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Fresh sweet cassava — Specification



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National foreword

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This Draft Uganda Standard, DUS DARS 835: 2024, *Fresh sweet cassava — Specification*, is identical with and has been reproduced from an African Standard, DARS 835: 2024, *Fresh sweet cassava — Specification*, and adopted as a Uganda Standard.

The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee UNBS/TC 204, *Fruits, vegetables, tubers and processed products*.

This standard will cancel and replace US EAS 738: 2023, *Fresh sweet cassava root — Specification*.

Wherever the words, "African Standard" appear, they should be replaced by "Uganda Standard".

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Foreword

The African Organization for Standardization (ARS) is an African intergovernmental organization made up of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Organization of African Unity (AU). One of the fundamental mandates of ARSO is to develop and harmonize African Standards (ARS) for the purpose of enhancing Africa's internal trading capacity, increase Africa's product and service competitiveness globally and uplift the welfare of African communities. The work of preparing African Standards is normally carried out through ARSO technical committees. Each Member State interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), governmental and non-governmental organizations, in liaison with ARSO, also take part in the work.

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Introduction

Cassava, (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz) is the third most important food crop in the tropics after rice and maize, and is consumed daily by up to one billion people, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa. Global cassava output in 2011 was expected to rise by over 6% from the previous year (2010), and to surpass 250 million metric tons for the first time (FAO, 2011).

Cassava is also replacing major traditional staples such as maize, finger millet, bananas, and plantains, because the productivity of these traditional staples have been declining as a result of deteriorating soil fertility and the adverse effects of climate change. Cassava on the other hand thrives in harsh conditions, and produces its carbohydrate-rich roots in poor soils, even in times of drought.

The rapid increases in cassava production has significant implications for the food, nutrition and energy security of Africa's rapidly rising urban population, which will increase from 414 million to over 1.2 billion by 2050 (UN, 2012). Despite enormous production challenges, at least 60% of global cassava production is projected to come from Africa, with significant potential to reduce the food gap, increase farm incomes in the rural areas, and reduce rural and urban food, nutrition and energy insecurity and poverty (Otim-Nape et al., 2008)

Given these significant attributes, the emerging vision for the crop (CGIAR 2000, Otim-Nape et al., 2008) in Africa, is that cassava will increasingly be a major contributor to improved food, nutrition, and health security, with smallholders producing surplus cassava harvests. Marketing increased quantities of high quality fresh cassava roots and leaves, and traditional and processed cassava products will improve their income generation potential. It is envisaged that producers will increase their competitiveness in the cassava value chain through better market response and efficient processing. Ultimately, cassava will become a major driving force in rural development and poverty reduction through industrial production and marketing. In spite of the evidence of brisk production growth and enormous scope for the crop, there is evidence of current overall contraction in production (FAO 2011), and declining productivity of the crop, due to major biotic and abiotic stresses. There are also other major production and marketing challenges which continue to impede progress (Nweke et al., 2001).

Cassava's market challenges result from poorly organized value-added chains, limited infrastructure, high transaction costs, competition from cheap imports, and limited investments in research, mechanization, production, harvesting and processing (Nweke et al 2001) .

Significant opportunities now exist for marketing of fresh and processed cassava for urban and rural consumption, high quality cassava flour for bread and other products, and cassava for fuel ethanol, and animal feed. These opportunities will be closely tied to changes in overall staple food markets, market diversification and competition within cassava food markets.

This African Standard was prepared to establish uniform quality and safety requirements for fresh sweet cassava in order to facilitate trade in fresh cassava in the domestic, regional and international markets.

Fresh sweet cassava — Specification

1 Scope

This Draft African Standard specifies requirements, sampling and test methods for varieties of fresh sweet cassava roots of *Manihot esculenta* Crantz, of the *Euphorbiaceae* family for human consumption.

Cassava roots intended for industrial processing are excluded in this standard.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents 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.

ARS 56, *Pre-packaged foods — Labelling*

ARS 53, *General principles of food hygiene — Code of practice*

ARS 844, *Cassava and cassava products — Determination of total cy21 anogens — Enzymatic assay method*

CXS 193, *Codex general standard for contaminants and toxins in food and feed*

CXC 53, *Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*

CXG 21, *Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria Related to Foods*

ISO 7563, *Fresh fruits and vegetable — Vocabulary*

ISO 874, *Fresh fruits and vegetables — Sampling*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions in ISO 7563, and the following apply.

