruding more than 3 mm from the most protruding part of the olive. They are not considered as a defect in the case of whole olives presented with peduncle;
- 10) **Harmless foreign matter:** Any vegetable matter, such as leaves and detached stems, not dangerous to human health, not including the ingredients whose addition is provided for by this order.

**Article 9.** - Green olives, turning colour olives, black olives and olives blackened by oxidation marketed shall be classified into three (3) categories: Extra category, category I and category II, taking into account the thresholds allowed per batch set out in annex II to this Order.

**Article 10.** - The labeling of table olives must comply with the provisions of the aforementioned Decree No. 2-12-389 and also include, as the case may be, the following information:

- the type of olive, as defined in article 3 above;
- the mode of presentation as defined in article 5 above;
- for the stuffed olives:
  - indication of the mode of presentation: “rows” or “not rows”, as the case may be;
  - “olives stuffed with...” if a single ingredient or in combination was used;
  - “Olives stuffed with paste of...” if a single or combination paste was used.

**Article 11.** – This order shall take effect from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

However, the operators concerned shall have a period of nine (9) months from the said date of publication to comply with the provisions of this order.

**Article 12.** - This Order shall be published in the Official Gazette.

**Rabat, 8 Shawal 1442 (20 May 2021)**

**The Minister of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development and Water and  
Forests, Aziz AKHANNOUCH**

## Annexes

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### ANNEX I PHYSICO-CHEMICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BRINE OF TABLE OLIVES

ways of olive traitement	BRINE OF TABLE OLIVES	
	Minimum concentration of Sodium Chloride%	Maximum pH limit
Candied olives	5 %	4,3
Natural olives	6 %	4,3
Pasteurized candied olives and natural olives	BPF*	4,3
Wrinkled olives	8 %	BPF
Olives blackened by oxidation	BPF	BPF

\*GMP : Good Manufacturing Practices.

## Annex II : Defect thresholds allowed per lot according to the type and category of olives

	Catégory Extra			Catégory I			Catégory II		
	Green olives	Olives blackened by oxidation	Turning color olives and black olives	Green olives	Olives blackened by oxidation	Turning color olives and black olives	Green olives	Olives blackened by oxidation	Turning color olives and black olives
<b>Pitted or stuffed olives</b> (Maximum tolerances in% of fruit):									
Pits and/or pits' fragments	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2
Broken fruits	3	3	3	5	5	5	7	7	7
Stuffing defects :									
- sorted olives	1	1	1	2	2	2	-	-	-
- unsorted olives	3	3	3	5	5	5	7	7	7
<b>Whole olives, pitted or stuffed</b> (Maximum tolerances in% of fruit):									
Marked fruits	4 <sup>(*)</sup>	4	6	6	6	8	10	6	12
Mutilated fruits	2	2	3	4	4	6	8	8	10
Wrinkled fruits	2	2	4	3	3	6	6	6	10
Abnormal texture	4	4	6	6	6	8	10	10	12
Abnormal color	4	4	6	6	6	8	10	10	12
Peduncles	3	3	3	5	5	5	6	6	6
Maximum accumulation of tolerances for these defects	12	12	12	17	17	17	22	22	22
<b>Maximum tolerance in units per kilogram or per fraction:</b>									
Harmless foreign matter	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

(\*) In addition, at least 30% of the fruit must be practically free from marks or stains.

The tolerance assessment should be carried out on a minimum sample of 200 olives taken in accordance with the appropriate sampling plan.