

International Standard



6754

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION • МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ПО СТАНДАРТИЗАЦИИ • ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE DE NORMALISATION

Whole thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* Linnaeus) — Specification

Thym entier (*Thymus vulgaris* Linnaeus) — *Spécifications*

First edition — 1985-10-15

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UDC 635.711

Ref. No. ISO 6754-1985 (E)

Descriptors : agricultural products, seasonings, spices, thyme, specifications, packing, marking, storage, transportation.

Price based on 4 pages

Foreword

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Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for approval before their acceptance as International Standards by the ISO Council. They are approved in accordance with ISO procedures requiring at least 75 % approval by the member bodies voting.

International Standard ISO 6754 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 34, *Agricultural food products*.

Users should note that all International Standards undergo revision from time to time and that any reference made herein to any other International Standard implies its latest edition, unless otherwise stated.

Whole thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* Linnaeus) — Specification

1 Scope and field of application

This International Standard specifies requirements for whole thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* Linnaeus) in processed or semi-processed form,¹⁾ for purposes of international transactions.

Recommendations relating to storage and transport conditions are given in annex A.

2 References

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

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

ISO 929, *Spices and condiments — Determination of water-insoluble ash.*

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

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

ISO 948, *Spices and condiments — Sampling.*

ISO 2825, *Spices and condiments — Preparation of a ground sample for analysis.*

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

ISO 6571, *Spices, condiments and herbs — Determination of volatile oil content.*

3 Description

Thyme is the perennial herbaceous plant *Thymus vulgaris* Linnaeus. (See the figure.) The leaves of dried thyme are small, ash-green to brownish grey in colour according to their origin. Their shape is linear and the length varies from 1 to 5 mm. The colour of the dried flowers varies from purplish-pink to brownish.

In international trade, thyme appears in dried form free from roots

- either in bouquets (stalks, leaves, flowering tops), "Herba"
- or cleaned, comprising dried leaves and flowers, "Folia".

4 Requirements

4.1 Odour and flavour

Thyme shall have a characteristic odour and flavour, strong and aromatic with variants according to the chemical strain (thymol thyme, linalol thyme, thymol/carvacrol thyme).

It shall be free from foreign flavours and odours.

4.2 Freedom from insects, moulds, etc.

Thyme shall be free from living insects and moulds, and shall be practically free from dead insects, insect fragments and rodent contamination visible to the naked eye (corrected, if necessary, for abnormal vision) or with such magnification as may be necessary in any particular case. If the magnification exceeds X 10, this fact shall be stated in the test report.

4.3 Extraneous matter

4.3.1 Extraneous matter originating from the plant

The percentage of extraneous matter originating from the plant (stalks) in cleaned thyme, determined by the method specified in ISO 927, shall not be more than 5 % (m/m).

4.3.2 Extraneous matter not originating from the plant

All matter of vegetable origin other than leaves, flowers and stalks of thyme (for example leaves, stalks of plants other than thyme) or mineral matter (for example dust, sand, soil) is considered to be extraneous matter.

1) Powdered thyme is sometimes offered for sale. The powder may be obtained from different parts of the plant according to its use, for example powder from cleaned thyme for domestic consumption, powder from cleaned thyme with a greater or lesser percentage of stalk for industrial use and powder obtained from stalks for animal consumption. These forms lie outside the scope of this International Standard.

Its percentage in the thyme in bouquets and in cleaned thyme, determined by the method specified in ISO 927, shall not exceed 2 % (*m/m*).

4.4 Categories

Thyme may be graded into categories according to its place of production and its type (chemical strain).

The main producing countries are listed in annex B, for information only.

4.5 Chemical requirements¹⁾

Thyme shall comply with the requirements given in the table.

Table — Chemical requirements

Characteristic	Requirement	Method of test
Moisture content, % (<i>m/m</i>), max.	12	ISO 939
Total ash, % (<i>m/m</i>) on dry basis, max.	14	ISO 928
Water-insoluble ash, % (<i>m/m</i>) on dry basis, max.	12	ISO 929
Acid insoluble ash, % (<i>m/m</i>) on dry basis, max.	5	ISO 930
Crude fibre, % (<i>m/m</i>) on dry basis, max.	30	ISO 5498
Volatile oil content, ml/100 g on dry basis, min.	1	ISO 6571

5 Sampling

Sample the thyme by the method specified in ISO 948.

6 Test methods

Samples of thyme shall be tested for conformity to the requirements of this International Standard by the methods of test referred to in 4.3 and the table.

The test sample shall be prepared according to ISO 2825. Samples shall be ground so that the whole of the material passes through a sieve of aperture size 1 mm.

7 Packing and marking

7.1 Packing

Thyme shall be packed in clean and sound containers made of a material which does not affect the product.

7.2 Marking

The container shall be marked or labelled with the following particulars:

- name of the product (botanical name and form of appearance), trade name and brand name, if any;
- name and address of the producer or packer;
- batch or code number;
- net mass;
- category of the product (if graded);
- producing country;
- any other marking required by the purchaser, such as year of harvest and date of packing;
- possibly, a reference to this International Standard.

1) Limits for toxic substances will be included later, in accordance with the recommendations of the Joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission.

Annex A

Recommendations relating to storage and transport conditions

(This annex does not form part of the Standard.)

- A.1** Containers of thyme should be stored in covered premises, well protected from the sun, rain and excessive heat.
- A.2** The store-room should be dry, free from objectionable odours and proofed against the entry of insects and vermin. The ventilation should be adjusted so as to give good ventilation under dry conditions and to be fully closed under damp conditions.
- A.3** The containers should be handled and transported so that they are protected from rain, from the sun or other source of excessive heat, from unpleasant odours and from cross-infestation, especially in the holds of ships.

Annex B

Main thyme-producing countries

(Non-limiting list given for information. This annex does not form part of the Standard.)

Cultivated thyme

Poland
Czechoslovakia
Romania
German Democratic Republic
USA
France

Wild thyme

Spain
France
Tunisia

NOTE — Only the Mediterranean countries produce wild thyme.



- A Calyx (enlarged)
B Front view of corolla (enlarged)

Figure — Flowering branch of thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* Linnaeus)