3.1

fresh cassava

unpeeled roots from varieties of cassava [*Manihot esculenta* (Crantz)] of the *Euphorbiace* family which contain stored carbohydrates mainly as starch

3.2

clean

practically free of visible soil, dust, or other visible foreign matter, except substances used to prolong its shelf life

3.3

firm

resistant to externally applied pressure

3.4

practically free

product without defects in excess of those that can be expected to result from, and be consistent with good agricultural and handling practices employed in the production and marketing of the fresh cassava

3.5

sound

wholesome

free from disease, serious deterioration (such as but not limited to decay, breakdown, freezing damage, or soft or shrivelled specimens) or adulteration/contamination, that appreciably affects their appearance, edibility, the keeping quality of the produce or market value

3.6

sweet cassava

cassava roots that contain less than 50 mg/kg hydrogen cyanide (fresh weight basis)

3.7

whole cassava

fresh sweet cassava which has not been subjected to any cutting or peeling of its initial harvested mass, "trimming" exempted

3.8

fresh cassava

appearance at the time of sale, similar visual characteristics to the fresh sweet cassava recently harvested (i.e., colour, texture, firmness or shrivelled)

3.9

industrial processing

production of sweet cassava products such as starch, flour, livestock feeds, paste, granules and syrups

3.10

food grade material

one that will not transfer non-food chemicals into the food and contains no chemicals which would be hazardous to human health

4 Requirements

4.1 General requirements

The fresh sweet cassava roots should be carefully harvested after reaching an appropriate degree of physiological development taking into account the characteristics of the variety and the area in which they are grown.

The development and condition of the fresh sweet cassava shall be such as to enable it to:

- a) withstand normal transport and handling conditions; and
- b) arrive in a satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

4.2 Specific requirements

4.2.1 In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the cassava shall be:

- a) wholesome/sound; produce affected by rotting, mould or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded;

- b) of colour, taste and texture characteristic of the variety;
- c) fresh, clean, whole and firm;
- d) of a characteristic skin colour and free from flesh discolouration (vascular streaking); Skin colour characteristics are basically three in number: white; clear and brown dark brown, and colours characteristic of the pulp are two: white and yellow;
- e) practically free of pests affecting the general appearance of the produce;
- f) practically free of damage caused by pests and diseases;
- g) free of abnormal external moisture, excluding condensation following removal from cold storage;
- h) free of loss of colour in the flesh;
- i) free of any foreign smell and/or taste with exception of preservation agents allowed; and
- j) practically free of mechanical damage and bruising.

4.2.2 The cut at the distal (narrow) end of the cassava shall not exceed 2 cm in diameter.

4.2.3 The stalk end of the root shall have a clean cut between 1 cm and 2.5 cm in length.

4.3 Total cyanogen content

When tested in accordance with ARS 844, Fresh sweet cassava roots shall have not more than 50 mg/kg of hydrogen cyanide (fresh weight basis).

4.4 Classification

4.4.1 Fresh sweet cassava may be classified before marketing. Where classification is done the following grades shall be used in accordance with the requirements of each class and the quality tolerances in Clause 6.

- a) Extra Class;
- b) Class I; and
- c) Class II.

4.4.2 Extra Class

Extra class sweet cassava shall be cassava roots that meet the minimum requirement in Clause 4.2 and are:

- a) of superior quality in terms of taste, texture, skin and flesh colour.
- b) characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type, uniform in shape, quality and size.

Extra class cassava roots shall be free from defects, with the exception of very slight superficial defects, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and not in any case affecting not more than 2 % of the cassava roots.

4.4.3 Class I

Class I cassava storage roots shall be cassava roots that meet the minimum requirement in Clause 4.2 and are:

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- a) of good quality; and
- b) characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

The following slight defects, however, may be allowed, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality:

- a) slight defects in shape not exceeding 5% of the roots;
- b) bruising, not exceeding 10 % of the surface area of the roots;
- c) scraped areas, not exceeding 20 % of the surface area of the roots; and
- d) scarred and healed damage, not exceeding 5% of the surface area of the roots.

The defects shall not, in any case, affect the pulp of the produce.

4.4.4 Class II

Class II cassava storage roots shall be cassava, which does not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfies the general requirements specified in Clause 4.1.

The following defects, however, may be allowed, provided the cassava retains its essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- a) defects in shape not exceeding 10 % of the roots;
- b) bruising, not exceeding 20 % of the surface area of roots;
- c) scraped areas, not exceeding 30 % of the surface area of roots and;
- d) scarred and healed damage, not exceeding 10% of the surface area of the roots.

The defects shall not, in any case, affect the pulp of the produce.

5 Size requirements

In all cases, cassava shall not be less than 300 g in weight nor less than 20 cm in length.

Sweet cassava shall be coded in sizes in accordance with Table 1. Size shall be determined by measuring the diameter at the thickest cross-section of the root.

Size tolerances for all classes shall be a maximum of 10 % by number of the weight of cassava corresponding to the size immediately above or below the size declared or indicated on the package.

Table 1 — Size requirements of the sweet cassava roots

Size code	Size	Diameter cm
A	small	4.0 - 6.0
B	medium	6.1 - 8.0
C	large	>8.0

6 Tolerances

Tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each package for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.

6.1 Quality tolerances

6.1.1 “Extra” Class

Five percent by number or weight of cassava not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class I or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

6.1.2 Class I

Ten percent by number or weight of cassava not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

6.1.3 Class II

Twenty percent by number or weight of cassava satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of produce affected by rotting or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.

6.2 Size tolerances

For all classes, ten percent by number or weight of cassava corresponding to the size immediately above and/or below that indicated on the package.

7 Presentation

7.1 Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only sweet cassava of the same origin, variety and/or commercial type, quality and size. The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

7.2 Packaging

The visible part of the contents of the pre-packaged must be representative of the entire contents. A special effort should be made to suppress camouflage, for example, concealing in the lower layers of the package produce inferior in quality and size to that displayed and marked.

Similarly prohibited is any packaging method or practice intended to give a deceptively superior appearance to the top layer of the consignment.

8 Marking and labelling

8.1 Consumer packages

In addition to the requirements of ARS 56, sweet cassava roots shall be legibly and indelibly labelled with the following information:

- a) name of the produce to be shown on the label shall be “Fresh sweet cassava”;
- b) name and location address of the vendor and/or packer shall be declared;
- c) country of origin of the produce, and optionally, place of origin such as district, or region;
- d) commercial identification shall be declared by:
 - i) grade (only when classified);
 - ii) variety/cultivar or type;
 - iii) size (size code); and
 - iv) net weight (in metric system).

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- e) lot identification (batch number);
- f) declaration of preservatives, if used;
- g) The name and address of the producer and/or packer shall be declared;
- h) preparation instructions, statement indicating that cassava should be peeled and fully cooked before being consumed;
- i) date of harvest;
- j) packing date;
- k) storage conditions; and
- l) Indication “for human consumption”.

8.2 Non-retail containers

Each package must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside, or in the documents accompanying the shipment.

8.2.2 Nature of produce

Name of the produce if the contents are not visible from the outside. Name of the variety and/or commercial type (optional).

8.2.3 Origin of produce

Country of origin and, optionally, district where grown or national, regional or local place name.

8.2.4 Commercial Identification

- Class;
- Size (size code or minimum and maximum diameter in centimetre);
- Net weight; and
- preparation instructions, statement indicating that cassava should be peeled and fully cooked before being consumed.

8.2.5 Official inspection mark (optional)

9 Contaminants

9.1 Pesticide residues

Fresh sweet cassava shall conform to those maximum residue limits for pesticide residues established by Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

9.2 Heavy metals

Fresh sweet cassava shall comply with those maximum levels for heavy metal contaminants established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

9.3 Other contaminants

Fresh sweet cassava shall conform to those maximum levels given in CXS 193.

10 Hygiene

10.1 The produce covered by the provisions of this Standard shall be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of ARS 53 and CXC 53.

10.2 The produce shall comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the CXG 21.

10.3 When tested by appropriate methods of sampling and examination, the product:

- a) shall be free from microorganisms in amounts which may present a hazard to health;
- b) shall be free from parasites which may represent a hazard to health; and
- c) shall not contain any substance originating from microorganisms in amounts which may represent a hazard to health.

10.4 During handling, storage and transportation, effective measures must be taken to prevent cross contamination with chemicals, microbial or physical contaminants.

11 Sampling

Sampling shall be done in accordance with ISO 874.

**Annex A
(informative)**

Defects in the minimum requirements affecting no more than 10 % of the roots may be allowed, provided the cassava retains its essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation. The defects shall not, in any case, affect the quality of the pulp of the cassava roots.

Bibliography

Nigerian Industrial Standard, NIS 459:2004, *Standard for cassava roots*

Ghana Standard, GS 560:2004, *Fresh fruits and vegetables — Specification for sweet cassava*

EAS 738:2010, *Fresh sweet cassava — Specification*

CODEX STAN 238-2003(Am. 2011), *Standard for Sweet Cassava*

